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DULUTH--The old war between heredity and environment -- which determines behavior and intelligence -- is becoming a dead issue, a research psychologist said at UMD today (Wed.)

More important, Dr. Anne Anastasi of Fordham University said, is a consideration of the ways in which both influence personality, and why.

Dr. Anastasi spoke at the first of five public programs outlined in the UMD Counseling and Guidance Institute, which began this week and continues until Aug. 19. Future talks are at 1 p.m. Wednesdays in Kirby Ballroom except the final lecture which is scheduled at 9 a.m. Dr. Gerald Gladstein, associate professor of psychology at UMD, directs the course.

Among the ways heredity can stunt learning are an inherited susceptibility to physical diseases, keeping a child away from school for periods of time; deafness resulting in retardation, and defective genes.

The speaker said environment begins to operate before birth. Prenatal conditions can affect behavior and intelligence as well as parental attitude toward a child -- the way his questions are answered and whether his academic progress is greeted with encouragement or indifference.

Social expectancy is a big factor in personality and learning, Dr. Anastasi noted. "What is expected of an individual largely affects what he does."

Dr. Anastasi said that although many intelligence tests still rely largely on verbal aptitude as criteria for future academic progress, psychologists are increasingly aware of the need for knowing individual and creative abilities for themselves, regardless of scholastics or culture.