

Alder's birth order theory: a case study on the Kardashian sisters

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The Kardashian Sisters and Adler's Birth Order Theory

German psychotherapist Alfred W. Adler lived from 1870 to 1937. His research emphasized the importance of the feeling inferiority and how it plays on the development of personality. Adler believes that when an individual is encouraged, he or she tends to feel capable, cooperative, and appreciated. On the other hand, when an individual is discouraged, he or she may withdrawal, give up, or even compete with others. In addition to this, Adler believed that birth order influenced personality and makes an impact of an individual's style of life. Other than just taking in account of birth order, Adler's birth order theory takes into factor the total number of children in a family and the age gap between the siblings. For the purpose of this assignment, I cannot think of any other well-known trio of siblings that could best represent Adler's birth order theory than Kourtney, Kimberly, and Khloe Kardashian.

According to Alfred Alder, the first born child is the center of attention, but only when they are the only child in the family. When the next child is born, the first-born develops a strong feeling of dethronement and because they are used to being the center of attention, will look for ways to regain power that could potentially result in insecurities and hostility. Despite being first-born, Kourtney Kardashian walks in the shadow of her most famous and second-born sister, Kimberly. Kourtney illustrates her want to remain in power by occupying her sister to glamorous club openings and being featured in magazines. Kourtney does not let the public forget about her. The first-born is also expected to be the responsible, intellectually mature one,

and the one to set the example. Certainly out the of three sisters, Kourtney is that sister. She is seen as a role model by following the most “ traditional” route. She did not jump from relationship to relationship like her sisters and was with the father of her three children for over ten years. Kourtney does not let the limelight dominate her like other sisters and she maintains passions for the simpler things in life such as cooking, working out, and decorating her house.

The second-born child is a little more temperamental. Because they see their older sibling as a pacesetter, the second-born tends to be more competitive and ambitious. This could leave the second-born child with the need to outdo everyone and Kimberly Kardashian definitely does that. Kim Kardashian is one of the most talked about celebrities. She is a model, socialite and a successful businesswoman and certainly loves the spotlight. Middle children share many characteristics with second-born children, in addition to that, they also have a “ take it or leave it” attitude. Kim has an extraordinary amount of confidence, she’s a trendsetter and is never afraid of bad publicity.

Lastly, Khloe Kardashian eliminates the stereotype of being the “ baby” of the family. The youngest-born are usually the most spoiled. Khloe is definitely the type of woman that knows what she wants and how to get it. The youngest are also the most social. By watching the family’s reality television show, Keeping Up with the Kardashians, it is obvious that out of the three sisters, Khloe is the closets with their half siblings, Brody, Kendall and Kylie. Youngest siblings also take more risks than their older siblings.

This notion is because they also have someone looking after them or “babying” them so the youngest feel that they can do no wrong. This also results in the youngest becoming less intelligent than his or her older siblings because everything is done for them and they aren’t given the chance to stand on their own. When it comes to family vacations, Khloe is certainly the risk taker. She is seen as more of the “sporty” one amongst the sisters and can often be found riding four wheelers, jumping off cliffs or yachts, or dancing on bars. Lastly, Khloe is the least accomplished out of her three sisters. She isn’t a businesswoman or mother and seems to only enjoy dancing in the spotlight that surrounds the Kardashian family.

To conclude, it is important that Alder’s theory of birth order is just a theory. While lots siblings could have these personality characteristics, many siblings might not follow these guidelines. There are many factors that could potentially affect one’s personality other than just their birth order. For example, I have an older brother who is mentally disabled, but despite being the middle child, I find myself encompassing many characteristics that Alder believed should belong to the first-born. I am the role model for my little sister and almost like a third parent to her. I am also the pacesetter and often find myself insecure and jealous when the attention is not on me.