



HDFS 549: Developmental Theory

Fall 2000

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“There’s nothing as practical as a good theory.”

Kurt Lewin

Our assumptions about the processes underlying development shapes how we read the literature, how we design studies, and how we interpret results. HDFS 549, Developmental Theory, is designed to give you a broad basis for understanding theoretical approaches to the study of development and to effectively use theory in the design of original research.

Goals:

The course has four goals:

1. To gain knowledge of approximately six major theoretical approaches to development;
2. To develop a clear understanding of the role of theory in empirical research;
3. To develop your ability to use theory in the conceptualization, design, and interpretation of your own research;
4. To improve your ability to communicate your ideas effectively.

To meet these goals, each of you will do a series of readings, discuss the readings in class, and complete a series of short writing assignments and one major project. Let me lay out my assumptions up front. At this point in your scholarly careers, I expect that a) you have your own goals and ideas about what you want to get out of this class, and b) you can learn best by taking the ideas presented in this class, playing with them, and getting feedback about your own ideas from both myself and others. In other words, I think you will learn more by working through your own ideas than by listening to me talking about mine. I have tried to structure the assignments to increase the likelihood that you will meet the goals I’ve set as well as to be flexible enough to meet the goals you’ve set for yourself.

Course Requirements:

It is very important that you attend and come prepared for all classes. You are also responsible for keeping yourselves informed of any changes that are announced in class or through the e-mail system regarding assignments and changes in schedule. The better prepared you are, the more you can contribute to all of our learning experiences. Reading assignments for each week should be completed before the class of that week. *All auditors are expected to do the readings, participate in on-line discussions, and come to class ready to talk about the readings. Auditors don't have to write the major paper.*

Evaluation:

There are three major criteria on which you will be evaluated: class participation and attendance, participation in a computer discussion group, and an integrative analytic paper linking theory with empirical research.

Class Participation. Class participation is graded each day on a 3 point scale. You get 1 point for coming to class, 2 points for coming prepared and participating (i.e. asking a question or making a comment), and 3 points for making a particularly good contribution to class.

Computer Discussion Group. Writing about what you've read is one of the best ways to process and expand upon new ideas. A computer list server has been created to allow people in the class to share their thoughts about the readings prior to class. The purpose of the list server is to provide a forum for people to think about, critique, and speculate about our readings outside of class. It lets you comment, ask questions, and read what other people in the class are thinking.

How does it work? The forum basically takes the form of e-mail. You send your weekly assignment to the listserv (plus any other comments or questions you may have) and it is distributed to other people in the class. Other people in the class can add their own speculations, comment on what you said, or answer your questions. Although your postings can be any length, I'd try to keep it to no more than 1 single-spaced page. They can be as short as a sentence or two.

Specific Assignments: The units are structured in two week blocks. Within each block, we'll spend the first week reading about the theory and the second week reading empirical articles that apply the theory.

Theory weeks: On theory weeks, your assignment is to spend one page developing a

testable question and hypothesis (or series of hypotheses) derived from the theory and some of the considerations that you would have to keep in mind if you were to test your hypothesis empirically. These responses can be written *informally* and can contain questions to yourself or to us. This is a good time to speculate and ask for feedback. The purpose of these assignments is to get you thinking about the underlying structure of each theory and what its implications are. For up to two of your six theory week assignments, you can discuss or elaborate on what other people have written.

Empirical weeks: On the weeks we're reading empirical papers, your assignment is to pick one assigned article and to write a single page critique of the study *as an application of the theory*. In other words, your goal is **not** to critique the paper on the basis of general methodological considerations (i.e., the sample is small, it's not longitudinal). Rather, you are to critique the paper on the basis of whether it is an accurate and appropriate application of the theory from which it was derived and the extent to which the method, measures, and analytic strategy employed by the researcher accurately reflect the theoretical perspective and question addressed. These responses are to be written *relatively formally*, as you would a journal review. If you would like to use one or more of these essays to fulfill the review component of your comps, come talk to me.

Requirements: There are two requirements for this part of the course. First, you need to participate by making at least one posting each week about the class readings. Because one purpose of the discussion is to help you prepare for class and for me to know what people are thinking about before we get started, this posting must be made BY WEDNESDAY EVENING BEFORE class. Second, you should generate a portfolio of your best postings, to be turned in the last week of class. This portfolio should consist of 6 different postings from 6 different weeks and represent both empirical and theory week essays.

Rationale: Why do I make you turn these assignments in on-line? Two basic reasons. One is that I think we all benefit from reading each others' writing. Science is a social process, not a dialogue between two individuals. Second, most of your professional life will involve laying out your ideas and presenting them to your peers. That's what writing journal articles, grant proposals, and reviews - even delivering lectures - is all about. The more practice you have at it, and the more opportunities you have to read good (and sometimes bad) examples of it, the better you will get at it.

Semester Project: The goal of the semester project is for you to learn to apply one or more theories to the design and evaluation of empirical research. To do this, you need to a) pull out the

underlying assumptions or premises of the theory or theories you are working with, b) develop questions and hypotheses derived from these theories as they apply to a particular empirical area, c) identify and develop research designs appropriate to testing your hypotheses, d) assess empirical measures according to their appropriateness and fit with the theory or theories you are working with, and e) develop an analytic strategy appropriate to the theory and your hypotheses.

The theory or theories you choose to work with for your semester project need not be ones we cover in class. The goal of the project is for you to develop the skills to link theory with research design, but I would also like this project to move you further towards your own goals. To that end, you can choose one of several options.

Begin with a specific area of empirical research. In this option, you will develop knowledge of a specific empirical area. From your knowledge of this area, develop a research question. Apply two theoretical approaches to answering this question, developing hypotheses from each. Then design a research project to test the alternative hypotheses, based either on an existing dataset or based on new data you are proposing to collect. The challenge of this type of project is to find a critical comparison where the two theoretical approaches will make different predictions, allowing you insight into the processes underlying your empirical findings, and to accurately reflect both theories in the design of your project.

Begin with a specific theory. In this option, you will develop an in-depth knowledge of a specific theory and use this theory to provide insight into a specific empirical question. The challenge of a project of this type is to identify a key question and empirical area that will allow you to adequately test the theory and eliminate alternative hypotheses. Anyone can wave their hands at a theory and say 'see - my hypotheses are based on this theory'. The goal of this paper is for you to do more than that. Your paper will be judged on how well you integrate and apply the theory to inform your research design and methodology. One starting place for such a project would be to look at the relevant literature looking for consistencies or inconsistencies that may have to do with methodological flaws in the theory's operationalization.

Design a course in which several different theoretical approaches are explored. In this option, you can design a course in which a single topic is explored from a number of different perspectives. For example, you might be interested in designing a course about close interpersonal relationships that comes at this issue from the perspective of social learning theory, attachment, social exchange theory, etc. The challenge here would be to lay out the key theoretical areas appropriate to such a course, choose readings that would exemplify different perspectives, and compare and contrast the different approaches. You

would also be responsible for critiquing different empirical contributions to the area in light of different theoretical perspectives.

Format: The format for the first two options is a formal research proposal (such as a thesis, dissertation, or grant proposal). The format for the third option is a formal course proposal, with attached syllabus and reading list. I'd expect each to be at least 15 pages long plus appendices.

This project is meant to take you a semester to develop. It also is built on itself. For example, in the first option, you need to fully flesh out the relevant theories before you can develop a critical test of them. You need to develop a good question and hypotheses before you can design the study. For that reason, you will be turning in a series of essays, each of which will correspond roughly to one section of your paper. At the end of the semester, you will pull these together as a final, integrated proposal. *Only the final proposal will be graded.*

Course Schedule

Note: I have put the readings in the order I think they're best approached from.

Unit One: Introduction

- Week One: **!** N. Darling & C.L. Cohan (1998): The Continuity of Relationships Across the Lifespan (handed out in class)
- Week Two: **!** T.S. Kuhn (1970): The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (This should be the focus of your writing for this week.)
- !** T.H. Leahey (1992): The mythical revolutions of American psychology. *American Psychologist*, 47, 308-318.
- !** T.C. Chamberlin (1890/1965): The method of multiple working hypotheses. *Science*, 148, 754-759.
- !** J.R. Platt (1964): Strong inference. *Science*, 146, 347-353.

Other readings of interest:

- !** P.C. Friman, K.D. Allen, M.L.E. Kerwin, & R. Larzelere (1993). Changes in modern psychology: A citation analysis of the Kuhnian displacement thesis. *American Psychologist*, 48, 658-664.
- !** B. Gholson & P. Barker (1986): Kuhn, Lakatos, & Laudan:

Applications in the history of physics and psychology. *American Psychologist*, 40, 755-769.

! K.R. Popper (1959): *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*.

Unit Two: Piaget

Week One:

! P. Harris (1997). Piaget in Paris: From 'autism' to logic. *Human Development*, 40, 109-123.

! H.E. Gruber & J.J Vonèche (1977). Part X Piaget's Philosophy: Introduction. In H.E. Gruber & J.J Vonèche (Eds.) *The Essential Piaget : An interpretive reference and guide*. (1977) New York, Basic Books. pp. 735-743.

! J. Piaget (1968). Structuralism: Introduction and location of problems. Reprinted in H.E. Gruber & J.J Vonèche (Eds.) *The Essential Piaget : An interpretive reference and guide* (1977) New York, Basic Books. (pp. 767-774).

! J. Piaget (1973/1983). Piaget's theory. In W. Kessen (volume Editor), P. Mussen (series editor). *Handbook of Child Psychology*. (4th Edition). Volume 1: History, theory, and methods. New York, Wiley.

Other readings of interest:

! H.G. Furth (1981). *Piaget & Knowledge: Theoretical foundations*. (2nd Edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

! H. Ginsburg & S. Opper (1979). *Piaget's theory of intellectual development* (2nd Edition). Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice-Hall.

! J. Piaget (1973). The affective unconscious and the cognitive unconscious. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 21, 249-261.

! D.F. Bjorklund. (1997). In search of a metatheory for cognitive development (or Piaget is dead and I don't feel so good myself). *Child Development*, 68, 144-148.

! R. Case & Y. Okamoto (1996). The role of central conceptual structures in the development of children's thought. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*. Vol 61, v-265.

! Sternberg, R.J. (1987). A day at developmental downs: Sportscast for race # 2: Neo-Piagetian theories of cognitive development.

International Journal of Psychology, 22, 507-529.

Week Two: Choose either the first or second set of papers to read. Each was chosen because it reflects a different focus and a different take-home message. The first set concerns the discourse between people working within and from without the Piagetian framework to try to understand the processes underlying children's acquisition of conservation of number. Donaldson's experiments were critical in moving Piaget from his central place in cognitive development. The second set concerns the application of Piaget's concept of egocentrism to social relationships (i.e. the concepts of imaginary audience and personal fable) and empirical tests of that application.

Set One

- ! J. Piaget & A. Szeminska (1941). The Child's Conception of Number. Introduction and selected readings reprinted in *The essential Piaget: An interpretive reference and guide*, (1977) 298-329 (H.E. Gruber & J.J. Vonèche, Eds.). Pay particular attention to the introduction and to pages 317-329.
- ! J. McGarrigle & M. Donaldson (1975). Conservation accidents. *Cognition, 3*, 341-350.
- ! I. Neilson & J. Dockrell (1983). Justifying conservation: A reply to McGarrigle & Donaldson. *Cognition, 15*, 277-291.
- ! M. Donaldson (1983). Justifying conservation: comment on Neilson et al. *Cognition, 15*, 293-295.

Set Two

- ! J. Piaget (1924). The principal features of child logic. Reprinted in *The Essential Piaget : An interpretive reference and guide* (1977) H.E. Gruber & J.J Vonèche (Eds.) New York, Basic Books. (pp. 90-110).
- ! D. Elkind (1967). Egocentrism in adolescence. *Child Development, 38*, 1025-1038.
- ! D. Elkind & R. Bowen (1979). Imaginary audience behavior in children and adolescents. *Developmental Psychology, 15*, 38-44.
- ! D.K. Lapsley, M. Milstead, S. Quintana, D. Flannery, R.R. Buss (1986). Adolescent egocentrism and formal operations: Tests of a theoretical assumption. *Developmental Psychology, 22*, 800-807.

Other readings of interest:

- ! P.K. Arlin (1975). Cognitive development in adulthood: A fifth stage? *Developmental Psychology, 11*, 602-606.
- ! P.R. Dasen & A. Heron. (1981). Cross-cultural tests of Piaget's theory. In H.C. Triandis & A. Herson (Eds.). *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology: Developmental Psychology (Vol. 4)*, pp. 295-341.

Unit Three: Freud and his Legacy

- Week One:
- ! R. Muus (1988). The psychoanalytic theory of adolescent development. Chapter 3 in *Theories of Adolescence, Fifth Edition*.
 - ! S. Freud (1925/1961). Some psychical consequences of the anatomical distinction between the sexes. In *The Standard Edition* (volume XIX), pp. 248-258. London: The Hogarth Press.
 - ! Bronfenbrenner, U. (1960). Freudian theories of identification and their derivatives. *Child Development, 31*, 15-40.
 - ! E. Erikson (1963). *Childhood and Society*. (2nd Edition). Chapter Seven "The eight stages of man" pp. 247-274.

Other readings of interest.

- ! B. Azar (October, 1997) Was Freud Right? Maybe, maybe not. <http://www.apa.org/monitor/oct97/freud.html>
- ! R.N. Emde (1992). Individual meaning and increasing complexity. Contributions of Sigmund Freud and René Spitz to developmental psychology. *Developmental Psychology, 28*, 347-359.
- ! C.G. Jung (1961). *Memories, Dreams, and Reflections*. Chapter V (Sigmund Freud) has a fascinating description of Freud and Jung's relationship and supplements his other writings on the subject.

- Week Two:
- ! R.A. Spitz (1945). Hospitalism: An inquiry into the genesis of psychiatric conditions in early childhood. *Psychoanalytic study of the child, 1*, 53-74.
 - ! R.A. Spitz (1946). Hospitalism: A follow-up report on investigation described in Volume 1, 1945. *Psychoanalytic study of the child, 2*, 113-117.

- ! S. Fraiburg, E. Adelson, & V. Shapiro (1975). Ghosts in the nursery: A psychoanalytic approach to the problem of impaired infant-mother relationships. *Journal of Child Psychiatry, 14*, 387-421.
- ! L. S. Newman, K.J. Duff, & R.F. Baumeister. A new look at defensive projection: Thought suppression, accessibility, and biased person perception. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 72*, 980–1001.
- ! J.E. Marcia (1993). The ego identity status approach to ego identity. In J.E. Marcia et. al. *Ego identity: A handbook for psychosocial research*, pp 3-21.

Unit Four: Attachment

- Week One:
- ! J. Belsky & J. Cassidy (1994). Attachment: Theory and Evidence. In M. Rutter & D. Hays (Eds.), Development through life, pp. 373-402. London: Blackwell.
 - ! J. Bowlby (1982). Attachment & Loss. Vol. 1 (2nd Edition). New York: Basic Books.
 - ! M.D. Ainsworth (1989). Attachments beyond infancy. *American Psychologist, 44*, 709-716.
 - ! C. Hazan & P. Shaver (1994). Attachment as an organizational framework for research on close relationships. *Psychological Inquiry, 5*, 1-22.

Other readings of interest.

- ! The Hazan & Shaver piece was the target article for that entire issue of Psychological Inquiry. If you're interested in the piece you might find the discussion (and the authors' response) illuminating.
- ! R. Karen (1994). *Becoming attached: Unfolding the mystery of the infant-mother bond and its impact on later life*. This is a popular press book, but it's quite good and really interesting.

- Week Two
- ! M.D. Ainsworth & S.M. Bell (1970). Attachment, exploration, and separation: Illustrated by the behavior of one-year olds in a strange situation. *Child Development, 41*, 49-67.
 - ! D. C. van den Boom (1995). Do first-year intervention effects endure? Follow-up during toddlerhood of a sample of Dutch irritable infants. *Child Development, 66*, 1798-1816.

- ! M. Main & R. Goldwyn (1984). Interview-based adult attachment classifications: Related to infant-mother and infant-father attachment.
- ! J.A. Simpson, W.S. Rholes, D. Phillips (1996). Conflict in close relationships: An attachment perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71, 899-914.

Other readings of interest.

- ! J.A. Simpson & W.S. Rholes (1997). *Attachment theory and close relationships*. (Edited volume). New York: Guilford Press.
- ! M.H. van IJzendoorn & P.M. Kroonenberg (1988). Cross-cultural patterns of attachment: A meta-analysis of the strange situation. *Child Development*, 59, 147-156.
- ! R. Karen (1994). *Becoming Attached*. New York: Warner Books. This is a very good popular press book on attachment.

Unit Five: Learning Theory & Its Derivatives

- Week One:
- ! R. Muus (1996). The contributions of Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory to an understanding of adolescence. In *Theories of Adolescence*, pp. 281-309.
 - ! A. Bandura (1989). Human agency in social cognitive theory. *American Psychologist*, 44, 1175-1184.
 - ! G.R. Patterson, B.D. DeBaryshe, & E. Ramsey (1989). A developmental perspective on antisocial behavior. *American Psychologist*, 44, 329-335.
 - ! E.E. Maccoby (1990). Gender and relationships: A developmental account. *American Psychologist*, 45, 513-520.
- Week Two:
- ! K. Bussey & A. Bandura, A. (1992). Self-regulatory mechanisms governing gender development. *Child Development*, 63, 1236-1250.
 - ! A. Bandura, C. Barbaranelli, G.V. Caprara, & C. Pastorelli (1996). Multifaceted impact of self-efficacy beliefs on academic functioning. *Child Development*, 67, 1206-1222.
 - ! T.J. Dishion, K.M. Spracklen, D.W. Andrews, & G.R. Patterson (1996). Deviancy training in male adolescents friendships. *Behavior Therapy*, 27, 373-390.
 - ! T.J. Dishion, G.R. Patterson, M. Stoolmiller, & M.L. Skinner.

Family, school, and behavioral antecedents to early adolescent involvement with antisocial peers. *Developmental Psychology*, 27, 172-180.

- ! C.N. Jacklin. & E. Maccoby (1978). Social behavior at 33 months in same-sex and mixed-sex dyads. *Child Development*, 49, 557-569.

Other readings of interest.

- ! T.J. Dishion, G.R. Patterson, K.A. Kavanagh (1992). An experimental test of the coercion model: Linking theory, measurement, and intervention. In J. McCord, R. Ernest, et al. (Ed.). *Preventing antisocial behavior: Interventions from birth through adolescence.* (pp. 253-282). New York, Guilford Press.

Lifespan Development

- Week One:
- ! P.B. Baltes (1997). On the incomplete architecture of human ontogeny: Selection, optimization, and compensation as foundation of developmental theory. *American Psychologist*, 52, 366-380.
 - ! G.H. Elder (1997). The life course and human development. In *Mussen Handbook*
 - ! K.W. Schaie & S.L. Willis (forthcoming). A stage theory model of adult cognitive development revisited. In B. Rubinstein, M. Moss, & M. Kleban (Eds). *The many dimensions of aging: Essays in honor of M. Powell Lawton.* New York: Springer.
- Week Two:
- ! Smith, J. Staudinger, U.M. & Baltes, P.B. (1994). Occupational settings facilitative of wisdom-related knowledge: The sample case of clinical psychologists. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 62, 989-1000.
 - ! X. Ge, F.O. Lorenz, R.D. Conger, G.H. Elder, & R.L. Simons. (1994). Trajectories of stressful life events and depressive symptoms during adolescence. *Developmental Psychology*, 30, 467-483.
 - ! Schaie, K.W. (1984). Midlife influences upon intellectual functioning in old age. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 7, 463-478.
 - ! Werner, E.E. (1989). High-risk children in young adulthood: A longitudinal study from birth to 32 years. *American Journal of*

