

Rhodes College
Psychology 229
Dr. Marsha Walton
Office hours:

Fall, 1998
Principles of Development: Conception through Middle Childhood
121 Clough
Mondays 3:00-5:00 drop-in (no appointments)
Wednesdays, Fridays 3:00-5:00 by appointment

Course Objectives

Knowledge Objectives: You will be expected to become familiar with current theoretical issues and with research data concerning the development of infants and children. These will be applied to practical problems of child welfare. We will critically examine the potential for scientific theory and research to contribute to our efforts to create a social and physical environment that facilitates human development.

Value/Attitude/Commitment Objectives: It is my hope that this course will make us all more aware of the needs of children in our own community, and of the extent to which those needs are not being met. Work in this course should make it clear how much needs to be done, and also how much difference it makes if we do even a little. I want you to leave the course with a recognition that we must all take responsibility for the welfare of the next generation, and with a sense of hopefulness and a belief that your efforts can make an important contribution.

Student Skills to be Developed: The assignments and the use of class time in this course focus on exercising and improving the following abilities:

- the ability to apply concepts and theoretical constructs to practical problems
- the ability to read primary research in different areas of developmental psychology
- the ability to evaluate empirical evidence and to assess its relevance to theoretical and applied problems
- the ability to make insightful observations of children in natural settings
- the ability to organize pertinent scientific evidence and to formulate one's own thoughts to write a literature review paper in standard professional style.
- the ability to present research orally in standard professional style.

Course Focus: Increasing attention has been given in the last decade to problems associated with violence against children, violence in the presence of children, and violence by children. We will focus much of our attention in this course on gathering information pertinent to these three questions:

- What are the developmental consequences of exposure to violence?
- What are the developmental precursors to violent and aggressive behaviors?
- What efforts have been made to reduce the threats to children caused by various forms of violence?

Required Texts

Cole, M. and Cole, S. R. (1993). *The development of children, 2nd Edition*. New York: Scientific American Books.

Hart, B., & Risley, T. R. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

National Issues Forum (1997). *The troubled American family: Which way out of the storm?* Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

National Issues Forum (1997). *Contested values: Tug-of-war in the schoolyard*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

National Issues Forum (1997). *Our nation's kids: Is something wrong?* Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

Rosnow, R. L., & Rosnow, M. (1992). *Writing papers in Psychology, 2nd Edition*. Belmont, Ca.: Wadsworth.

Thorne, B. (1993). *Gender play: Girls and boys in school*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Course Requirements

Service Journals (20 % of final grade)

You will be required to spend a minimum of 10 hours during the semester doing volunteer work with children - - at least an hour a week for ten weeks of the semester. There are many possibilities for a variety of kinds of work in central city schools, churches, hospitals, or social service agencies. You are encouraged to find a way to match your own talents and interests with needs of children in the community.

You will be required to keep a journal reflecting on your volunteer experiences. Entries in the journal should relate experiences to course readings, to in-class discussions, and to other material you collect relevant to this course. As a class, we will call on the experience of students in their service sites in discussions of public policy and socio-cultural issues that relate to the welfare of children.

Journal entries should be made at least weekly and must be typed and dated. Journals will be turned in at midterm, and will be due at 5:00 p.m. on the last class day. Late journals will be penalized one-half letter grade per day.

I will evaluate service journals according to three criteria:

- quality and insightfulness of the descriptions, observations of the service site
- appropriate use of course concepts, vocabulary, and research to explain and elaborate on observations
- quality of critical analysis of the problems faced at the service site, and the relevant social policy issues

Violence Project (40% of final grade)

Students will work together in groups of two or three to research some aspect of the problem of violence. Each research team will endeavor to do a thorough review of the relevant research literature, and then to discuss the issues raised by the evidence gathered. The work will be reported in two forms.

Class Presentation (20%): In the week before the Thanksgiving break, each group will have half a class period to report the results of their research. Powerpoint software will be used to present data graphically and considerable attention should be given to producing a polished and professional presentation. All students in the class will be required to give feedback to each presenter.

Research Paper (20%): Members of the research team may choose to collaborate or to work separately on a written report (approximately 3000 words). This paper must be written in APA style, and the author or authors should pose a thesis and use the research evidence gathered to support that thesis. Papers will be due by 5:00 on November 23, and there will be a one-half letter grade per day penalty for late papers. There will be a full letter grade penalty for papers that are not written in strict accordance with APA style guidelines.

Examination (20% of final grade)

During the term, I will give three objective and short-answer self-tests, one at the end of each of the first three units. (There will be no self-test for the last unit.) You are strongly encouraged to study for these

and to take them as a closed-book, timed exam, but you may do so on your own. These exams will not contribute to the course grade, but they are important ways to let you know whether you are reading and learning the material adequately. If you complete the test by the next class period after they are distributed, I will score it for you and let you know what your grade would be. Otherwise, you can use your texts and discuss answers with other students to score your own tests.

During the college-scheduled final exam period, I will give a cumulative exam, similar in form to the self-tests.

Class Participation (20% of final grade)

About a third of the class sessions in Psychology 229 are discussion classes, and many of the lecture sessions will include discussion. Your participation in these discussions will be critical to the success of the class. My assessment of your participation in discussion classes will be based not only on how clearly you express your own ideas, but also on how well you elicit the ideas of your classmates. Be attentive to opportunities to ask follow-up questions, and to respond to or elaborate on the ideas expressed by others in class.

We will often be discussing controversial issues of considerable importance to us all. Please remember that a good discussion is not necessarily an argument. We certainly will have arguments in class, but our overriding goal is to increase our mutual understanding of the issues, not to prove one another right or wrong.

One way to make good contributions to class discussions is to stay alert to relevant news or commentary on the issues we will be discussing. It will often be appropriate and useful to bring in news clippings or material that you have read for other classes. Needless to say, good class participation will always require that you have done the assigned reading for the course thoughtfully.

If you must be absent on a class discussion day, you should write a short essay (under 500 words) describing your thoughts on the topic of the discussion. If you are absent on a lecture day, you can get notes from another student.

Part of the class participation grade will be determined by the quality of the feedback you give your classmates on their presentations. Absences during these presentations, therefore, will be especially damaging, and cannot be made up.

Honor Code

All work in this course should be pledged. Students are encouraged to collaborate and to help each other as much as possible on all assignments except while taking the final examination. Sources used should be cited in accordance with APA style.

The following pledges must be signed for each assignment, excepting the final exam:

- This work reflects my own ideas and my current understanding of this issue.

For co-authored papers, and for the presentation, each group author should also sign the following:

- I have contributed my fair share to the work on this project.

Class Schedule

	Day	Date	Reading	Class Activity	Assignment Du
1	W	8/26		Introductions, Project Assignments	
2	F	8/28	CC1	D: How are humans unique?	
3	M	8/31	HR 1-2, T 1-2	D: Research ethics, ethical issues for service projects	Service project preference
4	W	9/2	CC2	L: Behavioral Genetics	
5	F	9/4		Service learning & violence projects.	
Labor Day					
6	W	9/9	CC3	L: The Epigenesis of Sex	
7	F	9/11		L: Birthing, Bonding, Breastfeeding	Self Test 1
8	M	9/14	CC4	L: BBB contd.	
9	W	9/16		L: BBB contd.	
10	F	9/18		Workshop: Researching Violence	
11	M	9/21	CC5	L: Temperament and the Epigenetic Landscape	
12	W	9/23	HR 3-4	L: Piaget and the Philosopher Child	
13	F	9/25		Babies	
14	M	9/28	CC6	L: The Psychodynamics of Gender	
15	W	9/30	HR 5-6	L: Radical Mothering: The Ethological Parent	
16	F	10/3		Service project reports	
17	M	10/5	CC7	D: What do humans need?	
18	W	10/7	HR 7-8	D: Spoiling children.	
19	F	10/9	NIF	D: The troubled American family.	Self Test 2
20	M	10/12	CC8	L: Sounds and Sense	
21	W	10/14	HR9	D: How to teach language to humans.	
22	F	10/16		Service project reports	Service Journals
Fall Break					
23	W	10/21	CC9	L: Bringing Children into Culture	
24	F	10/23		Preschoolers	
25	M	10/26	CC10	L: Becoming Gay or Straight	
26	W	10/28	T 3-5	L: Theories of Gender	
27	F	10/30		Service project reports	
28	M	11/2	CC11	L: Engineer in the Nursery: The Behaviorist Parent	
29	W	11/4	T 6-8	D: Daycare and Parental Employment	
30	F	11/6		Workshop: Powerpoint Presentations	Self Test 3
31	M	11/9	CC12	L: How to Destroy a Child's Curiosity	
32	W	11/11	CC13	L: Say it's a Lie or I'll Punch You: Naïve Epistemology in Classroom Conflict Episodes	
33	F	11/13	NIF	D: Contested values in the schoolyard	
34	M	11/16		P: Culturally Condoned Violence: Corporal Punishment of Children P: Criminal Violence Against Children	
35	W	11/18		P: Media Violence and Child Development P: Impact of Adult Violence on Children	
36	F	11/20		P: Development of Hyperaggressive Children P: Teaching Peace: Conflict Resolution Programs	

37	M	11/23		Panel Discussion with Fourth Graders	Violence Papers
Thanksgiving Holiday					

Class schedule, contd.

38	M	11/30	CC14	L: XYZ:PDQ! Social Breaches in Middle Childhood	
39	W	12/2		L: "This is about a Fight: Narratives of Central City School Children	
40	F	12/4	T 9	D: Becoming gendered.	
41	M	12/7		L: Jumprope Rhymes, Ghoulis Tales and Becoming Blood Brothers (Fingers Crossed): Preserving the Culture of Childhood	
42	W	12/9		Course Closings, Exam Preparation	Service Journals
M 12/14, 8:30 am				Final Exam	

Note: Classes labeled 'D' are discussion classes. Come prepared to participate.
 Classes labeled 'L' are lecture classes.
 Classes labeled 'P' are student presentations.
 'CC' refers to the Cole and Cole book.
 'HR' refers to the Hart and Risley book.
 'T' refers to the Thorne book.
 'NIF' refers to the National Issues Forum publications.