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PSYC 230-01, Principles of Development: Adolescence and Young Adulthood, Spring 2008

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Adolescent Development

Instructor: Dr. Kathy Russell

Office: 121 Clough

Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Open hour: 10:00 – 11:00 am
Or by appointment.

Email: russellk@rhodes.edu

Class Time: TR 12:30-1:45, room 313

Required Text:

Cobb, N. J. (2007). *Adolescence: Continuity, change, and diversity*. (6th edition.) Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Garbarino, J. (1999). *Lost boys: Why our sons turn violent and how we can save them*. New York: Free Press.

Rosnow, R. L., & Rosnow, M. (1992). *Writing Papers in Psychology*. Belmont, Ca.: Wadsworth.

Way, N. (1998). *Everyday courage: The lives and stories of urban teenagers*. New York: New York University Press.

Additional Reading: Any additional readings and a copy of this syllabus can be found on the academic file server: \\Fileserver1\acad_dept_pgm\Psychology\Russell_Kathryn\Public\PSYC_230-01_S08

Brief Course Description

Students will be expected to acquire a familiarity with current theories of adolescence and early adult development, and to evaluate the evidence relevant to them. Significant attention will be paid to the theoretical and methodological considerations that guide ongoing research in these areas, and to the implications of developmental research for social policy that affects the welfare of adolescents. The assignments and the use of class time in this course focus on exercising skills required of professionals in adolescent psychology. These include:

- Learning to formulate your own questions and hypotheses in professionally sophisticated formats, and learning to find relevant information for addressing those questions. Students will be encouraged to give special attention to course material that stimulates their own interests and questions.
- The ability to contribute to a productive discussion both by expressing your own ideas and by facilitating the development and expression of others' ideas. Students should be mindful of preparing themselves to join an important national discourse concerning the well-being and the education of our youth.
- The ability to find and evaluate a body of scientific research relevant to a well-defined question, and to write a review of those findings in a standard professional style.

There are three major themes that will continually come into focus throughout this course. These will come into our conversations as we consider every aspect of development.

- Most theorists recognize the primary psychological tasks of adolescence are organized around the development of something we call “identity.” We will be occupied frequently with considerations of what we mean by identity development, and of how this construct relates to the various “problems” of adolescence and to our efforts to improve the well-being and the education of our youth.
- It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that gender and sexuality are pre-eminent features in the world of adolescence. Although some theorists believe that gender identity is established years earlier, no one disputes the notion that the adoption of gendered roles and coming to terms with sexuality and gender are critical challenges for this part of the life cycle. Many of the experiences, opportunities, and outcomes of adolescent development may be different in interesting ways for girls and boys. Few topics in adolescent development can be understood without considering how they relate to questions of gender and identity.
- We will find that ‘adolescence’ has very different meanings depending on the socio-cultural and historical context. We will examine ways that adolescent development is influenced by (a) media messages and general beliefs about what teens are like and how they can be expected to behave, and (b) cultural norms that specify the appropriate times for economic independence, marriage, childbearing, etc. The experiences, opportunities, and outcomes of adolescent development vary markedly and in interesting ways for individuals in different ethnic and racial groups and for teens with different cultural traditions. We must be careful not to talk about “adolescent development” without asking “Which adolescents?”

Panel Exams

(30% of final grade) Two oral examinations will be conducted as panel discussion. Students will come in groups of three. Each student will respond to a discussion question, and the other two students will have an opportunity to elaborate or expand on their response. The grade will be based on how thoroughly and thoughtfully you responded to your own question (100 points) and how insightful and helpful your comments are on your classmates’ responses (50 points).

Research Paper

(25% of final grade) Students will select a topic early in the term and begin to review the relevant scientific literature in a paper (approximately 3000 words) written in accordance with APA style. The Rosnow and Rosnow handbook will serve as a guide for format and style, and also offers useful suggestions for selecting a topic, developing a thesis, conducting library research, and writing. You should consult with me about your paper early in the term. As you work on your research paper, be attentive to the development of the following skills, all of which are critical to our discipline and to many others:

- The ability to develop your own questions about an area of research
- The ability to evaluate previous literature that pertains to your questions
- The ability to develop an argument or conclusions concerning a specific topic

Students are encouraged to collaborate in pairs on research papers and to co-author their final paper. Collaboration is not required, but many students find they learn more from working together. Most of the professional work in our discipline is collaborative, and most of the papers you read co-authored. Topic statements, preliminary bibliographies, thesis statements, and organizational frameworks will be due during the semester, and each will count towards the final paper grade. A 1 point penalty will be deducted for each day these are late. Final papers are due in class on April 24th. There will be a 10

point penalty for every day that papers are late that will accrue every day at 3:30. Final papers will be evaluated according to the following point system:

- Early Preparation (50 points)
 - Preliminary Topic and Bibliography due 1/31, 5 points
 - Research Bibliography due 2/7, 5 points
 - Preliminary Thesis due 2/21, 5 points
 - Preliminary Organizational Framework due 2/21, 5 points
 - Annotated Bibliography due 3/18, 10 points
 - Revised Thesis due 4/8, 10 points
 - Revised Organizational Framework due 4/8, 10 points
- Final Research Paper due 4/24 (200 points)
 - Library Research Skills, 25 points
 - Adequate coverage of current scholarly journals and books on the topic
 - Conceptual Work, 65 points
 - Focus
 - Recognition and discussion of material is clear and sensible
 - Clear statement of problem, clear statement of thesis and conclusions
 - Conceptual Framework
 - Organization of material is clear and sensible
 - Relates to developmental theory and conceptual issues
 - Previous Research, 60 points
 - Previous research is presented clearly and accurately
 - Adequate attention to operationalization and to research procedures
 - Appropriate inferences or generalizations made from research findings
 - Original Contributions and Creative Thought, 30 points
 - Evaluation of previous work
 - Proposing research that needs to be done
 - Pointing out aspects of the problem that have been overlooked or oversimplified
 - Style, 20 points
 - Clarity of writing
 - Mastery of APA style

Research paper assignments and research reports (see below) should be typed, printed in black ink, double spaced, in 12-point font, either Arial or Times font, and with one-inch page margins.

Research Reports

(20% of final grade) Twice during the term, students will prepare a report of a study they have read pertaining to their research paper topic. Each student will write a brief (500-1000 word) summary of the article, partly as practice in reviewing empirical research for the research paper. On the day that these reports are due, each student will be given 5 minutes to describe the study to the class. Late reports will suffer a full letter grade penalty for every day they are late, and you will still be expected to give a class summary after you turn in your report. Each report is worth 100 points. Research reports may **not** be co-authored. Even if you are working with a partner on your final research paper, you each must select different articles as the source for your research reports. These reports will be prepared in the following format:

- Complete reference information for the article, in APA style.
- Description and explanation of the research question.
 - Describe the authors' research question, the hypothesis they tested, and/or their purpose in doing the project.

- Description of the method.
 - Participants: detail the number and relevant characteristics of the research participants (e.g. age, education, recruitment, etc.)
 - Procedure: Using the vocabulary reviewed in chapter 14 of the Cobb text book, describe the design of the research. Is it an experiment, quasi-experiment or correlational study? Is it longitudinal, cross-sectional, or sequential? What types of variables are assessed and how are the operationalized or measured (e.g. self-report, direct observation, etc.)
- Description of results.
 - Give a brief summary of the research results. You may attach photocopied tables or figures if this helps explain the findings. You do not need to report all of the exact values of each of the statistics, but may include some of the primary numerical findings if this is helpful.
- Conclusions and evaluation.
 - Summarize the authors' conclusions and consider how it relates to other material we have read or to the thesis of your paper. How valid do you consider the study and how worthwhile?

Reading Notes

(15% of final grade) As you read for this course, you are encouraged to monitor and to make note of your own knowledge, understanding, feelings, and questions relevant to the material. There are four types of notes that you should be making as you read:

- **FACTS:** Facts are things that you know because of the reading. It is an empirical assertion that is backed up by substantial evidence, so that there is general agreement among experts of its validity. A definition is not a fact. You should note the facts that you consider most interesting or most important. Facts can be important for many different reasons. Which facts do you expect to remember after reading the text? Facts that you knew before the reading or that most people know without taking adolescent development should not be included, even if they are important and memorable.
- **CONCEPTS:** Concepts are ideas you understand because of the reading. A concept is a way of thinking about something. They may include explanations and explanatory constructs or approaches to studying or understanding development. As with the facts, you should select concepts you consider important.
- **REACTIONS:** Reactions are emotions you felt as you were doing the reading. Your own reactions (e.g. fascination, anger, sorrow, awe, puzzlement, etc.) are important guides to your interests and are significantly related to your memory and understanding. You should record both your reaction and briefly what statement or issue provoked your reaction.
- **QUESTIONS:** Questions are one of the most important aspects of this course. What questions are you formulating as you read the material? The ability to ask your own questions as you approach new material is an essential characteristic of a liberally educated person, and one you should deliberately cultivate.

For readings from the Cobb book, you should turn in reading notes consisting of 4 FACTS, 4 CONCEPTS, 2 REACTIONS, and 2 QUESTIONS. These reading notes will be worth 10 points for each reading. For readings from the Way and Garbarino books you should turn in 2 CONCEPTS, 2 REACTIONS, and 2 QUESTIONS. These reading notes will be worth 5 points for each reading. Reading notes should be typed, single-spaced, and in 12-point font, Arial or Times. For most readings, you should be able to fit all your reading notes on 1 to 1½ pages. Reading notes should be turned in at the beginning of the class period for which that reading is assigned. You do not have to turn in reading notes for every reading, but may turn them in until you have accumulated 150 points. The total number of points possible is 225 (you may not turn in reading notes for the epilogue in the Way book). So you should plan on turning in reading notes for about two-thirds of the assigned readings.

When you turn in reading notes, you should bring two copies to class. One copy will be turned in to me and one will be given to one of your classmates. Each student will keep a folder of reading notes that should include both their own notes and those they receive from classmates. You should try to have at least one set of reading notes (either your own or a classmates) for each reading. Be sure to receive reading notes from your classmates over the course of the semester. The purposes of the reading notes assignment are:

- To encourage students to take responsibility for deciding what material in the course is important, and serves their own educational goals.
- To help students nurture the professional skill of formulating your own questions.
- To help me know what is interesting and important to each student in the class, and to help you get to know each other.
- To help students keep a record of the most important things they are learning. This record will be useful as you prepare for the panel exams.
- To encourage students to read material on time, and therefore to get the most out of our class meetings.

Class Discussion

(10% of final grade) It is critical to the success of this class that students read thoughtfully and critically and spend time preparing to contribute to class discussions. You should bring copies of each reading to class, along with your notes and questions or comments, prepared for discussion. Being a good contributor to class discussion does not typically mean being the person who talks the most. It should be the goal of all of us to see that each of us has an opportunity to express ideas. If there are members of the class community whose ideas we do not hear, this should be seen as a problem for all of us and we should all be thinking about ways to include those individuals in our conversations. Class participation grades are positively affected by contributions that highlight or encourage the contributions of other students. Instead of attendance, I will keep track of who is contributing to class discussions according to these guidelines. 10% of your final grade (100 points) will be class participation in discussions. For this reason, excessive absences (excused or otherwise) are something you should avoid. If you are an athlete and anticipate missing several classes, you should speak with me before the scheduled absence.

Honor Code

Explicit details concerning honor code violations are listed in your college handbook. Honor code violations will not be tolerated and will be reported immediately to the appropriate authority. Please review the Rhodes College academic dishonesty policies. Since you will be required to submit written reports for this course pay special attention to the section on plagiarism and pledge all of your work. I value collaborative work highly, and I believe that students frequently learn most when they work together on assignments. I will not ask you to pledge that you have neither given nor received help on any assignment. However, I will ask you to be very attentive and careful to give credit and to acknowledge those who have helped you. An acknowledgment foot note to your final research paper should credit those people who helped edit and proofread, as well as those who shared ideas and made substantive suggestions.

All written work in this course (excluding reading notes) should include the following two pledges:

"I pledge that the above paper reflects my own thinking and my current understanding of this material."

"I pledge that the word count for this essay/paper is _____."

In addition, for coauthored papers, both authors should sign the following pledge:

"I pledge that I have contributed my fair share to this project."

Class Announcements

The information on this syllabus is tentative and is subject to change. Announcements concerning the class will be made in class and/or via e-mail. Therefore, if you attend class and check your Rhodes e-mail account frequently, you will be sure to be up-to-date.

Course Schedule

The following schedule of topics is tentative. Panel Exam and assignment dates will not change. C indicates the Cobb text book; W indicates the Way book; G indicates the Garbarino book; RR indicates the Rosnow and Rosnow book.

	Class Topic	Readings	Assignment Due
January 10	Introductions; Overview of Themes		
15	Formulating questions, Defining adolescents, Questions from Malcolm's Stories	C1, W3	
17	Theories of development	C2, W1	
22	How we study adolescents	C14, W2	
24	Changes of puberty; Writing papers in psychology	C3, RR1	
29	Identity and intimacy	C5	
31	Voice and silence	W4	Prelim Topic & Bibliography
February 5	Sex and Romance	C6, RR2	
7	Reading & Critiquing Research		Research Bibliography
12	Peer influences	C8	Research Reports
14	Friendship and betrayal	W5	
19	Family influences	C7	
21	Teens of soccer moms and ghetto moms; Teenage moms and menopausal moms	W6	Preliminary Thesis Prelim Framework
26	Adolescent Pregnancy (review C6)	RR3-4	
28	Midterm Panel Exams – No Regular Class		
March 4 & 6	Spring Break – <i>No Class</i>		
11	Intellectual development	C4	
13	Academic success and failure	C9, W8	
18	Work, careers and college	C10	Annotated Bibliography
20	Easter Break – <i>No Class</i>		
25	Moral development and Values	C11	
27	Injustice; Epidemic of violence	W7, G1	Research Reports
April 1	Shame and depression in boys	G2	
3	Video: 'Tough Guise'	W9	
8	Problems in Adolescence	C12	Revised Thesis Revised Framework
10	Implications of Early Vulnerability	G3	
15	Knowing evil too soon	G4, G5, RR6	
17	Prevention: What the lost boys needed	G6, G7	
22	Reclaiming lost boys; How adolescents cope with stress	C13, G8, W epilogue	
24	Most interesting thing I learned writing my paper		Research Paper
29, 8:30am	Final Panel Exams		