

I *This volume brings together leading scholars to describe important new directions in research on child and adolescent development. This introductory chapter places their articles in the context of three larger trends in the field.*

Developmental Horizons: Legacies and Prospects in Child and Adolescent Development

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The field of child and adolescent development has a short history, if we consider it to have originated with the Child Study movement of the late nineteenth century. But already in that time it has seen a number of shifts in theoretical directions. Each new theoretical approach has grappled with its own issues and left its own legacy. At the same time, every approach since then has also sought to answer a number of common questions: To what extent are children's and adolescents' development shaped by the culture in which they grow up? What are the most influential developmental contexts: parents, friends, media, or something else? How do children develop the capacity to control their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors? The aim in this introductory chapter is to survey future prospects for developmental theory and research addressing these common questions.

As the series itself takes a new direction with our assuming the editorship, we are delighted to present this first volume, which looks broadly at some of the new directions today in our field. The volume brings together a group of cutting-edge developmental scholars with diverse areas of expertise. We have arranged their chapters into three parts, pertaining to culture, developmental contexts, and emotional and cognitive self-regulation.

William Damon, the founding editor, starts the volume off in Chapter Two with retrospective reflections on the dramatic changes in the field since the start of the series in 1978. He concludes with a prediction and challenge: that an important horizon for the field is formulating theories

that integrate domains of developmental studies. Developing integrations of this type—between self and culture, development and context, emotion and cognition, among other things—is also an underlying theme across these diverse chapters.

Self-in-Culture

In recent years, the perspectives and analytic repertoire of developmental scholars have expanded. To the long-standing nomothetic and idiographic approaches to human development, we have added a cultural one. Now our descriptions and explanations of thought and behavior address not only human universals and individual uniqueness but also the diversity of peoples.

The cultural approach is not completely new to psychology. At various points since its founding, psychologists have cast an occasional glimpse at the role that culture plays in development. For example, in the 1860s Wilhelm Wundt formulated a program of “folk psychology” (*Völkerpsychologi* in German) to complement his far-better-known experimental psychology. Folk psychology was to be the study of how human mental processes develop in historical context, and Wundt produced a ten-volume work on the languages, myths, and customs of diverse cultures. G. Stanley Hall, one of Wundt’s American followers, also incorporated information on cultural customs into his landmark 1904 volumes on adolescence. In Russia, Lev Vygotsky, in the 1920s and early 1930s, conceived of a developmental psychology that portrays the person in sociocultural context. However, these early flashes of attention to culture, along with others that followed, never consolidated into a coherent, full-fledged cultural approach.

Although most textbooks still do not give the cultural approach a place of its own next to the nomothetic and idiographic ones, there is no doubt that recent years have seen the ascent of such an approach in psychology. Today’s world brings people of differing cultures into vastly more contact with one another in real and virtual space than did the worlds of Wundt, Hall, and Vygotsky. With this expansion in intercultural contact, developmental scholars too have expanded their perspective. Culture may not become the single most important construct of research in developmental psychology (as it is in the new area of cultural psychology), but the study of how culture intersects with development has become vital and is likely to remain so.

Travel has broadened our horizon, but we now need to ask “Where to next?” in researching how the self develops in culture. The four chapters in Part Two of this volume that are centrally concerned with this question offer a host of keen and constructive new insights. Collectively, they demonstrate that when we conduct research with culturally diverse groups we need to be wary of setting out with a suitcase already full of theories and methods developed for one group (often the American middle class). We need not

leave with nothing, but there has to be room for discovering new and positive conceptions of developmental means, ends, transitions, and phases.

The need to conceptualize cultural groups in sophisticated and positive ways is a key refreshing message in Chapter Three, by Marcela Raffaelli, Gustavo Carlo, Miguel A. Carranza, and Gloria E. Gonzales-Kruger. Focusing on Latinos in the United States, they take as a starting observation the fact that currently 17 percent of American children and adolescents are Latino, and projections suggest that by 2050 this number will double. They point out that this sizeable sector of the U.S. population cannot be lumped together easily. Latino groups are highly diverse on factors such as immigration status, educational achievement, home language, household composition, and degree of acculturation, as well as nation and cultural group of origin. Future research needs to differentiate factors such as these. Raffaelli and her colleagues also call for a focus on positive development among Latino groups. The suggestion is not that we ignore problem behaviors but that we see them as one part of a much larger research agenda to develop a model of “Latino youth development.” In addition to being important in its own right, the study of diverse Latino groups may open up a trove of valuable insights, for example on the positive functions of respect for elders and family connectedness.

Chapter Four, by Joan G. Miller, is a lucid elaboration on the need for future research to consider that children and adolescents who are members of different cultural groups grow up with diverse developmental aims. Miller surveys cross-cultural research in three areas: understanding of self and others, moral development, and attachment. For each area, she notes how work with children in such places as India, Japan, and Puerto Rico shines a light on psychological concepts to which American psychology has paid little or no attention. To preview just one of Miller’s several thought-provoking examples, research has shown that as they grow older European American children and adolescents describe themselves and others increasingly in terms of such personality characteristics as extraverted, shy, and funny, whereas children and adolescents in India increasingly use role-based descriptors, such as daughter, mother, and uncle. Miller’s central point is that children and adolescents across the globe are not headed toward one uniform set of psychological end goals. Her chapter also gives rise to complex questions regarding intercultural understanding. For example, how do developmental scholars (and people more generally) reconcile goals that may stand in some opposition to one another, such as individual authenticity and being dutiful, or independence and respect for elders?

T. S. Saraswathi (Chapter Five) adds new meaning to notions of independence and interdependence, and her chapter constitutes a fitting companion piece to Miller’s. Saraswathi gives an account of how varying psychological goals are in focus during the four phases of the Hindu Indian conception of the life course. Fulfilling role-based obligations is at a premium during the first two phases of being a student and householder (as is

also noted by Miller). A transcendental independence or release of the Hindu self, the “Atman,” is at the heart of the next two phases, retirement and renunciation of society. The latter goal of release of the self, in particular, is outside mainstream Western psychology but clearly central to the lives of Hindu Indians—and undoubtedly people in other places as well. Saraswathi suggests a future research program where the phases of the life course are placed in a cultural context.

If the end goals of developmental phases vary cross-culturally, it should not be surprising if developmental processes—the means to the goals—also vary cross-culturally. What may be more surprising, however, is how these processes involve everyday events that are habitual and routine. According to Peggy J. Miller and Sarah C. Mangelsdorf (Chapter Six), one of these everyday events is personal storytelling, particularly stories in which children hear their actions recounted. In their eloquent chapter, they offer a new integration of research on attachment and cross-cultural research on communication. They propose that in-depth understanding of the self requires focusing on how self-concepts develop out of social relationships and how those relationships routinely involve communication and narration pertaining to the self. Everywhere parents tell stories to and about their children, but which stories get told, when, to whom, and how they are told varies. Thus, Miller and Mangelsdorf write: “Wherever it occurs, personal storytelling takes on local color, absorbing values, affective stances, and moral orientations. As young children participate routinely in their community’s version of personal storytelling, they learn to interpret their experiences in culture-specific terms, carving out culture-specific selves.” Miller and Mangelsdorf focus on storytelling. However, their argument that everyday routines are far from mundane and instead reflect crucial cultural beliefs can easily apply to a host of other daily routines: sleeping arrangements, how infants are carried, cell phone use, meal times, and others.

Development-in-Contexts

Developmental research on the contexts of children’s and adolescents’ lives has gradually changed in two important respects, one quantitative and the other qualitative. The quantitative change is that we have greatly expanded the number of contexts that we address. The psychodynamic and behavioristic approaches that dominated the first half of the twentieth century focused on a limited number of contexts. Although holding highly divergent conceptions of the mechanisms involved in bringing about healthy and unhealthy psychological development, the two approaches shared a prominent focus on the role of the family context (especially parents) in children’s lives. During the last few decades, however, developmental psychologists have addressed an increasing number of other contexts. This change is well exemplified in Bronfenbrenner’s ecological approach, which in one fell theoretical swoop added myriad relationships, groups, and

networks to the vista of developmental scholars. With the ecological approach came new attention to such contexts as day care, the legal system, and overarching cultural belief systems, as well as interconnections among these contexts. Even now, we are adding new contexts. For example, current developmental research increasingly examines media and after-school and community programs. The developmental field, then, has seen what we might term a “pluralization of contexts.”

In addition to this quantitative change, an important qualitative change has occurred within the field. We have moved away from a one-way, top-down conception of how contexts form children and adolescents to a two-way conception that recognizes how children and adolescents also bring much into their contexts. Freud and Watson provided vivid accounts of how parents and other socialization agents influence children. They had less to say about how children influence their surroundings. Watson’s famous and particularly strong statement—that if given “a dozen healthy infants . . . I’ll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select”—sounds exaggerated to today’s developmental scholars. Researchers now address how children and adolescents bring feelings, concepts, motives, and abilities to their contexts. A new perspective has emerged, then, that draws attention to contexts as being co-constructed.

In Part Three, we include chapters on four contexts that are prominent in the lives of today’s children and adolescents. Two of these contexts, media and civic organizations, are of fairly recent interest to developmental scholars, whereas the other two, family and friends, have been of interest for a longer time. Taken together, the chapters highlight important thoughts and behaviors that children take from *and* bring to the contexts within which they develop.

The central message of L. Monique Ward’s engaging Chapter Seven is that media have come to play a prominent and powerful part in the lives of children and adolescents. According to Ward, American children who are between eight and eighteen years old currently spend almost eight hours a day on media, watching TV, listening to music, playing video games, and using the Internet. To use the creative language of Ward’s chapter title, all of this media use has serious implications for the “minds, bodies, and deeds” of contemporary children and adolescents. Drawing on a substantial body of interdisciplinary research, she argues that media influence deep-seated attitudes, feelings, and behaviors, notably body image, self-esteem, and sexual activities. Comparing Ward’s chapter with Miller and Mangelsdorf’s (Chapter Six), we might think of media as a form of public storytelling that, just like personal storytelling, has become routine with profound attendant influences on the self. Although Ward focuses principally on the path of influence from media to youth, other researchers have shown that these transactions also involve two-way processes, particularly in young people’s engagement with new interactive media (Sharma, 2004).

James Youniss and Daniel Hart point to the favorable impact for both youth and society of adolescents' engagement in civic organizations. The authors of Chapter Eight describe several community programs where adolescents come together and, often in collaboration with adults, work toward common civic goals. Youniss and Hart also document how such successful youth civic engagement in part draws on psychological competencies that adolescents bring into the context and in part strengthens and fosters new competencies. On the basis of these and other research findings, Youniss and Hart draw out several perspicacious implications for future developmental research and social policy. At the center of these implications is a positive conception of adolescents as collaborative rather than solitary, creative rather than destructive, and purposeful rather than apathetic.

Jacqueline J. Goodnow, like Youniss and Hart, argues in Chapter Nine that socialization involves far more than children learning the lessons of older generations. Focusing on family, she observes that "psychologists . . . seem prone to see life as determined only by 'how the twig is bent,' and that proneness calls for closer analysis than it has so far received." Goodnow's point is twofold. She emphasizes that family socialization is important beyond the early, or "twig," phase of a child's life, and that family socialization involves learning not only agreement but also resistance, negotiation, and compromise in interacting with older generations. She calls for research that examines the extent to which these diverse socialization outcomes depend on factors such as the issue at hand (for example, household chores, calling a family member by first name, or doing school work), the person in question (a grandmother or a sibling), and the culture under investigation (for instance, whether more or less collectivistic). What Goodnow accomplishes in her chapter is to show how family—an entity of long-standing interest to developmental scholars—can be both a top-down and a bottom-up developmental context from infancy through adulthood.

Just as Goodnow challenges us to think about family in new terms, in Chapter Ten William M. Bukowski and Lorrie K. Sippola call for new paradigms in research on friendships. More precisely, they call for us to go "back to the future," to return to broader conceptions of "the stuff" of friendships envisioned by early theorists such as Harry Stack Sullivan. Although recent research has given much attention to the role of friendship in individual adjustment and well-being, Bukowski and Sippola argue for attention to wider basic processes, such as how friendships work day-to-day, the dynamic interface between self and other, and the provisions of friendship for satisfying human needs such as security. As a powerful example, they describe new studies showing how friendship can serve as a zone of comfort for identity exploration; however, it appears that this provision can only be used if one brings sufficient self-esteem into the friendship to be able to balance one's own and others' needs. Their proposed conception of friendship, then, presents it as a complex, active, two-way set of processes, which reflects the horizon of research we see across diverse developmental contexts.

Self-Regulation of Emotion and Cognition

One reason developmental scholars have moved toward a bidirectional conception of the relation between children and environmental contexts is the changes that have occurred in how we think about the intersection of biology and environment. The field has moved away from a long-standing emphasis on environmental determinism—epitomized by Watson and his conviction that he could make any infant in the image he chose—toward the view that children bring inherent characteristics or propensities to their interactions with parents, friends, teachers, media, and so forth. At the same time, however, the field is rejecting the opposite pendulum swing toward biological determinism, which has seen personality traits as hard-wired and genes as exerting a fixed influence on behavioral development. Defining the middle ground between these views, a recent national panel of leading researchers concluded that the development of children unfolds along “individual pathways” shaped by the ongoing interaction of biology, daily environments, and children’ active participation in these environments (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002).

Chapters Eleven, Twelve, and Thirteen here speak to how these complex interactions shape pathways for the development of self-regulation, which this same national panel concluded “is a cornerstone of early childhood development” (p. 3). The goals of the work described in the three chapters of Part Four are diverse, including understanding the components of the pathways that are shared across children as well as those that vary between individual children. They also include creating environments that can compensate for individual developmental risks and enhance positive inherent dispositions in children and adolescents. The three chapters included here on regulation of emotion and cognition detail some of this latest research and propose new theoretical models to guide future research in this area.

Mary K. Rothbart and Michael I. Posner in Chapter Eleven give a thought-provoking account of their newest research, addressing the development of effortful control in terms of interconnections between genes, neural networks, and environmental interventions. Rothbart and Posner conceptualize effortful control as the ability “to inhibit a dominant response in order to perform a subdominant response, detect errors, and engage in planning.” They argue that temperamental differences exist between individuals in their capacity for effortful control, but environment and experience as well can substantially influence the development of this capacity. Indeed, their recent experiments have found that participation in a five-day program increased four-year-old children’s performance on tasks requiring effortful control and showed changes in their EEG patterns consistent with improved effortful control. The horizon Rothbart and Posner point to for this research includes identifying genotypic variations among children that influence these developmental pathways, and development

of training programs in preschool that assist children's growth in the ability to self-regulate.

Designing intervention programs to enhance children's self-regulation is also an important potential future application of the impressive research models that Nancy Eisenberg, Adrienne Sadovsky, and Tracy L. Spinrad propose in Chapter Twelve. They focus on "emotion-related regulation," a concept that includes a range of abilities for self-control, notably inhibition and activation of behavior, planning, attention, and the ability to influence the environment. Their chapter pulls together extensive research to propose two heuristic models for understanding the development of this capacity in relationship to other developing competencies, knowledge, and dispositions. Their first model proposes a set of early developmental influences among emotion regulation, language skills, and emotion knowledge. The second model suggests how these factors are associated with academic motivation and competence as children enter school. These heuristic models furnish a roadmap for future research and suggest the range of interacting factors that must be considered in planning interventions for children at different ages.

Mary Gauvain focuses on cognitive development; her Chapter Thirteen also addresses themes regarding pathways in the development of self-regulation. She begins by tracing a thirty-year history of cognitive development to show how the area has grown, and in turn she proposes three promising new research directions. One involves work on the biology of cognitive development; she points to new work aimed at understanding how emotional systems and emotional regulation influence cognitive growth. An interesting point she adds to the two preceding chapters of Part Four highlights the role of parents in adjusting emotional conditions to the temperament of the child so as to facilitate the child's cognitive development. Her second topic is research on learning; she describes new work on problem solving and strategy development, domains of growth that also increase children's ability to self-regulate as well as their ability to influence the environment. Gauvain's third topic is research focused on understanding the cultural contexts of cognitive development, particularly as it occurs in interactions with more experienced members of one's community. Thus her chapter offers a fitting ending to this volume, bringing together themes pertaining to biology, contexts, and culture that are addressed across all of the chapters included here.

Conclusion

To return to a quote that Goodnow cited in Chapter Nine, in the early eighteenth century Alexander Pope wrote, "'Tis education forms the common mind. Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined." Developmental scholars maintain elements of Pope's Enlightenment ideal. We still care deeply about providing nurturing and healthful environments for children and adolescents.

At the same time, we no longer see each child as a twig that we can bend in any direction, but rather as a person who comes into the world with emotional and cognitive tendencies that influence her or his developmental pathway. We no longer see an adolescent as a tree that early experiences have inclined in a fixed direction once and for all, but rather as an active, creative, and co-constructive member of society. Finally, we no longer see all persons as developing toward acquisition of one common mind, but rather as members of diverse cultures with varying educational and socialization goals.

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