

Chapter 1: Beliefs about Babies: Historical Perspectives on Infancy and Early Childhood

CHAPTER 1 AT-A-GLANCE

Key Topics	Detailed Outline	Readings & Activities	Media Supplements	Professor Notes
Why Do We Study Infants?	Development as Transformation Impact of Early Experience Research Methods and Tools		Video: “Ten Things Every Child Needs”	
	Interdisciplinary Collaboration	Huston (2005)	Video: “Discovering the Human Brain: New Pathways to Neuroscience”	
Recurring Themes in the Study of Child Development		Bronfenbrenner & Morris (2006)		
	The Path of Development: Stages vs. Continuous Change Heredity and the Environment Active or Passive Development? Normal and Atypical Development			

Culture and Context

Cole (2005);
Johnson et al.
(2003); Keller
(2003)

Video:
“People Like Us”

Lecture Launcher: T
Social Ecology of I
Infancy

Historical

Perspectives

on Children

and Childhood

Calvert (1992);
Hernandez (1994)
Hands On #2:
Family Matters

Historical Studies of

Children and Childhood

Views of Children

Family Life

Education

Hands On #1:
Revised Timeline

The Development

of Child

Development

Cairns (1998);
Lerner (2006)

G. Stanley Hall

James Mark Baldwin

John B. Watson

Arnold Gesell

Child Research

Institutes: Research

and Dissemination

John Bowlby

Sharing the Results

Chapter Outline

Why Do We Study Infants?

- Development occurs rapidly from birth to age 3.
- Early experience has a profound impact on current and future behavior and development.
- New research methods and tools are available to help researchers frame and answer previously unexplored questions about infancy.
- Researchers, practitioners, and policy makers in many different disciplines are now working together and sharing resources and knowledge as never before.

Recurring Themes in the Study of Child Development

- Is development stagewise or continuous?
- How do heredity (nature) and the environment (nurture) work together and contribute to behavior and development?
- Are children active explorers and shapers of their own development or do they play a more passive role?
- Development occurs within a context that is defined by the child's culture, race/ethnicity, sex, and the extent to which special needs or disabilities are present.

Historical Perspectives on Infancy and Early Childhood

- How have infancy and early childhood changed over time?

Historical Studies of Children and Childhood

- Children who lived in the past cannot be observed or interviewed.
- Indirect sources can be used, including literary evidence, and material culture, such as parents' diaries, childrearing books, toys, paintings, and records of births and deaths.
- Quantitative archival sources, such as official records and documents, also reveal both differences and similarities between the present and the past.
- Infant mortality rates have declined dramatically, and most infants now reach the age of 1 year.

Views of Children

- Over time, increasing belief in the importance of infancy and early childhood gave rise to organized efforts to train and educate children early in life so that they would grow up to be moral, responsible, and capable adults.
- Historical information is provided from Ancient Greece and Rome, Medieval Europe, The Renaissance, and Colonial America

Family Life

- Family size decreased in the United States.
- Families moved from rural areas and agricultural occupations to urban areas and industrial jobs.
- Women attained higher levels of education and pursued new economic opportunities.

Education

- Childrearing advice - now more typically referred to as parenting advice - has sometimes been inconsistent or faddish.
- An infant school movement in the early nineteenth century, for example, was soon followed by a pervasive mistrust and rejection of education for children as young as 18 months.

The Development of Child Development

- Key figures in the early years of child development include G. Stanley Hall, James Mark Baldwin, John B. Watson, Arnold Gesell, and John Bowlby

Child Research Institutes: Research and Dissemination

- Beginning in the 1920s and 1930s, universities established centers for the systematic study of child growth and development.

Sharing the Results

- Researchers disseminated their findings at professional meetings and through newly established scholarly journals.
- Most parents did not know about or read these journals, but they often turned to parenting magazines or one of the most popular childrearing books, Dr. Spock's (1946) *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care*.

Key Words

Continuous (5)	Characterization of development as a gradual, smooth process of change.
Infant mortality rate (13)	Number of deaths per 1,000 live births, usually reported with reference to the age of 1 year.
Infant school movement (23)	An early nineteenth-century movement, imported to the United States from Europe, in which educators believed that children as young as 18 months could be educated and taught to read.
Literary evidence (9)	Written information, including parents' diaries and letters, childrearing advice written by ministers and doctors, and children's books.
Material culture (9)	Physical evidence, such as toys, clothing, furniture, and works of art.
Nature (5)	Biological factors influencing development.
Nurture (5)	Environmental and experiential factors influencing development.
Oblation (14)	Medieval European practice involving the permanent "donation" of an infant or young child to a monastery.
Quantitative archival evidence (9)	Official sources of written information and data, including evidence census data, tax records, and legislative and court records.
Stagewise (4)	Characterization of development as occurring in distinct phases, with qualitative differences between stages.

Think About It: Questions for Reading & Discussion

1. Imagine that you are a historian in the twenty-*second* century and your topic is the history of infancy and early childhood. What sorts of literary evidence, quantitative evidence, and material culture evidence and artifacts being created today – might you use to study parenting in the twenty-first century? What sorts of conclusions might be drawn from these sources about our current society's attitudes about infants and their development? What would be the advantages and disadvantages of using these kinds of materials instead of observing infants directly?
2. Children in the United States and many other industrialized countries are becoming toilet trained at increasingly older ages (Bakker & Wyndaele, 2000; Brody, 1999). Whereas 92 percent of 18-month-olds were toilet trained in 1957, in 1999, only 2 percent of 2-year-olds, and 60 percent of 3-year-olds were reliably toilet trained. (It is not until the age of 4 years that most U.S. children – 98 percent – are finally out of diapers.) Use the information in this chapter to identify some of the factors that might be responsible for this trend.
3. What is the most surprising thing about the history of infancy and childhood that you have learned from this chapter? How does this information affect your views about infants and development from birth to age 3?

4. What do you think was the most important factor influencing the establishment and growth of the field of child development in the United States? Is this factor still important today? Are current conditions right to continue supporting the field of child development? Explain.
5. Do you think that today's parents would support an infant school movement? Why or why not?
6. Which of the recurring themes in the study of child development do you think is the most important? Explain.
7. When you think about the recurring themes in the study of child development, how do you tend to view the key debates in the field? That is, do you tend to believe more strongly in nature or in nurture as an influence on development? Do you tend to view babies as active or passive participants in their own development? How important do you think culture and the historical era are? Compare your views with the views of others taking this course. In addition, after you have finished this book, take another look at your notes to see if your ideas have changed.

Lecture Launcher: The Social Ecology of Infancy

The following questions may be considered in a lecture or discussion about Chapter 1, drawing on the articles by Keller (2003) and Hernandez (1994), and the general topic of the social ecology of infancy (i.e., the unique cultural, economic, familial, historical, and physical environment in which a child lives).

Keller (2003) describes two cultural models - apprentice and equality -- about the developmental period of infancy. The models are based on existing literature and observational studies "assessing infants' parenting experiences (breastfeeding, body contact, body stimulation, object stimulation, face to face contact and attention to positive and negative stimuli) in rural, agrarian Cameroonian Nso and urban German middle-class families". (p.288). Keller also reports results from video-based ethnographic interviews about parental ethnotheories in these two cultural communities. "Both models embody different conceptions of competence. They nevertheless coexist to varying degrees in different sociocultural and historical environments" (p.288).

Hernandez (1994) "discusses results of the first national study using census and survey data to describe the profound changes that have characterized the lives of America's children over the last 50 to 150 years" (p. 1). Hernandez reports that "children's lives have undergone a revolutionary shift ... as a result of increased nonfarm work by fathers, a drastic constriction in family size, and an enormous expansion in schooling [C]ontinuing transformation of children's lives has been associated with dramatic increases in mothers' labor force participation and in the incidence of mother-child families with no father present in the home" (p. 1).

1. How would you define the term "social ecology?" Have you ever heard this term before? If so, in what sort of context? Whether you have or not, how do the readings for this week help you understand this concept? How important is an infant's social ecology for his/her development?
2. In addition to variability in the social ecology of infants and children within the United States, there is also great variety around the world. Have you ever had a chance to observe infants, children, and families outside of the U.S.? If so, what did you notice and learn from those observations? What questions did your experiences raise for you? Whether you have or have not had a chance for international study-travel, what do the readings for this week suggest about some of the important dimensions of a global perspective on social ecology and development from birth to age 3? Can you think of any topics or international comparisons that would have made the readings for this week even better, in terms of exploring the concept of social ecology?

3. Keller (2003) discusses parents' cultural models for their infants' socialization and development. What are the practical consequences of having one sort of model versus another? To what extent are most parents of infants aware of possessing a model?
4. If you were able to carry out a follow-up study to expand on Keller's observations, what sorts of questions would you find the most interesting, and how would you try to find the answers?
5. How do you think a growing awareness of the social ecology of infancy might affect you now and in the future?

Hands-On Learning Activities

1. Family Matters: How much do you know about the childhood of your own grandparents, great-grandparents, or great-great-grandparents? How different were their early experiences from yours? Consider the dimensions that Hernandez addresses: father's work, family size, schooling/education, mother's participation in the paid labor force, and family structure/marital status.
2. Revised Timeline: Take another look at Table 1-1 (the chronology of childhood and child development in the United States). How different would it be if it were organized along the dimension of race/ethnicity? In other words, how similar (and how different) is the history of childhood for different races/ethnicities in the United States?

Videos and DVDs	Description
"Ten Things Every Child Needs" (1997, 54 mins), WTTW-TV, Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation.	Shows how brain development in children up to age three is influenced by such things as interaction, touch, stable relationships, safe environments, self-esteem, quality childcare, play, communication, music, and reading.
"People Like Us" (2001, 124 mins), Center for New American Media, WETA-TV.	Discusses how social class has as much influence as race or ethnicity in determining what kind of opportunities a person has in life.
"Discovering the Human Brain: New Pathways to Neuroscience," (2006, 30 mins), Davidson Films. With Susan Bookheimer, Ph.D.	Examples of actual research that utilize current technology are presented, including a study on the role of mirror neurons in autism and the mapping of language areas of a patient prior to surgery on a brain tumor. This film provides students with an understanding of the methodology and power of current research in neuroscience. With fresh animations and graphics, the film also reinforces basic information they have encountered in textbooks about the actions of neurons and specialized roles of certain regions of the brain.

Test Bank for Chapter 1: Beliefs About Babies: Historical Perspectives on Children and Childhood

1-1. All of the following are reasons cited in the text to study infants except

- a. the first three years are a time of significant transformation in every developmental domain
- b. the effects of adversity that occurs before the age of three are less permanent than adversity that occurs at later ages
- c. more research tools and information are available to guide inquiry than at any previous time
- d. there is heightened interest in interdisciplinary collaboration

Ans: B Topic: Why Do We Study Infants? Type: K

1-2. Which of the following is the newest reason to study infants, among the reasons cited in the text?

- a. The ability to communicate through language emerges during the first three years.
- b. By three to four months of age, initially immobile infants roll over.
- c. Infants who are born preterm are more likely than ever before to survive.
- d. Pediatricians are interested in studying the conditions under which infants thrive.

Ans: C Topic: Why Do We Study Infants? Type: C

1-3. Interdisciplinary collaboration in the study of infant development would be illustrated by all of the following except

- a. early childhood educators working with economists
- b. stage theorists sharing data with researchers who endorse a more continuous view of development
- c. historians and pediatricians investigating trends in infant mortality rates
- d. geneticists studying delays in early language acquisition

Ans: B Topic: Why Do We Study Infants? Type: A

1-4. All of the following were themes of development discussed in the text except

- a. whether development is stagewise or continuous
- b. the role of heredity and the environment
- c. contributions of nature versus nurture
- d. whether development is a closed or open system

Ans: D Topic: Recurring Themes in Child Development Type: K

1-5. Culture and context

- a. are less relevant for the study of infants than for older children
- b. refer to aspects of “nature” rather than “nurture”
- c. influence the way that parents care for and interact with infants
- d. are concepts that have emerged from the study of cells and genes

Ans: C Topic: Recurring Themes in Child Development Type: K

1-6. Which of the following discoveries is most closely related to the Human Genome Project?

- a. Dietary regulation can alter the effects of phenylketonuria (PKU).
- b. Parents who have stressful jobs may be less sensitive when interacting with their infants at home.
- c. Even very young infants can communicate their needs nonverbally by cooing, crying, and reaching.
- d. The diversity and validity of Native American family life is now recognized and supported.

Ans: A Topic: Recurring Themes in Child Development Type: K

1-7. Which of the following is the correct order for these events?

- a. Arrival of the first European immigrants in the New World, Indian Child Welfare Act, Chinese Exclusion Act, Human Genome Project.
- b. Arrival of the first European immigrants in the New World, Chinese Exclusion Act, Indian Child Welfare Act, Human Genome Project
- c. Human Genome Project, arrival of the first European immigrants in the New World, Indian Child Welfare Act, Chinese Exclusion Act
- d. Arrival of the first European immigrants in the New World, Human Genome Project, Indian Child Welfare Act, Chinese Exclusion Act,

Ans: B Topic: Recurring Themes in Child Development Type: C

1-8. All of the following statements are correct except

- a. in many Native American cultures, other adults in the community assist the parents in guiding and supporting the child at significant milestones in his or her life
- b. a history of family disruption has been found among many African Americans whose ancestors were enslaved
- c. the first Mexican American families and families of Spanish descent came to the United States in the early twentieth century
- d. Vietnamese families who immigrated to the United States have had different experiences as a function of differences in community sponsorship and support

Ans: C Topic: Recurring Themes in Child Development Type: C

1-9. All of the following statements support the notion that nature and nurture work together except

- a. all infants who inherit a gene for a disease develop that disease, regardless of differences in their nutrition and caregiving experience
- b. exposure to alcohol during the prenatal period can alter the normal course of the brain's development
- c. children's biological characteristics have an impact on the responses they elicit from parents and other caregivers
- d. infants who do not have adequate exposure to language have great difficulty acquiring language, even though they show initial signs of the ability to learn

Ans: A Topic: Recurring Themes in Child Development Type: A

1-10. Which of the following best reflects current thinking about the influence of the environment on infants' development?

- a. Only the immediate home environment exerts a measurable influence.
- b. For most outcomes and domains, genetics exert a greater influence than does the environment.
- c. Environmental influences can be both direct and indirect, involving environments in which infants never spend any time.
- d. Parents and other caregivers are unaware of most genetically determined characteristics and are thus unaffected by them.

Ans: C Topic: Recurring Themes in Child Development Type: A

1-11. All of the following are examples of material culture except

- a. parents' letters and diaries

- b. toys
- c. clothing
- d. furniture

Ans: A Topic: Historical Perspectives on Infancy Type: K

1-12. Given that parents and children who lived in earlier times cannot be observed or interviewed, researchers use all of the following sources to study the past except

- a. literary evidence
- b. quantitative archival evidence
- c. material culture
- d. qualitative dialectical records

Ans: D Topic: Historical Perspectives on Infancy Type: K

1-13. In medieval Europe, a new form of infant abandonment was introduced, in which an infant or very young child was permanently “donated” to a monastery. This practice was known as

- a. adoration
- b. oblation
- c. convocation
- d. absorption

Ans: B Topic: Historical Perspectives on Infancy Type: K

1-14. In the early nineteenth century United States, the widely held belief that children as young as 18 months could and should be educated was known as the

- a. infant insanity movement
- b. infant school movement

- c. industrial revolution
- d. Puritanical reform

Ans: B Topic: Historical Perspectives on Infancy Type: K

1-15. According to the chronology shown in Table 1-1, in what order did these events occur?

- a. Inoculation for smallpox is introduced, the polio vaccine is developed, the first “test-tube” baby is born, pediatrics emerges as a medical specialty.
- b. Pediatrics emerges as a medical specialty, the polio vaccine is developed, inoculation for smallpox is introduced, the first “test-tube” baby is born.
- c. Pediatrics emerges as a medical specialty, inoculation for smallpox is introduced, the polio vaccine is developed, the first “test-tube” baby is born.
- d. Inoculation for smallpox is introduced, pediatrics emerges as a medical specialty, the polio vaccine is developed, the first “test-tube” baby is born.

Ans: D Topic: Historical Perspectives on Infancy Type: C

1-16. In ancient Greece and Rome, the concept of citizenship included

- a. producing healthy offspring to serve the state
- b. producing daughters to continue the pattern of matrilineal inheritance
- c. preventing pregnancy, in order not to contribute to overpopulation
- d. granting inherent rights to infants

Ans: A Topic: Historical Perspectives on Infancy Type: C

1-17. For parents in earlier times who could not afford to keep their infants, which option offered the greatest likelihood that their children would survive?

- a. abandonment
- b. servitude
- c. oblation
- d. placement in a foundling home

Ans: C Topic: Historical Perspectives on Infancy Type: C

1-18. For Puritans in the New World, which statement appears to reflect their views about infants?

- a. "They are innocent lambs, incapable of doing wrong."
- b. "They may not survive, so we should not become emotionally attached to them."
- c. "Give them love – it is not possible to spoil them with affection."
- d. "They are innocent vipers, ignorant but inherently sinful."

Ans: D Topic: Historical Perspectives on Infancy Type: A

1-19. As an increasingly romantic view of childhood emerged in the United States during the nineteenth century,

- a. mothers' influence was diminished and minimized
- b. mothers' role as moral guardian was emphasized
- c. children were regarded as creatures with an advanced moral sense
- d. interest in children's souls increased while interest in their physical well being decreased

Ans: B Topic: Historical Perspectives on Infancy Type: A

1-20. Which of the following illustrates a significant change in family life in the United States from before the Industrial Revolution to the mid-twentieth century?

- a. Growing up, Louis had ten siblings and Lena had eleven, but they decided that their family was big enough after their second child was born.

- b. Jacob grew up in a large city but moved to a rural area as an adult and began working as a farmer.
- c. Sarah and Franklin had a total of six children, but only one of those children lived past the age of one year.
- d. Samuel, born during the Great Depression, was less negatively affected than his siblings who were born when their family and the country as a whole were more affluent.

Ans: A Topic: Historical Perspectives on Infancy Type: A

1-21. During the twentieth century,

- a. parents increasingly turned away from child development professionals and their advice
- b. services for children were established in schools, hospitals, clinics, and social agencies
- c. behaviorism was the most influential perspective on children and their development
- d. child development experts moved away from studying children's real-world problems and toward a focus on basic research questions

Ans: B Topic: Development of Child Development Type: K

1-22. Which person first became aware of child psychology while studying in Germany and has been described as having done more than any other founder to develop child psychology?

- a. John B. Watson
- b. Arnold Gesell
- c. G. Stanley Hall
- d. James Mark Baldwin

Ans: C Topic: Development of Child Development Type: K

1-23. As the discipline of child development emerged in the United States during the twentieth century,

- a. child research institutes were established at a number of prominent universities
- b. federal agencies that might have addressed children's social welfare problems were eliminated because of evidence that their efforts were ineffective
- c. Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory was refuted by research and became less influential
- d. the general public became less interested in scientific approaches to understanding children

Ans: A Topic: Development of Child Development Type: K

1-24. Which person is best known for studying “little Albert”?

- a. James Mark Baldwin
- b. Arnold Gesell
- c. G. Stanley Hall
- d. John B. Watson

Ans: D Topic: Development of Child Development Type: K

1-25. Which of these pioneers in child development minimized the importance of innate biological factors and maturation while asserting a primary role for experience?

- a. John B. Watson and Luther Emmett Holt
- b. Harry Harlow and James Mark Baldwin
- c. Arnold Gesell and G. Stanley Hall
- d. Sigmund Freud and John Bowlby

Ans: A Topic: Development of Child Development Type: C

1-26. In the early and mid-twentieth century, changes in societal attitudes toward children and their development

- a. worked against efforts to pass legislation that would fund programs to address child welfare problems
- b. led to the demise of *Parents* magazine
- c. supported the passage of the Social Security Act
- d. undermined initiatives to establish professional organizations for the study of children and their development

Ans: C Topic: Development of Child Development Type: C

1-27. According to the chronology in Table 1-1, in which order did the following events occur?

- a. The National Congress of Mothers was founded, the U.S. Children’s Bureau was created, the Baby Boom began, the case of *Brown v. Board of Education* was heard
- b. The U.S. Children’s Bureau was created, the National Congress of Mothers was founded, the Baby Boom began, the case of *Brown v. Board of Education* was heard
- c. The Baby Boom began, the case of *Brown v. Board of Education* was heard, The National Congress of Mothers was founded, the U.S. Children’s Bureau was created,

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- d. The National Congress of Mothers was founded, the Baby Boom began, the case of *Brown v. Board of Education* was heard, the U.S. Children's Bureau was created

Ans: A Topic: Development of Child Development Type: C

- 1-28. Which pioneer in child development is most likely to have uttered the statement, "The best thing that parents can do is to follow their child's own natural impulses and rich imagination."

- a. John B. Watson
- b. Arnold Gesell
- c. G. Stanley Hall
- d. Sigmund Freud

Ans: C Topic: Development of Child Development Type: A

- 1-29. James Mark Baldwin's inclusion of research on animals in his studies of the development of human infants' hand preference reflected

- a. the prevailing view at the time that infants were not actually fully human
- b. his disinterest in social institutions and cultural contexts
- c. the influence of Jean Piaget's theories of Baldwin's thinking
- d. the influence of theories of evolution on studies of human behavior and development

Ans: D Topic: Development of Child Development Type: A

- 1-30. Which answer would John B. Watson most likely have given as his reason for choosing to study infants?

- a. "I knew that I could eliminate the step of asking for their informed consent to participate in my research."
- b. "I had access to the young residents of an orphanage and their parents were not around to object to my studies."
- c. "I wanted to sell books, and the public will buy anything if it's written about babies."
- d. "I think that later behavior and personality are simply the result of emotional responses that are conditioned early in life."

Ans: D Topic: Development of Child Development Type: A