

Spring Semester 1998

EDUC 389 - 3
Special Topic:
Intellectual Development and Education
D01.00

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PREREQUISITE

One of EDUC 220, 230, 240, or permission of instructor.
Recommended: Psyc 250 and/or Psyc 355.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of the variety of ways in which attempts have been made to characterize intellectual development, and of the inferences drawn from them to principles for teaching and the curriculum.

OUTLINE OF TOPICS

1. *Epistemological Theories*. These theories have assumed that the mind is made up only of the knowledge that it learns. Development is seen as a function of knowledge-growth not something that is a function of minds independent from the knowledge they accumulate.
2. *Evolution, Biology, and Recapitulation*. We will consider the influence of Herbert Spencer's and Charles Darwin's theories of evolution and their impact on ideas about development in education. We will look at the ways in which the idea that each individual passes through equivalent stages in their education as "the race" did in its evolution and cultural development influenced the late nineteenth century curriculum.
3. *Psychological Theories*. These theories suggest that the mind, rather like the body, goes through a spontaneous developmental process. As the body develops largely regardless of the particular food it ingests, and the particular food does not affect the shape of organs, so the mind is characterized as going through a developmental process largely independently of the particular knowledge it learns.
4. *Socio-cultural Mediation*. We will consider how Vygotsky characterizes the mind's development as shaped by socio-cultural processes, and we will explore the education implications that are drawn from this theory.
5. *Evolution and the Modular Mind*. We will consider how modern evolutionary biology has influenced cognitive scientists to begin sketching new models of intellectual development.

REQUIREMENTS

Attend class, read everything required, write two half page introductions to topics, write one small paper by week 8 and a larger final paper by the last week of classes.

REQUIRED READINGS (A number of articles will be made available in a course reader)

- Margaret Donaldson, *Children's Minds*, Norton. ISBN 0393951014
- Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, Harvard University Press. ISBN 0674445449
- Kieran Egan, *The Educated Mind*, University of Chicago Press. ISBN 0-226-19036-6