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What is the concept of history of education

The notion that children "develop" seems an intuitive, obvious, and even self-evident idea. Children are born small, knowing the world in limited ways, with little or no understanding of other people as separate from themselves in body or mind, and no understanding of social relations or morality. They grow larger, learn about the physical and social worlds, join different cooperative social groups, and cultivate a more and more complex sense of right and wrong. Psychologists, teachers, and to rationalize practice. The language of development permeates CHILD PSYCHOLOGY and the childcentered professions. Practitioners in these areas speak of such things as "developmentally appropriate practices" for early childhood education, developmental psychologists to help justify social programs on behalf of children. If "high-quality" CHILD CARE enhances a child's development, then providing such care is good public policy. The idea of development is used extensively to give order and meaning to changes over time in children's physical, cognitive, psychosocial, and moral development. Development provides the rationale for myriad practices and policies related to children. There are, however, several concepts embedded in the idea of development that, upon closer inspection, may not be quite so obvious. What is not as obvious as the idea of development itself are the mechanism(s), direction(s), and end(s) of development. When one thinks about development in these terms and considers more deeply the origins and meaning of the idea of development, the obvious does not appear quite so obvious any longer. Development is a teleological concept-it must have a direction and an end. The presumption is that later stages build on earlier stages and are more development and in earlier stages. The Swiss psychologist JEAN PIAGET (1896-1980) proposed formal operations as the universal end of cognitive development. For Piaget, formal operations provided the most comprehensive and logically powerful organization of thought. Extending Piaget's work, Lawrence Kohlberg elaborated a stage-based theory of moral development. He too invoked a universal end based upon increasingly abstract conceptions of justice. Both Piaget and Kohlberg have been criticized for their initial presumptions about universality: more differences across cultures and between genders exist than either expected. These variations have rattled the bones of those seeking a universal, timeless developmental psychology but, at the same time, opened the doors to a more pluralistic notion of development. Still, typical notions of development (universal or not) presume that development proceeds in a specific direction and that later stages are "better" and more comprehensive than early stages. Direction and end are axiomatic to development. At the very core of the idea of development are values and ideas about the "good" for individuals and societies. Later stages are not only more comprehensive, they also represent better ways of being because the end is highly valued as a good for human existence. If development is going somewhere, if later states are "better" or "higher" than previous states, then the "end" must represent some pinnacle of human excellence; the end must be Good. On what bases are these ends grounded? These questions are critical for any inquiry into the meaning of development is as much grounded in values as in empirical facts. Can science provide values? (It should be noted that this entry does not address development in domains that are highly "canalized"-domains that are highly driven by genetics and physiology, for example, aspects of perceptual or motor development by first introducing the historical context out of which the idea of development in children arose in American thought. Second, the entry briefly explicates the work of two prominent American thinkers whose ideas about development were founded upon dramatically different assumptions about the source, mechanisms, and ends of development under a thinly disguised divinity. For Baldwin, the direction and end of development inhered in nature itself, conceived as good, true, and beautiful. In stark contrast, JOHN DEWEY resisted the temper of the times and rested his ideas about development on a set of explicitly chosen values. The contrast illustrates the fundamental difference between conceiving development as a natural or as a socially guided process-the child as a natural or as a cultural being. The Historical Origins of the Idea of Development in Children arose from a set of older ideas about natural and human history. By the mid-nineteenth century, ideas about evolution, development, and progress formed a virtual trinity. Evolutionary history (phylogeny), individual development (ontogeny), and social change (history) all illustrated and revealed development. When systematic child study began in the United States, it entered through an ideological prism of evolution, progress, and development. Although arguments for development in both natural and human history were not new, the nineteenth is most famously known as the century of "history," "development," and "progress." Prior to the publication of the English naturalist Charles Darwin (1809–1882), the Scottish publisher and author Robert Chambers (1802–1871), in his influential 1844 anonymously published book, Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation, maintained that alongside gravitation, so all of life was governed by the principle of development. Just as inorganic matter was governed by the principle of gravitation, so all of life was governed by the principle of development. spirit of the times when he wrote that the ultimate development of the ideal man (in his words) was logically certain; progress was not an accident for Spencer, it was a necessity. Civilization, Spencer wrote, was not artificial, but part of nature and all of a piece of a developing embryo or the unfolding of a flower. This was no mere analogy for either Spencer or the American culture that so warmly welcomed him. Amidst the din of development, Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection, as set forth in his seminal work, On the Origin of Species (1859), served not only as a radical secular theory of the origin of humans; it also provided a new scientific sanction for a set of older beliefs. Though Darwin himself was not committed to the notion that the evolutionary record implied development or progress-that human beings are necessarily more "developed" than other species, or that species perfect themselves through evolutionary change-many of his predecessors and proponents were just so committed. Darwin's theory of gradual, nonprogressive evolutionary change was assimilated into a culture that was ideologically prepared to receive and transform Darwin into a spokesman for development in general. Armed with the authority of science, developmental zealots seized upon the new and secular science to confirm and extend a set of older ideas. Biologists, philosophers, historians, and many of the blossoming new social and political scientists seized Darwin's theory of evolution as a platform for demonstrating development in fields far and wide. So-called evolution as a platform for demonstrating development in fields far and wide. dilemma by assimilating natural law as a visible demonstration of God's work. Riots of analogies were drawn between the development, broadly construed and expressed in fields as divergent as evolutionary theory, philosophy, anthropology, and history formed, the dominant intellectual context for the systematic study of development in children. The child became a linchpin-a link between natural and human history. Development in children. The Natural, the Social, and the Good Both James Mark Baldwin (1861-1934) and John Dewey (1859-1952) were distinguished philosophical psychologists. Baldwin was a brilliant theorist whose theory is now recognized as an anticipation of Piaget's work. More recently, Baldwin's work has inspired a number of both historical and empirical inquiries. His psychology was complex, comprehensive, and brilliant in many ways. Baldwin rested much of his work on a platform of evolutionary theory to explain development in general, across natural and human history. John Dewey was a first-rate philosopher who focused his many lines of inquiry around education. Both men wrote about evolution, child development, and history but in profoundly different ways. Baldwin found natural lines of development in evolution, child development, and historical change over time. He believed that the direction and ends of individual and social development were based on culturally negotiated values. The contrast between Baldwin and Dewey is powerful. It illustrates the vastly different implications of understanding child development as a naturally occurring process in which the end resides in nature or in culture and history. Both theories are anchored in values, but the source of those values differs. James Mark Baldwin. Baldwin entered Princeton University (then the College of New Jersey) in 1881 and soon fell under the influence of minister, professor, and college president James McCosh. McCosh was one of many liberal clergy who struggled to reconcile science and scripture. He taught the young Baldwin that human beings were fundamentally good and that just as science revealed divine handiwork in nature so moral philosophy demonstrated moral purpose and design in human affairs. Moral law was as real and inexorable as gravity, and both indicated the presence of a divine governor of the world. When Baldwin elaborated a thinly empirical but richly theoretical account of child development, he maintained his professor's conviction that to describe normal social practice was also to prescribe ethical behavior. Through his many written volumes Baldwin proposed a basic concurrence between the natural and the good. People are good because God directs nature toward the good. Baldwin acknowledged evolutionary biology as the "handmaiden" to individual development. Darwin identified natural selection as the mechanism of evolutionary change. Jean-Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1802) proposed that animals may, through effort, modify their form to better adapt to the environment and transmit these adaptations to progeny. Without resorting to simple Lamarckian theory, Baldwin, by a series of rather ingenious moves, invented a second mechanism of evolutionary transmission, organic selection, in order to explain apparently inherited acquired characteristics. (The notion of organic selection, also known as the Baldwineffect, is still recognized by evolutionary biologists as a mechanism that can account for various kinds of local adaptations in species.) Baldwin elaborated and transposed principles of evolutionary development onto wider and wider platforms to include both the child and society. He depicted children's social development as a dialectical process in which notions of self and other development was part and parcel of social development. As one of the late-nineteenth-century idealist thinkers, Baldwin maintained that a sense of self that is good and law-abiding must be a public self in which private ends and social ideals were one and the same. The naturally developing social self is good, and it demonstrates the unfolding of more highly developed forms of self-realization, or Mind. The source, direction, and end of development are thus transcendent, beyond the reach of ordinary human experience. In 1884 Baldwin declared that the embryology of society is open to study in the nursery, and that any theory of social progress must be consistent with individual and society are two sides of a naturally growing whole; the dialectic of individual development must hold true on the level of social organization. Thus, social progress occurs through a dialectic process strictly analogous to the dialectic of personal growth in the child. Human history cannot move in a direction that violates those states of mind-the ideal, social, and ethical states-that have enabled the individual to come into social relationships. Baldwin was convinced that social progress proceeded toward the pursuit of moral and social ends because "this is the direction that nature itself pursues in social evolution" (Baldwin, p. 163). The child and society both development reveal values because values are inherent in nature. Mind, when fully revealed, is true, good, and beautiful. Development leads naturally to God made manifest in nature. John Dewey. There were skeptics, however, who did not believe in the trinity among development in evolution, child development, and social progress. They were minority voices barely heard above the din of development. Dewey was one of those skeptics, and he too wrote about the meaning of changes over time in evolution, child development in nature, Dewey once remarked that the idea that everything develops out of itself was an expression of consummate juvenilism -a relic of an older mode of thinking made obsolete by Darwin. Dewey's ideas about development are most visible in his writings on education, his philosophical center. In a direct assault on Spencer, Dewey found false the common analogy between a child's development are most visible in his writings on education, his philosophical center. In a direct assault on Spencer, Dewey found false the common analogy between a child's development are most visible in his writings on education, his philosophical center. seed's destiny is prescribed by nature, whereas the growth and destiny of the more plastic child as seed, he asserted that the child may possess "germinal powers," according to Dewey but, playing on the analogy of the child as seed, he asserted that the child may develop into a sturdy oak, a willow that bends with every wind, a thorny cactus, or even a poisonous weed. Dewey rejected any idea of development that suggested or invoked the unfolding of latent powers from within toward a remote goal. Development does not mean just getting something out of the child's mind; development is manifested through lived experience. Dewey recognized the need to specify direction and ends to growth. He understood that one cannot know what development is desirable without antecedent knowledge of what is good. It is just this presumed antecedent knowledge on which those purporting "natural" development depend. Dewey's philosophical psychology is, first and foremost, a social psychology. He acknowledged a rapidly changing American landscape and lived through a period of extraordinary social change. He urged philosophers to stop worrying about the problems of philosophers and worry more about the problems of people. In response to the complex nature of the American industrial social order, Dewey leaned most heavily on schools to provide an institutional setting for children's development. He proposed that education serve as a lever of social change and charged schools with a mandate to become places that set development in the right direction. Dewey maintained that teachers should strive to provide a designed environment in which particular ideals of development are fostered through lived experience. Specifically, Dewey found those ideals in democratic governance and scientific inquiry, the latter broadly construed and akin to the term critical thinking. If the classroom could become a miniature model of a community based upon democratic governance and critical inquiry rather than arbitrary authority or sentiment, then that would provide, Dewey maintained, the best guarantee of a good society. Children arrive at school with certain native interests or curiosities. These dispositions are beginning points for teachers to guide children toward particular socially desired ends. It is the business of school to set up environments that make possible the creation of small cooperative groups; the task of the teacher is to direct natural tendencies toward systematic inquiry and democratic governance. Systematic inquiry into the biology of plants may thus emerge from the children's collectively designed and cultivated garden. From a class trip to the ZOO might emerge shared inquiry into the history or ecology of zoos or to the natural habitats of different zoo animals. Growth occurs through lived experience. Dewey hoped that transforming social experiences in classrooms would guide children to grow "in the right direction." The classroom becomes a place in which the conditions of democratic governance and inquiry free from arbitrary authority or sentiment can and must exist to ensure that democracy and science thrive in the wider society. Education, growth, and experience thus become synonymous with one another. Knowledge and politics become one, as science in the classroom becomes democracy in action. Schools thus become agents of both individual development and social progress. Dewey thought of schools as laboratories in which scientists can learn about the possibilities of human development. In 1896 he began one such "laboratory" school at the University of Chicago. In schools, Dewey maintained, citizens may project the type of society they want. Dewey wanted schools to become places in which children would grow and carry intelligence into a social democracy. Science and democracy is the most objective means of governance. Dewey promoted science and democracy as ideal ends for both the child's individual development and society's progress as well. In this sense, he resembles Baldwin and others in yoking individual development to social progress. While not inscribed in nature, science and democracy approach the status of absolute goods because they are, in Dewey's judgment, the best ways of solving an enormous range of problems. Science and democracy are not inevitable ends of history; they demand constant nurture and reformulation. The solution to the problem of values, endemic to the idea of development avoid the problem of specifying values because the ends of development, the good, are presumed to be inherent in nature itself. Having rejected development as a natural unfolding of latent powers, Dewey maintained that development is a function of socially acknowledged goods for self and society. In his judgment, democratic governance and objective thinking were the best guarantees of a good, just, and experimenting society. Like the nineteenth-century English philosopher John Stuart Mill, the German physiologist and psychologist Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920), the American psychologist Hugo Münsterberg (1863-1916), and others, Dewey sought a social and developmental psychology based upon understanding people in relation to their cultural circumstances. In this view, culture itself becomes a mechanism of development. He thought that this social psychology could stand beside the older and more entrenched experimental psychology and become a "second psychologists perhaps best represented Dewey's perspective. Following on the heels of the great Russian psychologists perhaps best represented Dewey's perspective. Following on the heels of the great Russian psychologists perhaps best represented Dewey's perspective. Bronfennbrenner, Michael Cole, Barbara Rogoff, and Jerome Bruner have all proposed models of and mechanisms for a cultural-historical approach to development in a social context and understand development as incumbent upon culturally valued goals and social practices. Theories of the Late Twentieth Century and Beyond From the mid-1970s to the early 2000s, a persistent string of philosophers, historians, and psychologists have argued again that psychologists have a grant psychologist ha data as some might like to believe. Dewey illustrates how once one renounces natural ends to development, one must become politically and morally engaged in a process to determine that which shall constitute good development and how it might be achieved. Science cannot identify what those goods are, but it can suggest different ways to achieve different ends. Once one renounces fixed and naturally determined ends, development becomes historically contingent. The philosopher Marx Wartofsky wrote that there are no values in nature; people create them. In this view, development does not lurk directly in the people studied but resides in the perspective used. Jerome Bruner has argued that theories of development require a metatheory of values about the good person and the good society. If developmental psychologists fail to examine those values rather than a consciously implemented goal. Sheldon White has suggested that while the idea of development may be proposed in the context of analysis, it becomes the idea of development is a systematic idea, it is likely to be treated as an ethical ideal. Bernard Kaplan (1983) and William Kessen (1990) have also drawn our attention to the value-laden nature of the idea of development. The "end" of development reflects that which people steer their children's development points the way to the good, then it is good to help development. In the midst of his youthful struggles to reconcile religion with science, the young Piaget wrote that "to hasten evolution is to do good" (p. 29). Developmental psychology began as a search for values and continues to do so today. See also: Bowlby, John; Bühler, Charlotte; Burt, Cyril; Freud, Anna; Freud, Sigmund; Froebel, Friedrich Wilhelm August; Gesell, Arnold; ; Isaacs, Susan; Klein, Melanie; Watson, John B. Baldwin, James M. 1911. The Individual and Society or Psychology and Sociology. Boston: Richard G. Badger. Bruner, Jerome. 1986. "Value Presuppositions of Developmental Theory." In Value Presuppositions in Theories of Human Development, ed. Leonard Cirillo and Seymour Wapner. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. Dewey, John. 1981. "The Need for a Philosophy of Education." In John Dewey: The Later Works, 1925-1953, ed. 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