

PSY242: Adolescent Psychology
Chapter 1 & 2
Essays

Chapter 1

1. Compare and contrast G. Stanley Hall's view of adolescence with Margaret Mead's and Inventionists' views; and discuss which of these appears to be most influential today.

G. Stanley Hall (1844-1924) had a Storm-and-Stress View of adolescence. He said that development is controlled by biological factors and viewed adolescence as a turbulent time full of conflict and mood swings. Adolescents could be sweet at one moment and sour the next. He believed that their thoughts, feelings, and actions fluctuated between conceit and humility, good intentions and temptation, happiness and sadness. This suggests that Hall viewed adolescents as incapable of controlling their own feelings and behavior. Margaret Mead (1928) had a Sociocultural view of Adolescence. She concluded that adolescence is not controlled by biological factors but rather sociocultural. She believed that adolescent beings were free of turmoil and that they did not go through stress. If the adolescent was free to engage in sexual relations, see babies being born, view death as normal, and not be restricted to "adult behavior", he or she would turn out fine. She did a study in Samoa and said that culture in America is different, because the adults do not allow their children to roam free like the Samoans. The Inventionist View sees adolescence as a sociohistorical creation. After Child Labor Laws and the Industrial Revolution, adolescents were not permitted to go to work. Instead, they had to focus on school, lived in urban neighborhoods, and youth groups appeared. Two changes resulted in the historical shift: decreased employment and increased school attendance. I believe that the most influential view is the Inventionist View because it has both Hall and Mead's view.

2. Explain the similarities and differences between the behavioral and social cognitive theories. Give an example of a personal experience that would be explained differently by a theorist from each behavioral perspective.

A behavioral cognitive theory is when you can study scientifically based on what you observe and measure. You can learn through experience with the environment. A version of behaviorism is found in Skinner's operant conditioning and a social cognitive theory is found in Bandura's social cognitive theory. Skinner's operant conditioning is when a behavior followed by a reward stimulus is more likely to recur and punishing stimulus is less likely to recur. In other words, rewards and punishment serve as a basis for behavior and development. An example of this was when I was

growing up, my grandma would pinch me if I was too loud or moving too much. They hurt a lot so I tried to be on my best behavior. In Bandura's theory, cognition is used so that observational learning is used for behavior. This is like a monkey see, monkey do type of situation. For example, when I was younger, I saw my dad greet everyone with a smile and bowing. I learned to act like him eventually. The two theories are similar in that there is scientific research done for behavior.

Chapter 2

1. Explain the relationship between the growth spurt, sexual maturation, and secular trends in puberty.

Growth spurt is accelerated during puberty. For girls, the average beginning of their growth spurt is at 9 years and for boys, the average is at 11 years. Girls increase about 3 ½ inches per year while the boys increase about 4 inches. Sexual maturation happens during puberty. For boys, their penis and testicle size increases, pubic hair appears, voice changes, first ejaculation, and growth spurt are apparent. Females undergo similar changes, including breast growth and menstruation. Secular trends in puberty are patterns across generations. For females, menarche begins much earlier in recent years than a century ago. Also, females of color develop earlier on than their white counterparts.

2. Describe the ethnic differences in exercise participation rates. Why do U.S. adolescents exercise less than their counterparts in other countries?

Ethnic differences occur in America but varies by gender. Caucasian boys exercised the most, and African American girls the least. It can be due to income levels or gender differences. American adolescents exercise less and eat more junk food than their counterparts in other countries because of the culture.