

The Networker

THE OFFICAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

SUSAN KRAUSS WHITBOURNE, UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS, AMHERST



Susan Krauss Whitbourne

With this issue of the Networker, we are launching the new leadership team for the 2006-07 and

I am delighted and honored to be assuming the role of SSHD's presidency. Along with the other members of the Steering Committee, I would like to welcome you to our organization and thank you for your support. My number one priority will be to provide services to our members as well as to ensure that we maintain our vitality as an organization.

Since SSHD's inception in 1998, we have sought to reach out to scholars of developmental science who are seeking an organization that can provide them with a different kind of experience unique to our interdisciplinary and life-span focus. We particularly wish to be able to allow for free and productive interchanges and to encourage new and innovative thinking in our field. Toward that end, I would like to invite you to spread the word about our great organization. We have many resources that are unique to

our society-a journal that is integrative and interdisciplinary, meetings that are still small enough to allow plenary sessions and roundtable discussions with leading scholars in the field, and collegial relationships that extend across the ordinary boundaries of discipline and periods of life. Not only can you help us accomplish our mission by encouraging your colleagues to join, but also by volunteering to help! We need volunteers in the areas of program, membership, funding, and publicity. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my predecessors, Rich Lerner and Jackie James. Their dedicated leadership and energy took SSHD from dream to reality, and we are fortunate to be able to count on their continued support as we move into our next developmental phase. I speak for the entire Steering Committee in urging you to send us your concerns, ideas, and suggestion. Thank you and I look forward to working with you over what I hope will be a productive and successful new term.

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PRESIDENT-ELECT'S COLUMN TONI ANTONUCCI, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



Toni Antonucci

It is both an honor and a privilege to step into the role of President-Elect of this exciting, relatively young new society. I firmly believe in its mission and, in particular, in the broad life-span, multidisciplinary perspective espoused by the Society

for the Study of Human Development. President Susan Whitbourne, in consultation with the Steering and Program Committee, has identified an exciting theme for our next meeting. In addition, we will take the opportunity to honor some of our heroes. Dr. Warner Schaie, a stellar, long-term contributor to the field, has fundamentally influenced both the shape and content of our field; and Dr. Jan Jacobs, who in her all too short life, made important contributions to our field, not the least of which is an area close to the hearts of most of us, i.e. the growth and development of women and girls. As many of you know, as President-elect, I serve as Program Chair for the next meeting. I consider this an important and significant responsibility. One of my goals is to make sure we take seriously and incorporate

our multidisciplinary commitment into our next meeting. I invite you all to share with me your ideas and suggestions for the program on all dimensions, scholarly, financial and social. Our meeting dates and location have been decided. I am pleased to report that we will be hosted by the **Pennsylvania State University, October 18-20, 2007**. We are in the process of identifying those scholars whom we would most like to invite. Your suggestions are welcome. I believe with your help we can make this our best conference yet!

Visit our website for the program from the 4th Biennial Meeting. The presentations from the Poster session are also available online

WWW.SSHDONLINE.ORG

Research in Human Development Now Online

Research in Human Development is moving to electronic form for SSHD members soon. Members will receive instructions for registering and activating access to all available content of the journal. When members register for a username and password, they may

sign up for electronic TOC Alerting Service which will notify them via email when each issue of the journal is posted on the website. All SSHD members will receive further instructions for registering for electronic access.

FEATURED SCHOOL

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY



Steve Zarit
Department Head

Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) at Penn State has a long and distinguished record of scholarship and training.

Many of the key concepts and methods that form the foundation of a lifespan approach

were developed at Penn State, and many of our doctoral students have gone on to be leaders in the field. This tradition continues today. Faculty and students work both on major developmental issues across the lifespan from birth to old age and on creation and refinement of new methods and approaches for studying development.

The graduate program in HDFS has 4 program areas. Students gain knowledge in each of these areas and then specialize in one area, or they may combine two or more areas. The 4 areas are:

- (1) Individual development: Our program emphasizes studying development across the life span from birth to old age. Understanding development depends on a multidisciplinary orientation. Faculty and students in

HDFS are interested in biology, genetics, psychophysiology, and health, as well as sociocultural factors, the environment, and moment-to-moment interactions in the family and beyond that influence development. Students have the opportunity to focus their interests across the life span, including infancy and childhood, adolescence, emerging adulthood, mid-life and old age. There are opportunities for students to draw upon unique longitudinal data sets that allow analyses of predictors of continuity and change across many of the key transition points in the life span and over long periods of time.

- (2) Family development: The family is a primary context in which individual socialization and development take place. It is, perhaps, the principal medium through which culture, society, and social change affect the individual. And it is a social fact in itself that feeds back and can accelerate or mitigate changes occurring in the broader society. Graduate study at Penn State offers students a

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There are currently 73 doctoral students in HDFS and 32 full-time faculty. All students are supported through their graduate students with assistantships and fellowships. New classes average 16 students. We accept applicants with bachelors or masters degrees who have a background in any area of the social and behavioral sciences.

For more information, see our website at: <http://www.hhdev.psu.edu>

PENN STATE HDFS

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unique opportunity to develop the substantive, methodological, and theoretical skills necessary to study human families.

- (3) **Intervention and prevention research:** In HDFS, intervention research is the science of designing, implementing, and evaluating a broad array of approaches for improving the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities. Typically, interventions in HDFS are developmental in focus, meaning they are designed to prevent problems or to enhance healthy development, rather than to remediate long-standing personal, relational, or family problems. HDFS interventions often target the contexts in which people develop including families, schools, health and human service agencies, workplaces, and communities.
- (4) **Research Methodology:** The field needs researchers who not only understand the critical substantive issues driving our search for knowledge, but who also have the expertise in statistical methods and research design that enable us to address these issues. Our doctoral program is structured so that all HDFS students receive excellent preparation in research methodology, and have the opportunity to emphasize this area, if they choose. Methodology training is an integral part of the doctoral program. It is done by faculty who are part of this program and who understand and work on the same research questions that students are addressing. This approach creates a “user-friendly” approach to methods, where students get hands-on training in approaches that are immediately applicable to their own research interests. Students have the opportunity to learn a variety of statistical and methodological approaches such as structural equation modeling, multilevel and growth curve modeling, time series and dynamical systems modeling, latent class and latent transitions analysis, growth mixture modeling, missing data analysis, and observational methodology.

The HDFS program is guided by a mentorship model of research training. All doctoral students begin working on research in their first semester, under the direction of faculty. They learn research methods and statistics in large part by doing it. Our students regularly present their research at conferences and are encouraged to publish their work in appropriate journals.

GRADUATE STUDENT’S CORNER: MEET ELIZABETH BRAUNGART FAUTH

I received my B.S. in May of 2000 from Syracuse University, majoring in Psychology, and



Elizabeth Braungart Fauth

I started graduate school at Penn State in the department of Human Development and Family Studies the following fall. Last August I graduated from Penn State with my Ph.D.

My research is in the area of aging. For my Master's degree I focused on longitudinal changes in behavioral symptoms of dementia, as well as associated caregiver stress. Then for my doctoral degree I focused on predicting longitudinal changes in functional ability and disability of the oldest-old, without an exclusive emphasis on dementia. I am continuing my research in both of these areas, and although they may appear to be separate topics, I see them both as falling under the general theme of maintaining independence and quality of life for older adults, and reducing their everyday

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MEET ELIZABETH BRAUNGART FAUTH

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stress.

I was attracted to Penn State because of its reputation in thorough methodology training and because of the specific research that Dr. Zarit (my academic mentor) was conducting on caregiving. It was a great choice for me and I feel I had a wonderful experience at Penn State. Along with the very thorough training I received in both research and teaching, one important benefit of getting my degree at Penn State is the number of gerontologists that also did their doctoral work at Penn State. Connection to this vast network of researchers has allowed me to make some valuable connections with other gerontologists across the country, and I value these relationships tremendously.

The professional highlights of my graduate experience there were when I received research fellowships from the National Institute of Aging and the National Institute of Mental Health. Penn State offers many gerontology students the experience of being trained under these grants, which allows students to really focus their energies on their research and provides them the resources to travel to national and international conferences. I feel these traineeships provided a solid foundation for my career in research and have guided many students towards successful careers in gerontology.

Like most Penn State graduate students, I felt I had a lot of "interdisciplinary experiences" during my graduate education. For example, I was able to assist on aging research projects in the biobehavioral health department, specifically the genetics center. Our weekly lectures at the Gerontology Colloquium often featured talks from people conducting aging research in policy, nursing, kinesiology and various other fields. Our classroom training covered theories from biology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, epidemiology, and so on. This interdiscipli-

nary approach was one of things I liked best about my graduate studies at Penn State -- I felt like I was a part of a whole circle of people from various fields tackling the same problems from different directions, and it always made me feel like I was getting a more "whole" understanding of development, as opposed to just learning one perspective.

If students are considering the HDFS department at Penn State for their doctoral work, I think having undergraduate training in psychology, sociology, or human development departments would be ideal. Because the HDFS department at Penn State is so interdisciplinary, however, other backgrounds could also work, as long as it fit well with the student's Masters or PhD research. As for personal characteristics, I don't feel as though only one kind of person can be successful in the program. We had students with all kinds of backgrounds and personalities that did well at Penn State. Of course time management skills will help a student get through the program a bit easier, but even that skill can be learned, I think.

As for my own personal and professional development, the good thing about studying older people is that it makes me realize I have a lot of time left in life to do the things I want to do! At this point in my professional development, I would consider myself a young researcher, and my priorities right now are to establish ways of funding my own research. I have submitted my first R03 grant and am waiting to hear if that gets funded, so that is at least a good start.

Because my husband and I are both balancing careers, we have discovered the difficulty involved in trying to find two "perfect" jobs in the same city. I am lucky right now because he has found a wonderful job in Logan, Utah working for a small orthopedic company as a research engineer, and the grant that I am working on for my post-doc allows me to be very flexible and work from home. Logan is also a university town, and I have been able to continue teaching (at Utah State University) which I enjoy very much.

In my personal developmental trajectory, I have also experienced a lot of recent exciting changes.

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My husband and I got married in July 2005, we both graduated with our PhD's in August, and then relocated to Logan, UT in November. I think we packed in as many stressful life events as possible in six months! But we are both very satisfied with our current situations and are practicing being parents with our new chocolate lab puppy. Minus a few chewed-up socks, things are going smoothly!

For my long-term personal and professional goals, hopefully I will eventually be active in both teaching and research as tenured faculty at a university. The location of that university is yet unknown, but my husband and I are open to living in many places in the country. I also hope to have started a family at some point. I know that balancing work and family in academia is sometimes difficult but I have seen enough people do it successfully that I am looking forward to the experience.

New and Noteworthy in Development

Development and Social Policy

Tang, K. L., & Lee, J. J. (2005). Global Social Justice for Older People: A Case for an International Convention on the Rights of Older People *British Journal of Social Work, 36*(4), pages TBA.

Abstract: Older people are beginning to represent a large proportion of the general population and have become a major area for social programming in many parts of the world. However, neglect or violation of older people's rights is common. Until recently, there has been a surprising lack of advocacy on the part of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and human rights activists for a legally effective international convention on the rights of older people, as compared with other vulnerable groups such as children and women. This paper argues that the introduction of an international convention on the rights of older people is long overdue. Such an international convention should contain comprehensive and legally binding provisions which would require ratifying states to promote older people's rights. It should be reinforced by a strong monitoring system that would involve key members of the international community. This paper outlines the arguments in favor of the creation of a transnational human rights agreement for older people and proposes that international NGOs and human rights advocates should work toward creating such a convention.

Developmental Neuroscience

Blair, C. (2006). How similar are fluid cognition and general intelligence? A developmental neuroscience perspective on fluid cognition as an aspect of human cognitive ability. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 29*, 109-125.

Abstract: This target article considers the relation of fluid cognitive functioning to general intelligence. A neurobiological model differentiating working memory/executive function cognitive processes of the prefrontal cortex from aspects of psychometrically defined general intelligence is presented. Work examining the rise in mean intelligence-test performance between normative cohorts, the neuropsychology and neuroscience of cognitive function in typically and atypically developing human populations, and stress, brain development, and corticolimbic connectivity in human and nonhuman animal models is reviewed and found to provide evidence of mechanisms through which early experience affects the development of an aspect of cognition closely related to, but distinct from, general intelligence. Particular emphasis is placed on the role of emotion in fluid cognition and on research indicating fluid cognitive deficits associated with early hippocampal pathology and with dysregulation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis stress-response system. Findings are seen to be con-

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sistent with the idea of an independent fluid cognitive construct and to assist with the interpretation of findings from the study of early compensatory education for children facing psychosocial adversity and from behavior genetic research on intelligence. It is concluded that ongoing development of neurobiologically grounded measures of fluid cognitive skills appropriate for young children will play a key role in understanding early mental development and the adaptive success to which it is related, particularly for young children facing social and economic disadvantage. Specifically, in the evaluation of the efficacy of compensatory education efforts such as Head Start and the readiness for school of children from diverse backgrounds, it is important to distinguish fluid cognition from psychometrically defined general intelligence.

Development & Genetics

Gottesman, I. I., & Hanson, D. R. (2005). Human Development: Biological and Genetic Processes. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 56, 263-286.

Abstract: Adaptation is a central organizing principle throughout biology, whether we are studying species, populations, or individuals. Adaptation in biological systems occurs in response to molar and molecular environments. Thus, we would predict that genetic systems and nervous systems would be dynamic (cybernetic) in contrast to previous conceptualizations with genes and brains fixed in form and function. Questions of nature versus nurture are meaningless, and we must turn to epigenetics—the way in which biology and experience work together to enhance adaptation throughout thick and thin. Defining endophenotypes—road markers that bring us closer to the biological origins of the developmental journey—facilitates our understanding of adaptive or maladaptive processes. For human behavioral disorders such as schizophrenia and autism, the inherent plasticity of the nervous system requires a systems approach to incorporate all of the myriad epigenetic factors that can influence such outcomes.

Developmental Methods

Bauer, D. (2005). The Role of Nonlinear Factor-to-Indicator Relationships in Tests of Measurement Equivalence. *Psychological Methods*, 10(3), 305-316.

Abstract: Measurement invariance is a necessary condition for the evaluation of factor mean differences over groups or time. This article considers the potential problems that can arise for tests of measurement invariance when the true factor-to-indicator relationship is nonlinear (quadratic) and invariant but the linear factor model is nevertheless applied. The factor loadings and indicator intercepts of the linear model will diverge across groups as the factor mean difference increases. Power analyses show that even apparently small quadratic effects can result in rejection of measurement invariance at moderate sample sizes when the factor mean difference is medium to large. Recommendations include the identification of nonlinear relationships using diagnostic plots and consideration of newly developed methods for fitting nonlinear factor models.

Adult Development

Perrig-Chiello, P., & Perren, S. (2005). Biographical Transitions from a Midlife Perspective. *Journal of Adult Development*, 12 (4), 169-181.

Abstract: Recent advances in life-span developmental psychology suggest that individual lives can be characterized as a series of interrelated transitions. The question of when and how past transitions have been experienced and how they affect subsequent ageing may be critical to understanding midlife adjustment. The aim of this study is (a) to investigate timing and emotional valence of experienced normative and silent transitions of middle-aged persons, and (b) to discover the impact of past transitions on current well-being and on anticipation of old age. Analysis of interview data from 268 persons suggest a considerable stability in the basic structure of human biography, but also evidence for age group, gender, and personality differences in the subjective perception of the life-course, adjustment and future anticipation in middle age. Emotional valence of puberty and that of personality variables were found to be important predictors of actual psychological well-being and anticipation of old age.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER?

The Society for the Study of Human Development (SSHD) is seeking to add new members and we invite you to consider joining this groundbreaking organization. SSHD is the *only* organization in the U. S. devoted exclusively to fostering research in human development across the life span. The Society was initiated in 1998 by a group of eminent scholars in the field who recognized the importance of creating a forum for life span researchers. We have had four successful biennial meetings and planning is under way for a fifth exciting conference. Our journal, *Research in Human Development*, is at the cutting edge of the field and will soon be available to members fully on-line. Our on-line newsletter, The Networker, keeps members up-to-date on job opportunities, Society activities, and new developments in the field.

To learn more about the Society, or to submit a membership application, log on to our web site: <http://www.sshdonline.org>. We look forward to including you in our growing membership and we hope to see you at our next meeting!

What are you missing?

Research in Human Development Vol. 2 (4) CURRENT ISSUE

Immigration Stress, Social Support, and Adjustment in the First Post-Migration Year: An Intergenerational Analysis

Mary J. Levitt, Jonathan D. Lane, Jerome Levitt

Academic Pathways and Children of Immigrant Families

Laura A. Szalacha, Amy Kerivan Marks, Meaghan Lamarre, Cynthia Garcia Coll

Arab American Elders: Network Structure, Perceptions of Relationship Quality, and Discrimination

Kristine J. Ajrouch

Physical and Mental Health Consequences of Aging in Place and Aging Out of Place Among Black Caribbean Immigrants

James S. Jackson, Toni C. Antonucci