Unit 4: Adolescence

PHYSICAL AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

SPCL 7804
Adolescent Growth

- Distalproximal
- Brain development
- Puberty
Behavioral Changes with Puberty

- Moodiness
- Conflict with parents
- Negative affect
- Risky behavior
Early vs. Late Maturation

How does timing of sexual maturation affect the storm and stress of adolescence?
Psychopathology

- 50% of mental illness occurs by age 14, and 75% by age 24
- Eating disorders
  - Anorexia Nervosa
  - Bulimia Nervosa
  - Binge-Eating Disorder
Which of the following is **not** an illustration of formal operational thought?

A. Alyssa classifies information about the main branches of the US government by drawing a diagram of various departments within each branch.

B. Cody generates all the possible combinations of numbers from a seven digit telephone number.

C. Cai writes a paper discussing how satire is used in a popular comic strip to promote deeper thinking.

D. Farouk creates a story about a society that is free from war, suffering, and death.
Formal Operational Thought & Information Processing

- Abstract reasoning
- Coordinating multiple relationships – transitivity
- Scientific problem solving – using combinatorial logic & hypothesizing
  - Inductive vs. deductive reasoning
- Introspection
- Constructing ideals – generating ideas about the world as it could be
- Metacognition
  - Processing speed and working memory increase
  - Selective attention continues to improve (ignoring distracting stimuli)
  - Cognitive control (self-regulation)
Formal Operational Thought

Can be difficult, even for adults – adolescents and adults don’t often use it effectively

- 30% of young adolescents (~13) show a tendency to apply formal reasoning in some situations
- 60% of older adolescents or young adults (college students) apply formal reasoning

Presence of pseudostupidity
Application

It’s a typical day for Tessa, a school counselor who works with teenagers. Marcus explains to her that he came to school high on drugs because he can get away with it. He believes his teachers are clueless when it comes to spotting kids on drugs. What is going on here?
Elkind’s Adolescent Egocentrism

Elkind proposed that physiological changes and formal operational thinking lead to adolescents’ self-focused thought.
Elkind’s Adolescent Egocentrism

What it Looks Like...

1. The imaginary audience
   Everyone is looking at me!

2. The mythological fable
   That won’t ever happen to me!

3. The personal fable
   Nobody knows what it’s like to be me!

Three types of adolescent egocentrism:

invincibility fable
Adolescent Egocentrism Reconsidered

Studies indicate that adolescents’ self-focused thought is not as closely associated with the emergence of formal operational skills as Elkind suggested.

Lapsley argues that the social realities of adolescence (the need to separate from parents and to form an adult identity) are at least as important in explaining adolescent egocentrism.
Adolescent Egocentrism Reconsidered

Lapsley contends that
- the imaginary audience may be an expression of intense anxiety associated with individuation
- the personal fable may be a useful fantasy for reducing some of that anxiety
Annotated Bibliography Paper