"Study of the Child: History and Trends"

I. Historical View of Childhood

- A. Ancient Greece & Rome (600 B.C. to 400 A.D.):
 - 1. Plato (427-347 B.C.): nativist knowledge is inborn
 - 2. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.): empiricist -knowledge gained through sensory experience.
 - 3. Infanticide killing of newborns females especially
 - 4. Slave labor sexual exploitation
- B. <u>Medieval Period</u> (1400 A.D. fall of Rome): children wore adult fashions and pursued adult passions, but were also seen as fragile and in need of protection.
 - 1. Church Ruled: Christianity send unwanted children to convents and monasteries. Children seen as born with original sin.
- C. <u>Renaissance</u> (1300 1600's):
 - 1. Growing belief that society is partly responsible for care and protection of children. Toy making industry play was seen as normal and important in the development of the child.
- D. <u>Reformation</u> (1500's): child rearing taken seriously, emphasis on education.
- E. <u>Descartes Dualistic Model</u> (1596-1650): he believed that we shared our biology with animals (this paved the way for studying animals to gain knowledge about humans), but the mind was something humans alone had. The mind contains certain "innate ideas" (e.g., God and self; ideas of space, time, and motion) which are not derivable from experience. Met with little religious opposition "God given" mind.

II. Early Theories

- A. <u>John Locke</u> (1632-1704): Empiricism all knowledge comes from experience ("Tabula Rasa" blank slate).
- B. <u>Jean-Jacques Rousseau</u> (1712-1778): Nativism innate processes driving force behind development. Human development unfolds naturally in very positive ways as long as society allows it to do so.
- C. <u>Charles Darwin</u> (1809-1882): competition for survival, natural selection, evolutionary value of behaviors (ethology).
 - 1. The baby biographies: Darwin observed and recorded his eldest son's behavior.

III. Pioneers of Child Psychology

- A. G. Stanley Hall (1844-1924): Father of child Psychology
 - 1. Questionnaire Method: groups of children
 - 2. Biological view influenced by Darwin
- B. <u>Sigmund Freud</u> (1856-1939): stage theorist (psychosexual model drive theory), experience during each stage influences development (fixation).

- C. <u>John B. Watson</u> (1878-1958): founder of behaviorism
 - 1. Got rid of consciousness as an area of scientific study
 - 2. Psychology as a purely objective experimental branch of natural science: the goal is the prediction and control of behavior.
- D. <u>Arnold Gesell</u> (1920's & 1930's): normative patterns these patterns unfold naturally with maturation.
- E. <u>Jean Piaget</u> (1896-1980): Genetic Epistemology (knowledge and its changes)
 - 1. Qualitative Differences in mistakes children made incorrect answers to IQ questions more informative than correct ones same kinds of mistakes were made by children of same age.
 - 2. Theories based on observation made by Piaget and his wife on their own children criticized for use of own children.

V. General Principles of Developmental Psychology:

- A. <u>Differentation</u>: growth develops from general to specific.
- B. <u>Integration</u>: growth proceeds from simple to complex.
- C. Cephalocaudel Principle: growth proceeds directionally from head to tail.
- D. <u>Proximodistal Principle</u>: growth proceeds from intermost to outermost.
- E. <u>Critical Periods</u>: period in time when an event will have its greatest impact (e.g., language development, embryonic development thalidomide, and attachment).
- F. <u>Uneven Growth</u>: although children all go through the same sequences of growth there are wide individual differences in timing.

| • | What is developmental psychology? |
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| • | What questions do developmental psychologist try to answer? |

• Goals of Developmental Psychologist?

Major Issues in Developmental Psychology?