7. Overview of Developmental Theories

Feldman's Theory of Universal to Unique Development

Universal Achievements
According to Feldman "there are certain advances in thought which all children will achieve. …. The achievement of universals is assumed to occur spontaneously. …. [That is] no special environment is required to guarantee that an individual will achieve [universal functions or operations]" (Feldman, 1985, p. 7).

Cultural Achievements
According to D. H. Feldman "There exist domains of knowledge that all individuals within a given culture are expected to acquire. .... The expectation is that every child in the cultural group should be able to achieve a certain level of mastery of the designated domains although not necessarily the highest level in each (1985, p. 9)." "... cultural environmental conditions are different from universal conditions in that they are created, husbanded [taken care of], preserved and passed on by members of a culture (Feldman, 1985, p. 17)." In general, cultural achievements are those taught <u>informally within a culture</u>, as opposed to achievements mastered formally through schooling.

Discipline-Based Achievements
According to D. H. Feldman "at the next major landmark [after cultural achievements] are developmental [achievements] that are based on mastery of a particular discipline. In some discipline-based domains such as chess or aviation, the different levels of mastery and the criteria for their attainment are clearly and explicitly established (e.g. Expert or Master level play in chess.) For other domains (such as medicine, carpentry, or political leadership) the levels of achievement are less clearly defined. One difference between cultural and discipline-based bodies of knowledge is that fewer people learn discipline-based domains than cultural ones (1985, pp. 9-10)."

Idiosyncratic Achievements
According to Feldman "most idiosyncratic domains are probably actually subareas of a discipline, craft, or profession. Not very many individuals within a culture will necessarily (or should necessarily) achieve a given level of expertise within such domains" (1985, p. 10). Individuals wishing to attain idiosyncratic achievements "must begin at the beginning [level of a domain] and advance through the levels, progressing from novice … to expert to master…. (Feldman. 1985, p. 10)

Unique Achievements
According to Feldman unique achievements "represent a form of organization within a domain that has never before been accomplished in quite the same way" (1985, p.11). The sort of unique achievement Feldman refers to goes beyond the general sense in which every person's achievements are unique because every human being is unique. He proposes that "individuals may at times fashion out new levels of organization within a domain or, in the most extreme cases establish a new or radically altered domain by transcending the constraints of an existing field or discipline to establish a major new order" (Feldman, 1985, p. 11). Feldman calls such achievements creative. He proposes that "while all creative advances in thought are in some sense unique, not all unique advances should be called creative. Creative advances result in substantial new contributions to bodies of knowledge; most unique advances, in fact, do not do this and therefore are not considered [by him] as creative" (Feldman, 1985, p. 11).

Gilligan's Development of the Ethic of Care

Based on studies of women confronted with moral dilemmas Gilligan found "a distinct moral language of selfishness and responsibility, which defines the moral problem as one of obligation to exercise care and avoid hurt. The inflicting of hurt is considered selfish and immoral in its fulfillment of moral responsibility. The reiterative use by the women of the words *selfish* and *responsible* is talking about moral conflict and choice, given the underlying moral orientation that this language reflects, sets the women apart from the men whom Kohlberg studied and points toward a different understanding of moral development" (Gilligan, 1993, p. 73). Based on her studies of the moral development of girls and women, Gilligan proposes a sequence in the ethic of care.

First Perspective
Young girls focus initially on caring for themselves. When caring for themselves is criticized as selfish, they transition into the second perspective. "The criticism signals a new understanding of the connection between self and others which is articulated by the concept of responsibility." (Gilligan, 1993, p. 74).

Second Perspective
Girls and women viewing their decisions from the second perspective focus on caring for others. "The elaboration of this concept of responsibility and its fusion with a maternal morality that seeks to ensure care for the dependent and unequal characterizes the second perspective. …. However, when only others are legitimized as the recipients of the woman's care, the exclusion of herself gives rise to problems in relationships, creating a disequalibrium…." (Gilligan, 1993, p. 74). Although many women continue to maintain the second perspective, some transition to the third perspective as they try to "sort out the confusion between self-sacrifice and care inherent in the conventions of feminine goodness" (Gilligan, 1993, p. 74).

Third Perspective
Women viewing the world from the third perspective understand that the world works better when they include themselves among those of whom they take care. They develop a "new understanding of the interconnection between other and self. …. This ethic, which reflects a cumulative knowledge of human relationships, evolved around a central insight, that self and other are interdependent" (Gilligan, 1993, p. 74).

King and Kitchner's Theory of Development of Reflective Judgment

Pre-Reflective Thinking
Stage 1: In King and Kitchner's Pre-Reflective Stage 1, "Typically, [truth] is expressed in the beliedf that there is an absolute correspondence between what is seen or perceived and what is. .... Beliefs do not require justification since one must only observe to know. .... Beliefs are not consciously constructed; they are simply held and are not open to criticism or doubt. Inquiry as a process is not perceived" (pp. 47-48).

Stage 2: In King and Kitchner's Pre-Reflective Stage 2, "there s a true reality that can be known with certainty but is not known by everyone. Certain knowledge is seen as the domain of authorities..." (p. 51). Stage 2 Pre-Reflective thinkers differentiate two kinds of belief: right and wrong. "People using Stage 2 assumptions ... seek the right answer from a 'good' authority. Evidence, whether supportive or contradictory, is not seen as relevant" (p. 52).

Stage 3: Stage 3 Pre-Reflective thinkers believe " that in some areas even authorities may not currently have the truth. .... [Their] understanding of truth, knowledge, and evidence remains concrete and situation bound. .... Diverse points of view, different conceptions of the same problem, discrepant data, and so on are incorporated by the system as areas of temporary uncertainty" (p. 55). Stage 3 thinkers are often confused because they do not distinguish beliefs and evidence.

Quasi-Reflective Thinking
Stage 4: People using Stage 4 begin to understand abstraction and are not limited to concrete examples, however, they do not clearly understand the difference between knowledge of truth and justification of belief. "[B]ecause neither evidence nor evaluations of evidence are certain, any judgment about the evidence is idiosyncratic to the person making the judgment. .... They choose evidence that fits their prior beliefs ... and presume that others do the same" (pp. 58-59).

Stage 5: In Stage 5, "while people may not know directly of with certainty, they may knowledge within a context based on subjective interpretations of evidence, a belief they sometimes call relativism. .... [W]hat is known is always limited by the perspective of the knower. .... [I]ndividuals frequently appear to be giving a balanced picture of an issue or problem rather than offering a justification for their own beliefs" (pp. 62-63).

Reflective Thinking
Stage 6: People using Stage 6 assumptions recognize "that problems that are complexly understood (for example, understanding that a problem can be approached from multiple perspectives, incorporating multiple kinds of evidence) require some kind of thinking action before a resolution can be constructed. ....[T]hey can compare and relate the properties of two different views of the same issues. .... [Individuals using Stage 6 assumptions will usually reject the terms *right* and *wrong* when evaluating arguments, they will suggest that one view is better, explaining that the other view has less evidence, that it is less appropriate or less compelling for the particular situation at hand, and so on" (pp. 67-68).

Stage 7: In Stage 7, people "take on the role of inquirers; they are agents involved in constructing knowledge. .... They are aware that their current knowledge claims may later be superceded by more adequate explanations. ... [In Stage 7, people are able] "to abstract generalizations about inquiry from frequent participation in the inquiry process" (pp. 70-71).

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development

Premoral or Preconventional Morality
L. Kohlberg identifies two premoral ot preconventional stages of morality: 1) Punishment and Obedience and 2) Instrumental Exchange. According to Kohlberg, when people are in the Punishment and Obedience Stage, they are motivated to obey in order to avoid retaliation from someone more powerful than themselves. When people are in the Instrumental Exchange Stage, they see favors and punishments as trade offs. They make concessions in order to get what they want or need.

Conventional Morality
Kohlberg identifies two stages in the development of conventional morality: 1) Interpersonal Conformity and 2) Law and Order. People in the Interpersonal Conformity Stage act in ways they hope will be approved by others. Such approval is often expresses as being a "good boy" or a "nice good". People in the Law and Order Stage follow rules for the good of the social order and seldom question authorities.

Postconventional Morality
Kohlberg identifies two stages in the development of postconventional morality: 1) Prior Rights and Social Contract and 2) Universal Ethical Principles. People in the Prior Rights and Social Contract Stage do not act according to a checklist of rules, but by applying abstract moral principles. The actions of individuals derive from mutual obligations or an understanding of the public good. People in the Universal Ethical Principles Stage believe in the equality and worth of all people and do not use people as a means to an end.

Kuhn's Levels of Epistemological Understanding

Realist Level
Statements are <u>copies</u> of the world. "Knowledge comes from an external source and certain" and "Critical thinking is unnecessary" (Kuhn, 1999, p. 13).

Absolutist Level
Statements are correct or incorrect <u>facts</u>. "Knowledge comes from an external source and certain" and "Critical thinking is a vehicle for comparing assertions to reality and determining their truth or falsehood" (Kuhn, 1999, p. 13).

Multiplist Level
Statements are <u>opinions</u> people choose. "Knowledge is generated by human minds and is uncertain" and "critical thinking is irrelevant" (Kuhn, 1999, p. 13).

Evaluative Level
Statements are <u>judgments</u> that can be evaluated according to standards and evidence. "Knowledge is generated by human minds and is uncertain" and "Critical thinking is valued as a vehicle that promotes sound assertions and enhances understanding" (Kuhn, 1999, p. 13).

Lowenfeld's Theory of the Development of Children's Drawing

Scribbling Stage
Children at the Scibbling stage enjoy the kinesthetic process of scribbling but are not attempting to represent anything in the world. Over time scribbles become for orderly and eventually many children give their scribbles names.

Preschematic Stage
At the Preschematic stage children begin consciously to represent things, usually beginning with people. They reveal their thinking in their drawings. In the Schematic stage children develop a specific way (schema) to represent things. Schematic drawings show space with things standing on a baseline.

Gang Age: Dawning Realism Stage
Children in the Gang or Dawning-Realism Stage grow dissatisfied with their schematic images and add increasing detail. They begin to show a horizon rather than placing things on baselines and use overlapping to show spatial relationships.

Pseudo-Naturalistic Stage
In the Pseudo-Naturalistic stage, young people are no longer spontaneous but are interested making naturalistic drawings. They begin to represent light and shadow, things diminishing in size in the distance.

The Period of Decision
Without formal art instruction many grow increasingly self critical and do not continue to draw.

Perry's Theory of Cognitive and Ethical Growth

Dualism
Things are either good or bad, right or wrong, a success or a failure. There are answers to problems somewhere. Authorities know the answers. (Perry, 1981, p. 79)

Multiplicity
One person's opinion is as good as another's in cases where there is no right answer. (Perry, 1981, p. 79-80)

Relativism
There are systems for judging opinions and values. "Some opinions may be found to be worthless, while there will remain matters about which reasonable people will reasonably disagree" (Perry, 1981, p. 80).

Commitment
People can affirm, choose, or decide matters, such as career, values, politics, and personal relationships, even though they know that opinions and values are relative (see Relativism above) (Perry, 1981, p. 80)

Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development

Sensori-motor Stage (birth to age two)
Piaget concluded that young children construct what they know through their actions: first through reflexive action, then through schematic and habitual action, then through actions based on intention and an understanding of environmental consequences, then through experimental action, and eventually through actions based on representative symbols.

Sensori-motor understanding is the first stage of cognitive development and is universal. Children at this stage take in information through their senses and through the movements of their bodies. They develop a sense of self, separate from the world around them. They understand that one thing can affect another and that things continue to exist even when not being perceived.

Preoperational Stage (ages two through six)
Preoperational understanding is Piaget's second stage of cognitive development. According to Piaget, children at this stage are self-centered and have difficulty understanding the perspectives of others. Children in this stage begin to understand symbols (such as words and images that represent things in the world).

Concrete Operations Stage (ages seven through twelve--and many adults)
According to J. Piaget, as children mature and interact with their environment, they develop their capacity to reason logically. However, their reason is limited at first to understanding relationships and ideas as applied to concrete objects and situations. He calls this stage of cognitive development the Concrete Operations Stage and associates it with young people approximately between the ages of 7 and 12. At this stage children are no longer as egocentric in their thinking as in the Preoperational stage and can organize their thoughts coherently.

Formal Operations Stage (ages twelve through adulthood)
Piaget called his next cognitive stage of development the Formal Operations Stage. People in this stage can formulate hypotheses and systematically test them. They can express and manipulate ideas abstractly, that is, through words and numbers. They can reason without reference to concrete things or situations. Growing up in a culture, especially one without universal, mandatory formal education, does not guarantee that one masters formal operations. Piaget and others have pointed out that many adults never learn to reason abstractly.   Systematic instruction seems to be necessary to move beyond concrete reasoning to reasoning abstractly.

Turiel's Stages of Conventional Understanding

- **Stage One:** UNDERSTANDING: Six and seven-year olds understand conventional information as "descriptive of what is assumed to exist" (Hastie, 1987, p. 178).
- **Stage Two:** QUESTIONING: Eight and 9-year olds understand "conventional acts as arbitrary" (Hastie, 1987, p. 178).
- **Stage Three**: UNDERSTANDING: Ten and eleven year-olds understand conventions as arbitrary and changeable and "based on concrete rules and authoritative expectations" (Hastie, 1987, p. 178).
- **Stage Four:** QUESTIONING: Twelve and thirteen year olds evaluate a convention by evaluating the act to which it pertains. They understand conventions as "'nothing but' social expectations" (Hastie, 1987, p. 178).
- **Stage Five:** UNDERSTANDING: Fourteen through sixteen year olds begin to understand convention as "normative regulation in [a] system with uniformity, fixed roles and static hierarchical organization" (Hastie, 1987, p. 178).
- **Stage Six:** QUESTIONING: Seventeen and 18-year olds understand conventions as "'nothing but' societal standards that exist through habitual use" (Hastie, 1987, p. 179).
- **Stage Seven:** UNDERSTANDING: Eighteen through twenty-five year olds understand "conventions as uniformities that are functional in coordinating social interactions. [They believe that] shared knowledge, in the form of conventions, among members of social groups facilitates interaction and operation of the system" (Hastie, 1987, p. 179).

Vygotsky's Social Theory of the Formation of Mind

Natural or Elementary Mental Processes
Natural or elementary mental processes are those associated with the organic growth and development of a child. He proposes that natural or elementary mental functions are different from social, interpersonal mental functions, though these two types of development occur simultaneous in young children and interact during development.

Social, Interpsychological Mental Processes
Vygotsky argues that mental processes are first performed with others (usually one's mother) before they are internalized. Vygotsky described the child's development from grasping to pointing as an example of moving from a natural mental process (grasping) to a higher, social mental process. A child learns to point (use a sign) through interaction with an adult. "The *combination* of the child's behavior and the adult's response transforms a noncommunicative behavior into a sign on the interpsychological plane. The sign form is transformed from a general reaching and grasping movement to an indicatory gesture. Later, the child gains voluntary control on the intrapsychologial plane over what formerly existed only in social interaction" (Wertsch, 1985, pp. 64-5).

Individual, Intrapsychological Mental Processes
Vygotsky proposes that the mental processes people use internally (within their own individual thinking processes) were first developed externally with another person. One of Vygotsky's followers identified three stages in the internalization of mental processes: "(1) making an external action maximally explicit; (2) transferring its representaion to audible speech, first on the interpsychological plane and then on the interpsycholgical plane, and (3) transferring it to inner speech" (Wertsch, 1985, pp. 66).

Vygotsky proposed that "Instruction is good only when it proceeds ahead of development. Then t awakens and rouses life and entire set of functions which are in the stage of maturing, which lie in the zone of proximal development" (Wertsch, P. 71).