

EDPSY 581: Bruner Seminar—An Overview of the Interplay of Psychology and Education

Winter 2002

Tuesdays 1:30 to 3:50pm

Miller 402P

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OH: Mondays, 2pm to 4pm (or by appt)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Over the past fifty years there has been a complex interplay between the fields of education and psychology as efforts have been made to intellectually grasp and correspondingly orchestrate human knowing, learning, and development. In this graduate reading seminar, we will conduct a chronological reading of select works of Jerome Bruner related to issues of education. In addition to reading the pieces as scholarly works in their own right, we will also use this particular corpus as a means of exploring the shifting landscape of education in light of the theories and trends of psychological research that have sought to inform it in conjunction with Bruner's anthropological tendencies and perspectives.

Bruner has been one of the most influential and eloquent psychologists of our time. Over the course of more than six decades, his work has explored a variety of topics related to a pursuit of how people organize experience. For this reason, the readings provide a broad overview of numerous topics in psychology and education including the structure of subject matter, child development, perception, thinking, play, the processes of language acquisition, cognitive and psychocultural theories of instruction for education, autobiography and narrative, and the profound influence of culture on learning and development. In addition to this overview of the field, the class will also offer us the opportunity to reflect upon the many choices made within the intellectual life of a productive academic over the course of his career.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Participating in Class Discussions. Given the graduate reading seminar format, all class members are expected to actively participate in the discussions each week.
2. Posting Informal Reactions to the Readings on the Class Web Discussion Board. Each week, everyone is asked to post a brief critical reaction to some aspect of each of the readings. Compose a paragraph or two that engage with the substance of the piece and try to make a connection back to something else we have read (or another piece that is relevant). You might also include posing critical or wonderment questions, describing how the ideas connect to your interests or projects, or more generally reflecting on the implications of the ideas. This assignment can be as simple as recording your thoughts as you do the readings (i.e., a brief annotation). Each week your comments should be posted **by noon on Monday** so members of the class can view them before we meet each week. We will be using the E-Post tool for this purpose at the following URL:

<http://catalyst.washington.edu/webtools/epost/register.cgi?owner=pbell&id=3904>
(this link will be sent around by email after the first class)

3. Leading Class. Each student will be asked to lead a portion of class discussion once this quarter in collaboration with at least one other student. Class leaders are responsible for coordinating class activities for about an hour that allow us to explore some of the central issues involved in the papers. Class activities should include a discussion of the

papers focused on relevant questions or topics, but can also include more creative activities as well (engaging in tasks that demonstrate phenomena or issues, role plays, problem solving). Please meet with me during my office hours prior to the class session you will be leading to discuss your plan.

4. Exploring the ideas addressed in the readings. In lieu of a culminating paper for this class, you will be asked to explore some of the ideas found in the readings. There are two distinct approaches you can take to this assignment. You should consider which approach might best suit your interests and priorities. You will be asked to decide which route you are taking to this assignment **by the second week of class.**
 - a. *Incremental weekly reports.* Each week under this option, track down and report on one or two topics or studies referenced in a reading that week *or* trace the "life" of one of the week's readings in the literature (i.e., who subsequently cited it and why, how was it received or critiqued, etc.). If you follow this approach, post a brief summary of what you learn to the class web discussion tool under the topic for the relevant paper **by Monday at noon.** Please title your post as follows: "WEEKLY REPORT: <subject>."
 - b. *Annotated bibliography* (5-7 pages). If the readings intersect with a specific interest of yours, you might opt to create an annotated bibliography about the particular topic in question. This will involve 'following out' a set of related papers and critically interpreting them individually and as a collection. Further instructions about the bibliography approach and format will be provided in class. You will be asked to share your annotated bibliography with the rest of the class and lead a brief discussion around the literature you explored. Presentation dates for the annotated bibliographies will be scheduled early in the quarter.

I expect all assignments to be completed in a timely fashion. All written work will be held to high standards and should conform to rules of proper grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling (with leniency for notes posted to E-Post). Please use at least a 12-pt. font for all written work, and the APA format should be used for references. Assignments will be weighed according to the following scheme:

Class Participation	30%
E-Post Contributions	20%
Leading Class Discussion	20%
Weekly Reports / Annotated Bibliography	30%

SCHEDULE OF READINGS & MILESTONES

Week 1, January 7

This session will provide an introduction to this course. We will listen to and discuss the lecture made by Bruner on September 15, 1996 at a joint meeting of the 'Growing Mind Conference' in honor of the centennial of Jean Piaget's birth, and the 'Vygotsky-Piaget Conference' of the Congress of Socio-Cultural Research, honoring both Lev Vygotsky's and Piaget's centennial.

Bruner, J. (1997). Celebrating Divergence: Piaget and Vygotsky. *Human Development*, 40, 63-73.

Week 2, January 14

Lutkehaus, N., & Greenfield, P. (2002). From *The Process of Education* to *The Culture of Education*: An intellectual biography of Jerome Bruner's contributions to education. In B. J. Zimmerman and D. H. Schunk (eds.) *Educational psychology: A Century of Contributions* (pp. 409-429). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Shore, B. (1999). Keeping the conversation going: An interview with Jerome Bruner. *Ethos*, 25, 7-62.

Bruner, J. (1983). *In search of mind: Essays in autobiography*. New York: Harper & Row.
Ch. 1 (Childhood lost and found), 2 (Intro the academy) & 3 (Graduate School at Harvard).

Bruner, J. S., & Allport, G. W. (1940). Fifty years of change in American psychology. *Psychological Bulletin*, 37, 757-776.

Week 3, January 21

Bruner, J. S. & Goodman, C. C. (1947). Value and need as organizing factors in perception. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 42, 33-44.

Bruner, J., Goodnow, J. J., & Austin, G. A. (1956). The process of concept attainment. In *A study of thinking* (pp. 131-157). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Bruner, J. (1960). *The process of education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Week 4, January 28

Bruner, J. (1962). *On knowing: Essays for the left hand*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. S. (1965/1971). Some elements of discovery, *The relevance of education* (pp. 68-81). Oxford, UK: W. W. Norton.

Week 5, February 4

Bruner, J. S. (1965). The growth of mind. *American Psychologist*, 20, 1007-1017.

Bruner, J. (1966). *Toward a theory of instruction*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1966/1971). Toward a disciplined intuition, *The relevance of education* (pp. 82-97). Oxford, UK: W. W. Norton.

Week 6, February 11

Greenfield, P., & Bruner, J. (1966). Culture and cognitive growth. *International Journal of Psychology*, 1(2), 89-107.

Cole, M., & Bruner, J. (1971). Cultural differences and inferences about psychological processes. *American Psychologist*, 26, 867-876.

Wood, D., Bruner, J., & Ross, G. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem solving. *Journal of child psychology and psychiatry*, 17, 89-100.

Bruner, J. S. (1975). From communication to language: A psychological perspective. *Cognition*, 3, 255-287.

Week 7, February 18

Bruner, J. (1981). The social context of language acquisition. *Language & Communication*, 1(2/3), 155-178.

Bruner, J. (1987). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Week 8, February 25

Bruner, J. (1990). Culture and human development: A new look. *Human Development*, 33, 344-355. (OPTIONAL – it is a distilled version of *Acts of meaning*.)

Bruner, J. (1991). *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1993). Explaining and interpreting: Two ways of using mind. In G. Harmen (Ed.), *Conceptions of the human mind: Essays in honor of George A. Miller* (pp. 123-137). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Week 9, March 4

Bruner, J. (1995). Meaning and self in cultural perspective. In D. Bakhurst & C. Sypnowich (Eds.), *The social self* (pp. 18-29). London: Sage.

Bruner, J. (1996). *The culture of education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Week 10, March 11

Bruner, J. (2002). The narrative creation of self, *Making stories: Law, literature, life* (pp. 63-87). New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Bruner, J. (1997). Will cognitive revolutions ever stop? In D. M. Johnson & C. E. Erneling (Eds.), *The future of the cognitive revolution* (pp. 279-292). New York: Oxford.

Geertz, C. (2000). Imbalancing act: Jerome Bruner's cultural psychology, *Available light* (pp. 187-202). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Bruner, J. (1999). Postscript: Some reflections on education research. In E. C. Lagemann & L. S. Shulman (Eds.), *Issues in education research: Problems and possibilities* (pp. 399-409). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Administrative Notes about Teaching at the University of Washington

If you have any concerns about the course or your instructor, please see the instructor about these concerns as soon as possible. If you are not comfortable talking with the instructor or not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may contact Prof. Bob Abbott (Chair of Educational Psychology), 206 616-6308, abbotr@u.washington.edu. If you are still not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may contact Assoc. Dean Steve Kerr, (206) 685-7562, stkerr@u.washington.edu. For your reference these procedures are posted on the bulletin board just outside Student Services, 206 Miller.

If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disabled Student Services, 448 Schmitz, (206) 543-8924 (V/TTY). If you have a letter from Disabled Student Services indicating you have a disability that requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to the Area Secretary to discuss the accommodation you might need for class.