

stones” while others prefer the easy life of eating “bonbons.” Also of note are the poems “Woman Flees,” “The Queen of Between,” and the choreo-styled “Sex Secretaries in Search of a Poet,” which examine the constant struggle of mothers working outside and inside the home to find time for themselves.

In the final section, “Giving Thanks,” Norman returns to her role as a daughter—to both mother and father—and granddaughter. Although these poems evoke the speaker’s warmth for her family, they border on trite sentimentality. Lines such as “for weeks I have been talking to my father / through my mother / inserting care and concern in the phone lines / passing by the heart” (“My Father, Driving”) lack the emotional poignancy found in some of the poems in the earlier sections. Nonetheless, Norman’s collection is a pleasure to read and paints a wide landscape of the lives of women.

The Development of Judgment and Decision Making in Children and Adolescents

Janis E. Jacobs and Paul A. Klaczynski, eds.
Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005.

Reviewed by Tatjana Chorney

In a society where we often hear about large numbers of youth suffering from moral and ethical apathy, lacking a clear sense of orientation with regard to their own individual future and the future of the world at large, making poor choices when it comes to drugs and sex, and where parenting and parental involvement are areas of increasing interest to scholars and the general public, a book dealing with the decision-making practices and patterns among children and adolescents is welcome news.

This collection of ten essays seeks to elucidate the social, contextual, and cognitive aspects of judgment and decision-making. The rationale for the book comes from a perceived dearth of developmental research concerning the cognitive, emotional, and contextual processes underlying the development of judgment. While most traditional theories of cognitive development regard it as a “unidirectional progression from either intuitive thinking to logical, scientific reasoning ... or from states of limited understanding and complexity to more advanced understanding and computational complexity,” the essays hope to serve as a starting point for those interested in new models of thinking about the development of judgment that include a “broader array of explanatory variables and contexts” (xii). Thus, part one presents three developmental models offering different explanations of “what develops” and the relative importance of various cognitive and contextual components important

for developing judgment. Part two emphasizes the emotional, contextual, and social aspects—that is, the non-cognitive aspects—of decision-making, relevant for those interested in adolescent risk-taking and risky decisions. Part three provides three examples of research that apply developmental and decision-making models to practical research questions affecting social policy, such as legal decisions and abortion decisions. Each part is preceded by a brief editorial introduction and followed by scholarly commentary; these brief essays add value to the book as they coherently summarize and contextualize the diverse issues and perspectives raised in each chapter.

Some of the chapters are less than helpful to either researchers or concerned parents in that they come to conclusions about aspects of adolescent life and experience that have been common knowledge for a long time among diverse groups of individuals, irrespective of their level of education. For example, in the first section of the book we learn that “good options are those that are more likely to lead to positive outcomes than not-so-good options,” and that “an important indicator of competent decision making is the ability to choose options that are likely (but not certain) to maintain or improve the decision maker’s physical, emotional or financial well-being (and hopefully two or more of these aspects at the same time)” (11). Or, in discussing the role of consultation in abortion decisions among adolescent girls, we are told that “adolescents clearly consider their mother’s input to be meaningful for their pregnancy resolution decision” and that they see the mother as “the most important person for helping them cope with unexpected pregnancy” (268), although they place a lot of value on conversations with their best friend and romantic partner (depending on the quality of that relationship).

Being mindful not to decontextualize these and similar statements, however, it is worth pointing out that this methodology belongs to traditional academic discourse in the social sciences. And while this discipline-specific format may seem somewhat slow-moving, the book is not written explicitly for interdisciplinary audiences, but for researchers interested in decision-making or developmental psychology, practitioners, and graduate students. Even so, it includes chapters whose methodology and findings may be of great relevance to parents and caregivers and to policy makers, all of whom face complex challenges in caring for children and youth in today’s diverse world. One essay, for example, highlights systematic biases in adolescents’ estimates for the base rates of deviant activities and their own deviant behaviour, and identifies a number of similarities in developmental and contextual patterns in judgment across cultures with different hierarchies and ideologies. Another essay brings existing research on adolescent delinquent behaviour to bear on the current justice system and legal reform.

In general, this volume is a valuable contribution to the field of cognitive psychology and sociology; it enriches our understanding of the entangled relationships among social and cultural frameworks, as well as the development of a concept central to Western political, philosophical, and social thought:

selfhood. The value of this book is both cumulative and specific. Cumulative, because the sheer number of chapters dealing with adolescent decision-making in a wide range of theoretical and practical contexts increases our knowledge of developmental psychology and its practical application. Specific, because many chapters call into question particular assumptions that have governed research and policy, in content and in method. There is specific value even in those chapters that present their findings as subtle repositionings of familiar knowledge, as they provide a sound framework for future research on ideas and beliefs our society takes for granted.

Family Investments in Children's Potential

A. Kalil and T. DeLeire.

London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004.

Reviewed by Lynell Cadray

Family Investments in Children's Potential focuses on the role parents play in raising their children and the varied investments that influence the outcome of children. These outcomes are directly linked to the cultural, social, and economic backgrounds, genetics, and educational levels of parents. This collection of essays, written from a range of perspectives, serves as a useful guide to parents.

In chapter one, Bradley and Corwyn describe the five "S's" of safety/sustenance, stimulation, socio-emotional support, structure, and surveillance. Some of this development is done in prenatal care and continues throughout life. Socio-emotional support occurs during the child's growth and is based on how the child is socialized to norms and life's expectations. Structure relates to limits imposed upon children during their upbringing, and surveillance refers to maintaining the child's safety during upbringing. Despite the apparent practicality of the five "S's," there are many factors that cannot be guaranteed when raising children and no specific formula of assurance that all outcomes for children will be positive.

In chapter three, Michael considers the family's influences on children's verbal ability and contends that investing time in children, even when economic resources are limited, can be extremely beneficial to children. He contends that children's success is dependent not only on wealth, but on quality time spent with parents.

In chapter six, Fuligni and Yoshikawa highlight the experience of immigrant parents who do not speak the language of their adopted country. Immigrant parents, who often leave their native countries to pursue "better"