

Exploring Sculptures to Teach Family Development Theory: The Walking Tour Activity

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ABSTRACT. The university campus has several life-size statues that represent individuals and dyads at various ages. The instructor conducts a walking tour with students to create hypothetical biographies for the individuals or dyads. These biographies are used as a means to explain family development (FD) theory concepts, such as stages and developmental tasks. This article notes teaching options for other educators (with or without access to sculptures).

Keywords: Family development, stages, lifecycle transitions, family structures, active learning, observation, group discussions

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Background

The university (where this activity took place) acquired a group of five life-size statues of (a) young male and female adults embracing each other, (b) female adult and child facing each other, (c) a solo adolescent female athlete stretching, (d) a solo middle-aged male reading a paper, and (e) a solo older male and dog facing each other. This group of statues is located near the northwest corner of a campus building. Near the southeast corner of the same building, there is also one statue of a female adult holding a young toddler (of indeterminate sex). Installed within a specific area on campus, the statues are not placed in an age-sequential order (from youngest to oldest persons). Instead, the young couple statue is adjacent to the statue of the older male with the dog; the older male is adjacent to the middle-aged male statue; the middle-aged man is adjacent to the solo female with girl statue. The lifespan arc (represented across statues) might not be obvious to casual observers, but the statues are strong visual markers in the instructor's effort to teach family development (FD) theory.

Objectives

This course is designed to focus on theories relevant to family science (e.g., family development, symbolic interactionism, systems, chaos). The course concentrates on central tenets or elements of the theories. There is also an emphasis on application of theory in various contexts. Conceptual applications can occur during class activities. At the end of this walking tour activity, students should be able to (a) identify specific FD theoretical concepts and principles, and (b) articulate linkages between concepts and visual representations of family stages.

Rationale

First developed in the 1940s, family development (FD) theory focused primarily on traditional nuclear families (see Duvall, 1988). Over the decades, there have been efforts to expand FD theory to accommodate diversity in family structures (Baxter, Braithwaite, & Nicholson, 1999) and cultures (Falicov, 2005; McLoyd, Hill, & Dodge, 2005). However, FD's basic parameters have remained largely unchanged. The theory broadly focuses on stages that (a) begin with young adults becoming couples, (b) move through couples raising children, and (c) end when couples die (Duvall, 1988; Falicov, 2005). Most stages emphasize childrearing tasks and parental responsibilities (Dykstra & Hagestad, 2007). Critics of FD theory argue that it is too (a) focused on description, (b) redundant and (c) inflexible in response to current familial conditions (Rankin & Weekes, 2000; Rodgers & White, 1993). Students may benefit from active learning techniques in addressing FD concepts and principles (Hall, 2006; Laszloffy, 2002). This instructor has conducted a walk (through sculpture spaces) as an active technique.

Procedure

Typically, this activity is conducted in a three-hour class period. However, the activity occurs in phases. Other educators might distribute phases over a few class periods (or eliminate some phases). The instructor begins with a brief (15-20 minutes) overview of family development (FD) theory's basic concepts and principles, such as lifecycle and transitions. A document that the instructor distributes to students supplements this overview (see sample in Appendix A). The document includes a brief summary of typical stages and specific developmental tasks at each stage. After the overview, the instructor shows students a simple family tree (composed of children, two parents, and four grandparents) and asks them to identify specific stages and tasks which family members experience (now, or previously). After achieving consensus (and accurate responses), the educator begins the walking tour. Students are encouraged to bring the documents with them for the tour.

First, the instructor leads students to the statue of the embracing couple. She asks students to create an identity ("*What are their names?*"), a relationship history, and their current status ("*How did they meet? Are they dating, cohabiting, married or in another type of relationship [such as friends with benefits]? What's happening in their lives now?*"). The creation of a biography or story fits with (a) life course trajectories analysis in family relationships (Hamon & Way, 2001; Morgan & Casper, 2011) and (b) narrative or case study teaching strategies (Stueve, 2002; Wright, 2013).

After development of a story, the instructor delineates developmental tasks. For example, if the couple is identified as newly married and without children, the educator discusses tasks such as (a) creating a couple identity, (b) establishing a household, (c) managing finances, (d) creating resiliency skills, and (e) refining boundaries with social network members (e.g., Brotherson & Moen, 2011; Carter & McGoldrick, 1999; Fitzpatrick & Boden, 2008; Laszloffy, 2002). As discussion unfolds, students' contributions could reveal attitudes or myths about romantic relationships (Priest, Burnett, Thompson, Vogel, & Schvaneveldt, 2009). The instructor guides conversation to address implications of whether the couple is (a) resolving tasks successfully and building strengths that carry forward into later stages or (b) not resolving tasks successfully and building carryover stressors.

Next, the teacher leads the walking group to the mother-toddler dyad statue. She fosters development of a lifestory for this dyad as well. Typically, a few students ask whether this statue represents the same woman depicted in the embracing couple statue. The instructor responds that the class can choose a scenario whether (a) all statues represent a single family over time or (b) each statue represents a different family during the same time. She explains that option (a) is a longitudinal approach to conceptualizing family life course trajectories (Hutchison, 2005), while option (b) is a cross-sectional approach to conceptualizing concurrent effects across generations. The instructor conducts a class vote (for option a or b) and abides by the majority's choice.

In reference to the woman-toddler dyad, the educator discusses the transitional stage (parents with infants) that would occur between the first (married couple) and third (parents with toddlers) stages. She addresses challenges of altering couples' relationships to add parenting roles and fulfill infants' needs. During toddlerhood, aspects of children's biosocial development (such as mobility, language, or peer interactions) influence family activities of daily living (ADLs). Typically, students (who are familiar with infants or toddlers) will also offer ADL examples. The instructor uses these examples to explain why FD is considered a child-driven theory (Dykstra & Hagestad, 2007). Similar to the first statue, this statue can be a space for addressing child development myths such as (a) instinct makes women naturally good at mothering or (b) baby talk in parent-child communication hinders language acquisition (Weisskirch & Pérez-Granados, 2012).

Next, the instructor addresses issues of traditional versus non-traditional family formation (Aldous, 1990; Biblarz & Savci, 2010). She divides the class into two types of groups. Each group type receives a list of questions that address parameters of traditional (heterosexual, married, biological) or non-traditional emergent families. A sampling of questions that traditional groups receive is:

If this statue represents a traditional family, where is the father? Is the father absent because parental roles are divided along functional and socio-emotional role lines, which would suggest that he is "working" (breadwinner role) while the mother provides child nurturance? Is there a presumption that a mother is better able to care for a young child? Indeed, is there such a primacy on motherhood that a father is treated as invisible or secondary (Stueve, 2002)? Would a father have been included if the statue (a) clearly identified the toddler as a boy or (b) portrayed an older child?

Nontraditional groups receive questions such as:

If this statue represents a single mother, does it matter why or how she is single? Is the quality of her parenting indicated by whether she is divorced, widowed, or abandoned? What would be the developmental implications if she was single by choice and utilized reproductive technology (such as a sperm donor or pregnancy surrogate)? Is the sperm donor male considered this child's father? What would be the implications if this parent identified herself as lesbian, transgender, or bisexual? Does non-traditional formation represent a deviation, variation, or emergent family structure (Scanzoni, 2001)? What would be developmental tasks or challenges that emergent families would likely face (Biblarz & Savci, 2010)?

Working from the question lists, each group is expected to pick one or two questions they wish to consider. After five to ten minutes, the instructor asks each group to share their best insights with all other students.

The distribution of questions is influenced by class size, which has varied from 15 to 70 students over the years. In small classes, the educator typically allows each group (of 2-3

students) to select any question from the list. Although more than one group might select the same question, the instructor has not had that experience. Rather, each group has previously selected a unique question. In larger classes, the teacher typically creates question subsets (such as three questions per subset) and larger groups (of 4-5 students). Thus, students may only select questions they discuss from a specific subset. Use of this subset format minimizes the likelihood of high redundancy (from multiple groups' responses to the same question). This question distribution approach is consistent with recommendations for student engagement in discussions (Lopez, 2011; Wade, Bentley, & Waters, 2006).

Next, the instructor leads the walking group to the mother-child dyad statue. While walking, the instructor explains that the pathway between statues represents the concept of *transitions* (Falicov, 2005; Hutchison, 2005). She elucidates issues such as (a) carryovers [of stressors and strengths] across stages and (b) reasons for the ease or difficulty of some transitions. The instructor can use the walk's physicality to illustrate issues. For example, she demonstrates transitional resistance by (a) changing the walking pace of the entire class to slow, "heavy" steps or (b) asking a subset of students to walk backwards, "into" the larger group (of all other students).

Based on interactions that take place around the first two statues, the instructor determines whether the class is generally competent in the activity (linking FD concepts to hypothetical biographies). If the class is incompetent, the procedure is repeated with the third statue (woman and child). If the class is competent, the instructor introduces additional theoretical concepts. For example, she describes normative and non-normative dynamics (Carter & McGoldrick, 1999; Hutchison, 2005). In reference to the statue, the teacher explains normative familial changes associated with a child's gaining more independence from parents and becoming increasingly involved with friends. She then describes experiences that might be (a) common, but not normative (such as cyberbullying of a child) and (b) uncommon, but not normative (for example, an absent father is on a five-year solo sailing adventure).

Similarly, the instructor addresses *ontime* and *offtime* events. She explains how ontime events are considered normative or appropriate (i.e., the right developmental transition or stage at the right age). By contrast, the teacher explains that offtime events are considered non-normative or inappropriate (too early or late in family lifecycle). She revisits the concept of *emergence* by explaining that the timeline (for some events) has lengthened or expanded. For example, the instructor notes that the average age at first marriage has increased for couples in the United States. Thus, determination of when individuals are too young or too old to marry has shifted. If marriage is the first FD stage, this delay is consequential for subsequent stages. For linkage to the adult female-child statue, the instructor asks students to state whether the woman seems "too young," "too old," or "just right" to be the child's mother.

Next, the instructor addresses *leapfrogging*, *bypassing*, *obscuring*, and *negating* processes. Leapfrogging occurs when some family members jump across sequential stages. For example, first-time parents who adopt older children have leapt over the parent-infant and parent-toddler stages (Weir, 2003). Leapfrogging also occurs in other contexts, such as remarried

families (Braithwaite, Olson, Golish, Soukup, & Turman, 2001). The teacher inquires about relational implications if the statue represented the (a) woman as a new stepmother or (b) child as recently adopted.

When viewing the woman-child statue, one may also see four more statues (embracing couple, solo young female athlete, solo middle-aged male, older male with a dog) located nearby. Therefore, the instructor uses multiple statues to address *bypassing*, as well as *obscuring* or *negating*. Bypassing refers to either (a) not engaging in traditional sequential stages or (b) creating or redefining FD dynamics (in relationships typically considered non-familial). For example, the instructor now specifies that the embracing adults are a childfree couple. By default or design, such a couple would bypass parenting stages in this theory (Laszloffy, 2002). In the traditional FD sequence, a childfree couple would only “fit” the first and last stages (couple formation and widowhood). Referring to the solo female statue, the instructor speculates whether she might find that the athlete-coach relationship is more stable and enriching than her family life. In this scenario, the athlete might bypass her parents to complete developmental tasks with a more healthful adult figure. Bypassing could also fit with creating “a sense of family” in LGBT individuals’ social networks (Oswald, 2002, p. 375).

Finally, the educator describes *obscuring* and *negating* processes. Historically, FD theory has negated or ignored contributions of extended family relatives such as aunts, uncles, cousins, in-laws, and great-grandparents. These relatives can be essential to processes such as maintaining parent-child bonds, supporting families through transitions, or fulfilling tasks when parents are unable to do so (Milardo, 2005). If aunts and uncles are not married or do not have their own children, they might be considered complete bypassers or simply invisible in FD. Similarly, traditional conceptualization of this theory often ignore unmarried midlife-older adults’ dating relationships (Dykstra & Hagestad, 2007; Fitzpatrick, Sharp, & Reifman, 2009). FD theory has also been slow to address challenges of LGBT families (Biblarz & Savci, 2010; Oswald, 2002). In reference to the old male-dog dyad, the instructor discusses divergent viewpoints on whether pets are family members and the relative importance of pets across developmental stages (Albert & Bulcroft, 1988; Blouin, 2012). To date, FD theory has obscured pets or treated them as invisible.

At this point, the instructor opens discussion about students’ interest levels. If students still find the statues intriguing, she encourages them to explore the sculptures in more detail (e.g., move near them, sit next to them, look at body postures or facial expressions). Students can revisit statues that were discussed previously or move forward in the timeline (e.g., focus on the older male-dog dyad). Students can use the documents (e.g., stage list, question list) to help them consider common or uncommon developmental tasks that each statue might represent. The instructor also encourages students to consider (a) whether they see indicators of racial or ethnic status and (b) how ethnicity or culture influences timing of developmental tasks (Falicov, 2005). Students are now free to create their own biographies for the individuals or dyads (represented by the statues). The educator allows biographies that include uncommon events so long as their details are realistically possible (for example, the older male statue represents a man pondering his much younger girlfriend’s pregnancy).

If the open discussion indicates that students are no longer interested in the statues, the instructor gives them a different task. Specifically, she forms small groups (3-4 students) and asks them to seek information about family stages in nearby campus buildings. The visual or auditory information includes, but is not limited to (a) flyers for local events, (b) employment advertisements (including child care), (c) requests for assistance (moving, finding lost pets), (d) informational videos (rotating messages on large screens in public spaces), (e) background music and (f) signage (diaper changing table-equipped restrooms, family quiet rooms). Similar to the content of the statues, elements of the video or audio information are not always obvious, so groups sometimes must engage in a somewhat active search. After they find information, the expectation is that groups will use the documents (provided pre-tour) to identify FDT stages or developmental tasks. In addition, groups are encouraged to consider other concepts such as normativity, timing, leapfrogging, bypassing, or negating processes.

Before beginning either activity (exploring statues independently or seeking video information), students are informed that they (a) have a limited amount of time and (b) will be expected to share their insights with the rest of the class. Over the years, this sharing process has occurred in various locations (such as the classroom, statue area, or student union lobby). During one semester, student groups led the class (including the instructor) to the visual information that they had found in other buildings. The student who initiated this walk did so by insisting, “*You have to see what we found!*” Other groups had similar reactions, which created new variations in the activity. The groups’ enthusiasm for their insights was well-founded.

Reflection

There has been no formal evaluation of this activity. However, the instructor has used this activity on several occasions, and noticed trends in students’ reactions. To date, no student has refused to participate. All students have been willing to complete the walking tour. The instructor has used various tools (e.g., headcounts, signature sheets distributed at random moments) to remain aware of students’ presence. Typically, a subgroup of students (perhaps kinetic learners) appreciates an opportunity to get out of the classroom. This subgroup might be a motivating force that helps maintain energy over time. Similar to Stueve (2002), students have fulfilled instructors’ trust in their maturity.

In contrast to kinetic learners, there is a student subgroup uncomfortable with the ambiguities of a non-lecture format. It is common for some to ask, “*What are we doing here?*” Such students often benefit from (a) an overview before the tour and from (b) document availability. The teacher repeatedly emphasizes concepts (listed on the documents in their hands) and their relevance to discussing the statues. She also states that students might consider the tour as a prelude to future career demands. Soon, students who enter family education or care professions will work with real clients. Professionals who understand clients’ FD status may be better able to provide effective services.

This activity also has moments that fit well for extroverted and introverted learners (Mennell, 1981). Extroverts appear comfortable with discussion in public spaces (near statues,

the student center) and often serve as group leaders. Introverts seem to thrive when allowed to explore statues individually and at their own pace. If one purpose of art is to foster quiet reflection, that purpose aligns with introverts' strengths during the activity.

After the activity, students often mention other events or flyers they notice. They describe details that foster discussion (*Are father-daughter dances good or discriminatory?*). This fits the heightened perception (Chang, Cao, & Grossberg, 2009) that emerges from learning.

Conclusion

The author recognizes that it is fortuitous to have several statues readily available on this campus. Other educators may be surrounded by such resources, but simply do not consider public art relevant to their teaching responsibilities. Instructors can explore the availability and pedagogical value of statues in their college or university environments. If faculty members lack easy access to statues on campus, they may be able to identify or facilitate creation of other options. For example, teachers could plan field trips to other locations such as museums or cultural centers (Gloria, Rieckmann, & Rush, 2000; Sundermann, 2013) where statues (and other family-relevant items) are already in place. Alternatively, educators could contact local artists (including sculptors) to arrange student visits to their studios or exhibits. In addition, teachers can use other natural or fabricated environments as valuable pedagogical locations (Berger, et al., 2011). For example, it is possible to tour local neighborhoods to address family-residential linkages (such as smaller nuclear families in gentrified communities).

Some instructors may face logistical challenges that make field trips unworkable and may need to keep teaching activities within their classrooms. In this context, educators can explore collaboration with colleagues in the performing and visual arts (such as university drama departments or local theater groups). For example, performers could create "living statues" (Lavender, 2013) that pose in ways that reflect specific FD theory concepts. For a more dynamic performance element, drama students could enact play scenes highlighting specific lifecycle transitions (such as launching adult children out of the home). If educators seek more of an improvisational dimension, they may want to inquire about whether local realtors can recommend family actors. During open house sales events, some realtors hire actors to portray families who live in these homes. These performers spontaneously create interactions with each other and potential buyers (Keither, 2014; Raney, 2006). Such actors may be well suited to interactions with students in classrooms.

Instructors do not necessarily need to rely on other professionals in the arts. For example, it might be possible to work with students (in a family science course) to create role-plays or perform their own scripts (Gillingham, 2008; Jouriles, McDonald, Kullowatz, Rosenfield, Gomez, & Cuevas, 2009). Educators could use case studies as foundations for role-playing or simulations (Wright, 2013).

In contrast to dramatized families, it is important to remember that students can view actual families. Students can be trained appropriately in unobtrusive or participant observation

techniques, which can be used beyond the campus (Darian, 1998; Moriarity & Everett, 1994). After teachers delineate ethical parameters (such as respecting children's personal space), they can encourage students to conduct observations in public locations (see sample instructions in Appendix B). If students are completing community engagement activities such as service learning, perhaps they can see familial events in local agency settings (Fitzpatrick, 2013). Such observations might be incidental to task fulfillment (within the agencies) but still quite illuminating for students.

If instructors engage in any form of observation or performance, they should remember that these do not have to be self-contained or stand-alone events. Instead, there can be integration of these events with other teaching activities. For example, educators can use personal or relational life course trajectories. Retrospectively, students can receive assignments to explore their family histories. Historical analysis can reveal common familial patterns across generations, identify significant turning points in FD, and provide greater cultural context for students' developmental experiences (Hoop, 2009). Prospectively, students could be encouraged to imagine their lives in the future, as older adults (Barber, 2012). They can create full visions of their future selves and identify FD stages or tasks that need completing in order to realize their visions. Students could have common end-of-life tasks to face, such creating their wills (Mennell, 1981).

Some instructors might not consider the use of these retrospective or prospective assignments to be appropriate. They could be duly concerned that such assignments (a) place unreasonable burdens of self-disclosure on students or (b) inadvertently reinforce students' overgeneralizations (e.g., what was true for their families is true for all families). In this context, educators might consider using *other-oriented* materials such as scenario response groups (Hall, 2006; Laszloffy, 2002). Specifically, educators can create or use extant materials that describe a family's status at various developmental stages. At each stage, there can be description of the family's current membership, developmental tasks, or challenges. Descriptions of multiple stages make it possible to identify changes over time (Fitzpatrick & Wampler, 2000; Laszloffy, 2002). Instructors can have descriptions of multiple couples or families so it would be possible to assign the same family case to a single group of students for a semester. As they address various elements of couple or FD over the weeks of a college course, a group could receive opportunities to revisit the case (Hall, 2006). Alternatively, teachers might assign each group to a specific developmental stage. Thus, each group could act as class discussion "specialists" whenever a family scenario involves their assigned stage (e.g., a couple with tweens or launching/empty nest).

Regarding their teaching strategies and resources, educators should also be mindful of the need to be inclusive of diverse relational and familial developmental trajectories. For example, instructors can use extant research to address topics such as midlife single adults who seek dating partners (Fitzpatrick, et al., 2009), older single first-time biological mothers (Landau, Weissenberg, & Madgar, 2008), transnational adoptive families (Howell, 2003), grandparents raising grandchildren (Dolbin-McNab, 2006) or multifathering partnerships in remarried families (Marsiglio & Hinojosa, 2007). There are many ways to think "outside the box" (or classroom)

about theory-linked student engagement. Similar to students (Hoop, 2009), FD educators should be encouraged to use their sociological imaginations in teaching theoretical concepts and principles.

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Appendix A

Family Development Stages and Sampling of Tasks

STAGE	TASKS
1. Couple formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Creating daily routines to fulfill household tasks b. Negotiating roles as partners or spouses c. Modifying relationship boundaries with family and friends
2. Couple with infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Learning to provide appropriate care for infant b. Adjusting daily routines to include childcare tasks c. Adding roles of parents to roles of partners d. Negotiating changes in romantic relationship (such as less couple time) e. Addressing social network role changes (such as couples' parents involvement as grandparents)
3. Couple with toddlers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Balancing childcare needs with child's developmental acquisitions (such as language, self-care, and personal preferences) b. Addressing child's emerging sense of identity in reference to dimensions (such as race, ethnicity or gender) c. Guiding child in appropriate behaviors in settings outside of family (such as daycare centers) d. Scheduling playdates with other children/families
4. Couple with elementary-age children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Making choices about child's education (public, private, homeschool, or unschool) b. Balancing child's increasing independence self-care with appropriate supervision c. Managing family schedules of child and adult's activities d. In reference to activities, engaging with multiple environments and individuals (such as teachers, coaches, neighbors, friends and club members)
5. Couple with tweens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Preparing child for emerging biological and social changes associated with puberty b. Addressing with child the risks of first exposure or engagement in behaviors such as drinking, smoking or petting c. Adapting to child's social world that is increasingly beyond parental control (such as best friends or cliques at school, and online groups)

6. Couple with adolescents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Addressing biological and social changes that occur during puberty b. Adapting to adolescent's involvement with other primary relationships (such as romantic partners) c. Preparing adolescent for upcoming changes in launching (such as moving out of the family home, finding a job, and attending college or trade school) d. Beginning to consider changes in couple relationship that will occur during the launching/empty nest phase
7. Launching/empty nest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Facilitating the leaving-home (launching) process for adult child (typically 18 years or older) b. Making adjustments to daily routines to accommodate adult child's absence (such as reallocation of household chores among other children and couple) c. Negotiating relational boundaries with adult child d. When youngest child leaves home (empty nest), modifying couple relationship
8. Retirement/death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adjusting to the loss of worker/career identity b. Addressing changes to couple's daily routines (when one or both partners are retired) c. Responding to changes created by adult children's life choices (such as becoming grandparents) d. Addressing partner's health and need for palliative/end-of-life care e. Adjusting to widowhood f. Addressing own imminent death with descendants (adult children or grandchildren)

Note: This list reflects the stage outline that was traditionally associated with a two-parent family. This outline was based on assumptions that (a) the same partners would be together as a couple across all stages [no divorce, single parenthood or remarriage], and (b) the couple would have children, but (c) neither partner would have children prior or outside of the couple relationship. Thus, the specific nature, order or enactment of tasks would be different for other family structures (such as single-parent, remarried, or childfree families).

Appendix B

Unobtrusive Observation Paper

For each paper, the student will conduct unobtrusive observation of a familial child-adult dyad in a public environment (such as a store, playground/park, cinema, parking lot, public library, outdoor festival/community event). Based on the observation, the student will make an estimation of the dyad's relationship (such as parent-child, aunt-niece/nephew, older-younger siblings), family development stage (e.g., parent/couple with toddler) and specific developmental tasks.

The student cannot conduct the observation on a child-adult dyad with whom he/she has had any prior contact. The student is prohibited from entering/approaching child-specific buildings (such as preschool/daycare centers, schools) or private residences to complete the observation. During the observation, the student is to not interact (e.g., talk, play), follow, or approach the dyad (or any children/adults with the dyad). Also, the student is advised that she/he should not stare at the dyad; normal, casual observation skills will be sufficient for the task. The student should not make a visual and/or audio recording of the dyad at any time. In addition, the student is not permitted to discuss her/his observations in any social media context or venue (such as Twitter or Facebook).

The student should observe the dyad for a minimum of ten minutes. If the dyad moves beyond the student's vision during the ten minute period, then he/she is prohibited from following the dyad. Rather, the student must begin a new observation of another dyad.

The student should note the following information for each observation:

- (A) Child and adult's age^
- (B) Child and adult's gender^
- (C) Activity/activities in which the dyad engages (such as eating, playing, talking, disagreeing, comforting, negotiating, shopping, reading, or watching a film).

During the observation of the activity, the student need not note the dyad's specific speech or actions. Rather, the student needs a general sense of the dyad's actions. The dyad might engage in more than one type of activity during the ten-minute period. Questions to consider include:

- Was the adult providing instruction or feedback to the child?
- Was the child engaging in an apparent power struggle with the adult?
- Was the child trying to coax the adult to buy/do something? How successful did the coaxing strategies appear to be?
- Was the adult phubbing (paying more attention to phone/computer) than the child?
- Was the child engaging in self-soothing behaviors (such as sucking fingers)? Was the adult supporting or adding to the soothing process?

After completing the observation, the student will write a brief paper. The paper will have two sections. The first section will be a summary of the dyad's characteristics. In the second section, the student is expected to integrate course material (such as required readings and Powerpoint notes). Integration does not mean a long series of quotations or vague referrals. Rather, integration means specific connections made between the course material and details from the unobtrusive observation. It is expected that the student will provide a cogent response, which demonstrates critical thinking about the issues relevant to the assignment.

Paper Sections:

(A) Description of Dyad (1-2 pages) – Describe:

- (1) Ages^
- (2) Genders^
- (3) Activity/activities in which dyad engaged

(B) Relevance to Family Development Stage/Tasks (3-5 pages) – Describe:

- (1) The dyad's family developmental stage
- (2) How the dyad's activities or interactions were consistent with the stage
- (3) Specific developmental tasks (a) in which the dyad engaged or (b) seem most consistent with the dyad's activities
- (4) If appropriate to observation, specify developmental tasks that might not be articulated in course materials, but appear to be generationally emergent (e.g., teaching toddler how to take a 'selfie'). Explain how emergence is relevant to principles of developmental tasks.

The paper should meet the following format conditions:

Title page (Name, Course & Section number, Specific time/date/location of Observation)

- Do not list Social Security Number on the Title Page

4-6 pages (in addition to title page)

12-point font

Double-spaced, 1" margins

Proper spelling/grammar

Each paper will be graded on the following criteria:

Description of dyad	2 points
Description of dyad activities	3 points
Description of family development stage	4 points
Description of specific developmental tasks	4 points
Integration of course material	5 points
Clarity/organization of paper	<u>2 points</u>
Total	20 points

A student may conduct observations in pair with another student. However, each student must write her/his paper independently and include the name of the observation partner. Papers that do not evidence independent work will be considered a violation of academic integrity. As such, each student in the pair will receive a grade of zero (0) for the observation assignment.

It is understood that the student might have to guess the age/gender of the adult and child in a dyad. These should be educated guesses, based on lifespan developmental concepts. These concepts are delineated in HDFS course materials (such as assigned readings).