The Adolescent Paradox: Emotions, Behavior, and Identity  
Fall 2017. NYU Course Number: CAMS UA-142

Instructor:  
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Course Meeting Times, Location, and TA:  
Tuesdays, beginning September 5, 12:30 to 3:15 pm. 7 E 12th St, Room LL 23.

Course Overview:  
Adolescence is a remarkable time of growth and development; in just a few years, children transition dramatically towards adulthood across multiple domains. While adolescence has been described as the healthiest physical period of the lifespan, it is also marked by an enormous rise in morbidity and mortality. This seeming paradox can be explained, in part, by biological, psychological, and social changes during puberty that collectively affect emotion regulation and cognition, increasing risk-taking behavior. At the turn of the twentieth century, adolescence was described as a developmental period inevitably filled with “storm and stress.” In what ways does this vision of adolescence still apply? How should current scientific findings inform our understanding of the propensity for risk-taking behavior during this period (including substance use, increasing sexual activity, and disordered eating)? In exploring the factors that shape emotions, behavior, and emerging identity during adolescence, this course will examine such questions from biological and psychosocial perspectives.

Required Text (available at NYU bookstore or Amazon):

Course Expectations:  
a. Class Attendance and Participation (20%): Students are expected to attend and actively participate in sessions, demonstrating familiarity with content of the assigned readings. Each student will submit a discussion question once during the semester (see sign-up sheet in class) and participate in a debate. Throughout the course, please notify the instructor by email preferably in advance if you must miss a class. Any unexcused absences or more than one missed class will result in point deduction.  
   - Reading Discussion Presentations: Once per semester, each student will be asked to lead the class in a brief discussion. There will be a sign-up sheet on the first day of class. The discussion question should be uploaded to NYU Classes by Sunday at 8 pm prior to the relevant class. Please see NYU Classes for additional details.

b. Class Quizzes (20%): There will be 3 quizzes throughout the course, based on the readings and class material. The lowest quiz score will be dropped (that is, each will count for 10%), *unless the final exam score is lower, in which case all 3 quizzes will count and the final exam will only count for 10%. There will be no make-ups for any missed quizzes.

c. Response Papers (25%): Students will choose and complete 3 of 4 assigned response papers throughout the semester (approximately 750 words each). To earn full credit, each response paper will demonstrate thoughtfulness, mastery of assigned reading, and the student’s ability to synthesize and reflect on the material. (All 4 response papers may be completed for extra credit.)

d. Term Paper (15%): Students will write an essay during the semester (approximately 1800 words) that will require synthesis of material covered in the class and readings. Details will be provided in class.

e. Final Exam (20%)*: The course will culminate in a cumulative in-class final exam.
List of Additional Required Readings (available online, on NYU Classes):

Arnett JJ and Cravens H: Stanley Hall’s Adolescence: A Centennial Reappraisal Intro. History of Psych., 2006; (9)3:165-171. [EXCERPTS, see syllabus]

Casey BJ and Jones RM: Neurobiology of the Adolescent Brain and Behavior; Implications for Substance Use Disorders. Journal of American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry 2010; 49(12): 1189-1202. [EXCERPTS, see syllabus]

Casey, BJ: Beyond simple models of self-control to circuit based accounts of adolescent behavior. Annu. Rev. Psychol 2015; 295-319. [EXCERPTS, see syllabus]


Erik Erikson, excerpts from Childhood and Society, 1950. [EXCERPTS, see syllabus]

Anna Freud, excerpts from: “On Adolescence,” 1958. [EXCERPTS, see syllabus]

McHugh and Slavney, The Perspectives of Psychiatry, Chapter 1: The Mind-Brain Problem and a Structure for Psychiatry; Chapter 12: “Emotions, Life Events, Traits of Temperament, and Treatment”


Policy on Late Submissions:
Term papers will be lowered by 1/3 for each day late (e.g., from an A- to a B+ on late day #1, from a B+ to a B on late day #2, etc.). Late response papers will generally not be accepted; exceptions may be granted with written permission from the instructor, on a case by case basis, but will still be marked as late with points deducted. Under no circumstances will any papers be accepted after the last day of class. Papers received after this date will not be graded and will receive a score of zero. Students requesting an exemption from the late submission policy must present a written note from a school Dean, Academic Advisor, or personal physician (e.g., not the student’s parent or family member) justifying the late submission, which will then be considered by the instructor.

Organizational framework of course:
The Introductory Session examines the nature of adolescence and explains the “adolescent paradox,” in the context of a historical overview of adolescence and the “storm and stress” concept. Part one, Current Perspectives on The Adolescent Period, consists of an overview of current understandings of adolescence, organized into: 1) Biological, 2) Psychological, and 3) Social perspectives. In the second part of the course, Emotions, Behavior and Identity in Adolescence, the biopsychosocial framework established earlier will be used to understand an adolescent’s task to achieve autonomy in the areas of 1) Emotional, 2) Behavioral, and 3) Identity development. In the Concluding Session, the larger historical context will be revisited, incorporating a debate about in what ways adolescence should still be viewed as a time of inherent storm and stress.

Syllabus and Readings:
Note: Readings and assignments subject to change. Be on the lookout for course site and email updates. With the exception of the first class, reading assignments should be completed PRIOR to class on the associated date.
Detailed Syllabus and Outline of Course:

September 5 (session 1): **Introduction.**
- **Course expectations, “Adolescent Paradox,” Storm and Stress View, History of Adolescence.**
  - Readings:
    1. Arnett/Cravens article, “Brief Biography” of Stanley Hall, pp 165-top 169 only.
    2. Steinberg: Intro Chapter, pp 1-12; Ch. 3 (Social Transitions), pp 70 to top 79.

**PERSPECTIVES ON ADOLESCENCE: BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS**

September 12 (session 2): **Biological Factors I**
- **Endocrine Changes in Puberty—Hormones and Behavior.**
  - Readings:
    1. Steinberg, Ch. 1 (Biological Transitions), pp 13-34, 40-41.
    2. Greenspan and Deardorff, NY Times 2/5/15 “What Causes Girls to Enter Puberty Early?” and Bakalar, NY Times 1/27/15 “Sugary Drinks Tied to Earlier Menstruation”

Sunday Sept 17: Response paper 1 due to NYU classes by 8 PM

September 19 (session 3): **Biological Factors II**
- **The Developing Adolescent Brain, and Changing Sleep Patterns.**
  - Readings:
    1. Steinberg, Ch. 2 (Cognitive Transitions), pp 51-62
    2. Casey and Jones: Neurobiology of the Adolescent Brain and Behavior; Implications for Substance Use Disorders. *J Amer. Acad. of Child & Adol. Psych.* 2010; **1189-top 1196 only**
    3. Casey, BJ; Beyond simple models of self-control to circuit based accounts of adolescent behavior. *Annu. Rev. Psychol.* 2015; **pp. 295 to 305 only.**
    5. Owens: Insufficient sleep in adolescents and young adults: an update on causes and consequences. 2014 (pp 921-932).

September 26 (session 4): **Psychological Factors I**
- **Quiz 1 (sessions 1-3, and reading due today, 9/26)**
  - **Cognitive Development; Piaget and other Theorists, Social Cognition.**
    - Reading: Steinberg, Ch. 2 (Cognitive Transitions), pp 42-51, and 60-64.

October 3 (session 5): **Psychological Factors II**
- **Self-Concept and Self-Esteem Development, Temperament and Personality.**
  - Readings:
    1. Steinberg, Ch. 8 (Identity), pp 209-219.
    3. Assignment: [http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp](http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp) and bring results to class!

October 10 (session 6): **Social Factors I**
- **Families: Parents and Siblings.**
  - Reading: Steinberg, Ch. 4 (Families), pp 95-112 [pp 113 to 121, supplementary].

Sunday Oct 15: Response paper 2 due to NYU classes by 8 PM

October 17 (session 7): **Social Factors II**
- **Peers, School and Neighborhood.**
  - Readings:
    1. Steinberg, Ch. 5 (Peer Groups) pp 123-151; Ch. 3 (Influence neighborhood), pp 90-94.
3. Steinberg, Ch. 6 (Schools), pp 153-158 and 176-179.

October 24 (session 8): Social Factors III  
*Quiz 2 (sessions 4 to 7, and reading due today, 10/24)*  
- **Influence of Media, Substance Use in Teens.**  
  Reading:  
  1. Steinberg, Ch. 7 (Media), pp 196-207; Ch. 13 (Substance Use), pp 352-362.  
  
  Guest Lecture.

**ACHIEVING AUTONOMY: Emotions, Behavior and Identity.**  
October 31 (session 9): Achieving Autonomy: Emotions  
- **Emotional Autonomy, Health vs. Illness, Internalizing problems: Depression and Anxiety.**  
  Readings:  
  1. Steinberg, Ch 9 (Emotional Autonomy), pp 238-top 243.  
  2. Steinberg, Ch. 13 (Psychosocial Problems) pp 348-352; (Internalizing Disorders) 371-379.  
  3. McHugh and Slavney, The Perspectives of Psychiatry, Chapter 1: The Mind-Brain Problem and a Structure for Psychiatry; [Chapter 12: “Emotions, Life Events, Traits of Temperament, and Treatment” = supplementary]

November 7 (session 10): Achieving Autonomy: Behavior  
- **Decision Making, Risk-taking, and Moral Development.**  
  Readings:  
  1. Steinberg, Ch 9 (Behavioral & Cognitive autonomy), pp 243-249, (Moral: 249-252)  
  2. Steinberg, Ch 2 (Risk Taking) pp 64-68.  

**Sunday Nov 12: Response Paper 3 due to NYU classes by 8 PM**

November 14 (session 11): (TENTATIVE DATE) HIGH SCHOOL VISIT  
- **Quiz 3 (sessions 8-10).**  
  Discussion of Interviews.  
**Sunday November 19: TERM PAPER due to NYU classes by 8 PM**  
(*Deadline may change, depending on date of student visit)

November 21 (session 12): Achieving Autonomy: Emotions II / Behaviors II  
- **Disordered Eating, Risky sexual behaviors.**  
  Readings:  
  1. Steinberg, Ch. 1 (Obesity and Eating Disorders), pp 34-39.  
  2. Steinberg, Ch. 11 (Sexuality), pp. 296-319.

November 28 (session 13): Achieving Autonomy: Identity Revisited  
- **Identity: Erikson and Freud / Conclusions: Adolescent Paradox Revisited, Wrap-up & Review.**  
  Readings:  
  1. Steinberg, Ch. 8 (Identity), pp 219-225.  

December 5 (session 14):  
- **CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM (IN-CLASS, 60 minutes)**  
- **POST-EXAM: Storm and Stress Debate / Play Excerpt Readings.**  
  **Sunday December 10: Response Paper 4 due to NYU classes by 8 PM.**