



SW 724

Theory and Practice of Infant Mental Health

Fall 2020

Prof. Julie Ribaldo

She, her, hers

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Office hours – by Zoom

Monday – 1:00 to 1:45

Others by appointment

Course Domain and Boundaries

This is an *introductory* course on the relationship between theory and practice in infant mental health. It is intended for graduate students in Social Work, Education, Nursing and Psychology. Its purpose is to furnish a conceptual framework, based upon recent developments in attachment theory, for understanding how the emotional qualities of the infant-parent dyad influence the infant's development, the parent's capacity to give care, and finally the professional's state of mind regarding the family. Emphasis is given to how the experiences of early childhood persist over time, and how they are summoned up again by the presence of a baby. This understanding becomes in turn the basis for learning how to plan a treatment approach that takes into account the family's capacities for change.

Specific Knowledge and Skill Objectives

The students should learn:

1. Theories of the relationship between early parent-infant interaction and subsequent development.
2. Consequences of failures or disruptions of the attachment process for both parent and child.
3. Strategies for effective intervention to strengthen early attachment.
4. Transference and countertransference issues pertinent to infant mental health work.

Course Agenda

Day One

Morning –

Class Introductions; course parameters

Attachment Theory

Afternoon-

Attachment Theory
Adult Attachment Interview

Day Two

Morning –

Assessment
Strategies for intervention
Infant-Parent Psychotherapy

Afternoon-

Strategies for intervention
Watch, Wait and Wonder
Transference and Countertransference

Course Requirements:

Prep for Class One (Found in Modules):

- Weatherston & Ribaud (2020) The Michigan infant mental health home visiting model
- Klawetter & Frankel (2018) Infant mental health A lens for maternal and child mental health disparities
- Fraiberg - Ghosts in the Nursery
- Lieberman - Angels in the Nursery

PRE-CLASS LECTURES - REQUIRED (50 minutes total). Watch from 9 to 10 am on 11/21 (or earlier if you like)

- Infant Mental Health - The Gift of Love - Part 1 - (16 Minutes) - What is Infant Mental Health?
- IMH - The Gift of Love - Part 2 - Components of IMH Services (16 minutes)
- Using Reflective Practice to Examine Microaggressions in Early Childhood Mental Health (11 minutes)
- Overview of the Strange Situation Procedure (brief youtube clip)

Prep for Class Two (Found in Modules):

- Weatherston, D. (1995). "She does love me, doesn't she?" *Zero to Three*, February/March 1995.
- Seligman, S. (1993). Why How You Feel Matters: Countertransference Reactions in Intervention Relationships. *The Signal*. 1, No. 2.
- Lyons-Ruth (2008) – Disorganized Attachment
- Jacobs & Mollborn (2012) - EARLY MOTHERHOOD AND THE DISRUPTION IN SIGNIFICANT ATTACHMENTS: Autonomy and Reconnection as a Response to Separation and Loss among African American and Latina Teen Mothers

- Suggested Further Reading:
- Rubio, B., Vecho, O., Gross, M., Gelderen, L., Bos, H., Ellis-Davies, K., Winstanley, A., Golombok S., & Lamb, M. (2017): Transition to parenthood and quality of parenting among gay, lesbian and heterosexual couples who conceived through assisted reproduction, *Journal of Family Studies*. DOI: 10.1080/13229400.2017.1413005
- Lyons-Ruth, K & Jacobvitz, D. (2008). Attachment disorganization: Genetic factors, parenting contexts and developmental transformations from infancy to adulthood. In J. Cassidy & P.R. Shaver (Eds.) *Handbook of Attachment, 2nd edition* (pp. 666 – 697).
- Jacobs, J., & Mollborn S., (2012). Early motherhood and the disruption in significant attachments: Autonomy and reconnection as a response to separation and loss among African American and Latina teen mothers. *Gender & Society, 26*(6), 922-944.
- Luby, J. L. and Whalen, D. (2019). Depression in Early Childhood. In C.H. Zeanah (Ed). *Handbook of Infant Mental Health, 4th ed.* (pp. 426-437).
- Case Studies in Infant Mental Health: Risk, Resiliency, and Relationships - (In files tab of Canvas). 27-39 (Ulrich Chapter – single mother and 5 month old), pp. 67-84 (Crockett Chapter – pre and post-natal work mo. with FASD) and pp. 187-199 (Weatherston Chapter – isolated young mother who had spent years in foster care, pre and post natal work).
- Biringen, Z., et al. (2015). Mindfulness, emotional availability and emotional attachment: Three pillars of daily practice. *Zero to Three*, November 2015, 22 – 26.
- Sadler, L.S., Slade, A., Close, N., Webb, D.L., Simpson, T., Fennie, K., Mayes, L., (2013). Minding the baby: Enhancing reflectiveness to improve early health and relationship outcomes in an interdisciplinary home-visiting program. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, Vol. 34 (5), 391-405.
- Zeanah, C., Berlin, L, and Boris, N., (2011). Practitioner Review: Clinical applications of attachment theory and research for infants and young children. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 52: 819–833.

Attendance and Class Participation Requirement:

Attend both sessions – You must be present for the entire 2 days to pass the course. If you are running late for some reason, please talk to me.

- Some material considered essential to the objectives of the course will only be presented in class
- The application of key concepts and student co-learning requires participation in class discussions and exercises
- *Predictability, reliability and consistency are core to any strong relationship. "Being there" is incredibly important to clients, so it is important in this class*

- **Please refrain from texting, web surfing, emailing, etc., in class. It is distracting to others, including me. I may not say anything to you directly, but if it becomes very noticeable, I reserve the right to not issue a passing grade.**
- Your active participation includes listening well to others and contributing at least occasionally. Please be mindful of contributing too much or too little.

Paper Requirement:

We will discuss it further in class on the first day.

COVID-19 Statement

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. By returning to campus, you have acknowledged your responsibility for protecting the collective health of our community. Your participation in this course on an in-person/hybrid basis is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including maintaining physical distancing of six feet from others, and properly wearing a face covering in class. Other applicable safety measures may be described in the [Wolverine Culture of Care \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and the [University's Face Covering Policy for COVID-19 \(Links to an external site.\)](#). Your ability to participate in this course in-person/hybrid may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the [Office for Institutional Equity \(Links to an external site.\)](#). If you are unable or unwilling to adhere to these safety measures while in a face-to-face class setting, you will be required to participate on a remote basis. I also encourage you to review the [Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and the [COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

Health-Related Class Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a Doctor's note) for medical excuses is *not* required.

Recording Class

Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording being done. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. If the instructor chooses to record a class, they will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on the course management website. On days when classes are recorded, students will be notified in advance that a recording will occur and be provided with an option to opt-out. Class recordings and course materials may not be reproduced, sold, published or distributed to others, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the instructor.

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: <https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources>. They include:

- *Safety and emergency preparedness*
- *Mental health and well-being*
- *Teaching evaluations*
- *Proper use of names and pronouns*
- *Accommodations for students with disabilities*
- *Religious/spiritual observances*
- *Military deployment*
- *Writing skills and expectations*
- *Academic integrity and plagiarism*