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SIEGAL, MICHAEL. Children, Parenthood, and Social Welfare in the Context of Developmental Psychology. Clarendon Press, 1985. vi + 170 p. \$???.

Prof. Siegal advocates developmental studies that connect psychological research to social and historical events and processes. He argues for greater integration of the worlds of work and family into both research and policy. Siegal argues, for example, that child characteristics such as gender, or previous academic performance, need to be seen in the context of mesosystem or exosystem constraints, such as the availability of jobs for women, or changes in parental roles and expectations in the modern economy. The intention of this volume is to encourage work on development based on the study of "...context involving parents, peers, and society" (p. v). Siegal also wants to counter models of "cold" cognition, including stage models and approaches which do not take a child's active sense of self, identity and involvement into account. This use of the term "context" necessitates including the full set of family relationships and emotional identifications in developmental research. The opening and concluding chapters review a small number of selected studies with the goal of connecting "...the complexity of parent-child relations with social and economic events" (p.17). The introductory chapter outlines "a trickle-down view" of the role of economic hardship on families, in which a family's

economic improvement comes from overall growth in the economy, which then produces more employment opportunities. The concluding chapter discusses what the author calls a "bubble-up" view, in which direct income assistance to the family is the basis of amelioration of family economic stress. The six chapters in between briefly review a variety of specific topics: moral development, intellectual performance, parents, peers, and children's appraisals of others, children's ideas about criminal justice and morality, achievement and economic justice, and children's ideas about agreement, conflict and control. These chapters do not really carry out the programmatic goals of the introduction and conclusion, and the rationale for choosing these particular topics is not clear. The methods of the studies reviewed involve standard paper and pencil, self-report, rating, or similar procedures, not ethnography, field observations, or other naturalistic methods. Few of these studies could be said to have external validity or direct connections to socioeconomic constraints or family context, as Siegal advocates. Siegal's own studies, which are summarized in several chapters, have the same character: methods and theory are not grounded in the ecocultural contexts of everyday family life. To make developmental research truly contextual, families and children have to be situated in a culture, not only in a socioeconomic stratum. Culture -- with its scripts for conduct; its patterns and models for behavior held in the mind, its socially constructed character, and its transmission through discourse and language as well as behavior and practices -- goes unmentioned in this book. Siegal's admirable agenda for context-rich research and a socially situated developmental psychology are not matched by his methods or by the limited range of research reviewed in this volume. -- T. S. Weisner