

QUOTES AND REFERENCES ON EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

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HEAD START

“Head Start is not fully achieving its stated purpose of promoting school readiness ... Indeed, these low-income children continue to perform significantly below their more advantaged peers in reading and mathematics once they enter school.”
- “Strengthening Head Start: What the Evidence Shows” – US Dept. of HHS, June 2003

“In the long run, cognitive and socioemotional test scores of former Head Start students do not remain superior to those of disadvantaged children who did not attend Head Start.” – Ruth McKey et al., "The Impact of Head Start on Children, Families, and Communities," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, HHS 85-31193, June 1985, Executive Summary, p. 1.

“Once the children enter school there is little difference between the scores of Head Start and control children. . . . Findings for the individual cognitive measures--intelligence, readiness and achievement--reflect the same trends as the global measure. . . . By the end of the second year there are no educationally meaningful differences on any of the measures.”- Ibid, pp. 1-24

“The body of research on current Head Start is insufficient to draw conclusions about the impact of the national program.” –“Head Start,” GAO review of over 600 citations, manuscripts, and studies, 1997

“This is not the first time universal preschool education has been proposed. . . . Then, as now, the arguments in favor of preschool education were that it would reduce school failure, lower dropout rates, increase test scores, and produce a generation of more competent high school graduates. . . . Preschool education will achieve none of these results... We simply cannot inoculate children in one year against the ravages of a life of deprivation.” – Edward Ziglar, co-founder of Head Start and director of the Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy at Yale University, *Formal Schooling for Four-Year-Olds? No* in *Early Schooling: the National Debate*, ed. Sharon L. Kagan and Edward F. Zigler (New Haven, Conn.:Yale University Press, 1987):32, 35)

“No large-scale studies have examined the effects of Minnesota's Head Start program on its participants.” - Joel Alter, Judy Randall, and Leah Goldstein, *The Early Childhood Programs*, Minnesota Office of the Legislative Auditor, report 01-01, January 12, 2001

"Fade out" is important to any discussion of universal preschool because it means that early intervention may be virtually irrelevant to how a child turns out in adolescence or early adulthood." - Darcy Olsen, entitlements policy analyst for the Cato Institute, UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL IS NO GOLDEN TICKET: Why Government Should Not Enter the Preschool Business, 2/9/99, <http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa333.pdf>

PERRY PRESCHOOL PROJECT

"We might marry the large number of nonsignificant and unfavorable findings into a different picture of the Perry Project's outcomes. We might argue that preschool training resulted in no differences in school motivation or school potential at the time of school entry, no lasting changes in IQ or achievement test performance. . . . There were no differences in their average grades as compared to former control-group children, in their personal satisfaction with their school performance or in their self-esteem. Their parents were no more likely to talk with teachers about schoolwork or to attend school activities and functions than control-group parents. Preschool children were more likely to have been placed in remedial education. By age 19, they were unemployed at a rate equal to that of their control-group counterparts." - Charles Locurto, "Beyond IQ in Preschool Programs?" *Intelligence* 15 (1991): pp. 303-4 as quoted in Olsen, 1999, pp. 12-13

[The Perry sample] was not only nonrepresentative of children in general; there is some doubt that it was representative of even the bulk of economically disadvantaged children. . . . The Perry Project poses a number of methodological difficulties. . . . Children had to have a parent at home during the day, resulting in a significant difference between control and intervention groups on the variable of maternal employment . . . [and] assignment to experimental and control groups was not wholly random. - Ziglar, pp.30-31 as quoted in Olsen, 1999, p. 13

“First, in more than 40 years, no other program or study has produced results as dramatic as those found for Perry. (Ron Haskins, ‘Beyond Metaphor: The Efficacy of Early Childhood Education,’ *American Psychologist* 44, no 2 [February 1989: 279). That suggests that there may have been unique conditions at the Perry Preschool that simply cannot be duplicated.... Second, benefits were obtained only for severely disadvantaged children at risk of "retarded intellectual functioning"; it is simply inappropriate to generalize the effects of Perry to all children... Third, Perry children may have outperformed children in the control group, but they still fared poorly compared with mainstream children. For example, nearly one-third of participating children dropped out of high school, nearly one-third of the children were arrested, and three of five participating children received welfare assistance as adults.⁶⁷ That has led many researchers to be more level-headed about the likely effects of early intervention: ‘Policymakers should not assume that the widespread enrollment of low-income children and families in early childhood programs will enable children living in poverty to perform later in school and life at the levels reached by more advantaged [mainstream] children.’ (Deanna S. Gomby et al., "Long-Term Outcomes of Early Childhood Programs: Analysis and Recommendations," in *The Future of Children* 5, no. 3 (Winter 1995): 14.)”.... Finally, Perry differed significantly from regular preschool programs or what we could expect to see in universal preschool programs. According to Zigler, ‘It is very unlikely that a preschool program mounted in the typical public school will be of the quality represented by the Perry Preschool Project.’” – Olsen, 1999, pp. 13-14

ABECEDARIAN PROJECT

The Abecedarian Project has received a fair share of criticism, most notably from Herman H. Spitz, former director of the Research Department at the E. R. Johnstone Training and Research Center in Bordentown, New Jersey. Spitz was concerned that the project personnel presented certain results in ways that bias the findings in favor of Abecedarian. For example, by combining the IQ findings of the four cohorts studied, the researchers concluded that the intervention raised IQ. However, they neglected to report that scores improved only for two of the four groups. In fact, for the third and fourth cohorts, the experimental group actually lost 3.68 IQ points more than did the control group, providing no support for the efficacy of the intervention. (Spitz, "Does the Carolina Abecedarian Early Intervention Project Prevent Sociocultural Mental Retardation? pp. 228–29). – Olsen, 1999, pp. 15-16

“For these children, a 4.6–point improvement was approximately a 5 percent increase in measured intelligence, an increase hardly noticeable in the classroom or on the job.” – John Bruer, president, James S. McDonnell Neurosciences Institute, *The Myth of the First Three Years*, The Free Press, New York, 1999, p. 165

“On the other hand, in their statistical analyses [of Abecedarian], Ramey and Campbell also found that the mother’s IQ was a more powerful factor in explaining a child’s performance than was participation in the program.” – Bruer, p. 166

“In the Abecedarian Project, children in the preschool program had IQs 4 to 5 points higher than the children in the control group at ages 12 to 15. Nonetheless, the early enrichment did not result in these children reaching IQ levels comparable to middle-class children in the community, nor did they reach the national average IQ of 100.” – Bruer, p. 171

“To summarize, then, no empirical evidence supports the claims that universal preschool will reduce the number of children who will perform poorly in school, become teenage parents, commit criminal acts, or depend on welfare. Although some projects have had meaningful short-term effects on disadvantaged children's cognitive ability, grade retention, and special education placement, those benefits are short-lived. At the same time, most interventions have concentrated on disadvantaged children, so there is no evidence for universal replicability. In fact, a large body of evidence shows that preschool can have a negative impact on middle-income children.” - Olsen, 1999, p.17

CURRICULUM

National Association for the Education of Young (NAEYC) certification required for all Head Start centers with more than twenty children. NAEYC created the Council for Professional Recognition, which grants the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential for childcare workers. The CDA is supported by TEACH. TEACH started in North Carolina and stands for Teacher Education and Compensation Helps. The program gives wage supports and scholarships to childcare workers so that they can obtain the CDA. The CDA and NAEYC’s childcare and preschool accreditation policy requires use of NAEYC’s radical anti-bias curriculum.

Anti-bias Curriculum - Tools for Empowering Young Children (Derman-Sparkes, NAEYC, Washington, D.C., 1989)

Multiculturalism:

Definition of “Whites: All the different national ethnic groups of European origin who as a group are disproportionately represented in the control of the economic, political, and cultural institutions in the United States.” (p. 3)

Witchcraft:

“Kay sets up...a 'witch-healer' table, where the children can make their own potions.” (p. 9)

Revisionist History:

“And if the hypothetical Indians who participated in that hypothetical feast thought all was well and were thankful in the expectation of a peaceful future, they were sadly mistaken.” (pp. 87-88)

Homosexuality:

Definition of “Homophobia: A fear and hatred of gay men and lesbians backed up by institutional policies and power that discriminate against them.” (p. 3)

Sexual Identity:

“...the purpose of these activities is to enable preschoolers to develop a clear, healthy sex identity through understanding that their being a girl or boy depends on their anatomy, not on what they like to do.” (p. 53)

“Make copies of an outline of a body as drawn by a preschooler, and in small groups, ask children to fill in all the body parts, and to show if the person is a girl or boy.” (p. 53)

Activism with Young Children:

“Young children have an impressive capacity for learning how to be activists if adults provide activities that are relevant and developmentally appropriate.” (;. 77)

“Instead of one superhuman figure (usually a white male) righting wrongs all by himself, activism activities teach that real people, adults and children, make life better by working together.” (p. 79)

That chapter on activism inspired an entire book called *That's not Fair! - A Teacher's Guide to Activism with Young Children*, which is also distributed by NAEYC. (Pelo and Davidson, Redleaf Press, St. Paul, MN, 2000)

One part of the curriculum describes a teacher reading books to the children in order to “bring up big issues, issues that provoke debate, discussion, and often, activism project.”

The book goes on to describe the teacher's reading of a book called the Trumpet of the Swan and how she uses it to deal with the issue of homosexuality. (p. 50-51)

“The second part of the book focuses on the swan's courtship and mating. When Ann reads the book, she changes the gender of the main character from a male to a female swan. When the main character is a female, her courtship of another female swan becomes the story of two women falling in love. This invariably provokes conversation among the children about women marrying women and men marrying men. It's important to Ann that children feel comfortable around people who are lesbian and gay. She wants children to expect to meet people who are lesbian and gay and to feel relaxed and at ease with them. When Ann reads this book, the kids already care about Louise the swan by the time she begins to court Serina, her true love. They can't easily dismiss her or ignore her, because they are invested in her life and her happiness.”

Another part of the book describes what happens when a teacher is out on a walk with the children and sees the Blue Angels preparing for an air show. She tells the children that they are bombing planes and then has them return to school and write their feelings regarding what they saw. Here is a sample of what they wrote (p. 106):

“They drew pictures of planes with Xs through them: ‘This is a crossed off bombing plane.’ They drew bomb factories labeled ‘No.’ Ann wrote down their messages: ‘Blue Angels stop.’ ‘Respect our words Blue Angels. Respect kids’ words. Don’t kill people.’ ‘This is a book to tell you, ‘Stop Blue Angels. Don’t kill anyone.’ ‘If you blow up our city, we won’t be happy about it. And our whole city will be destroyed. And if you blow up my favorite library, I won’t be happy because there are some good books there I haven’t read yet.’”

NAEYC’s views on diversity and multiculturalism are evident in their publication *Valuing Diversity: The Primary Years*:

***Teachers who develop
curricula based on trust and
respect***

1. examine how American society perpetuates racism and oppression in subtle yet systematic ways;
2. recognize how individuals unconsciously mirror this oppression;
3. enable cultural groups to retain their integrity while they gain skills to function in the larger society; and
4. use their influence to change oppressive systems.

(Based on Phillips, 1988)

This organization's relativist approach to conflict resolution that has no standards of right and wrong is evidenced in this chart.

3. "What could you do about this problem?"	Ask children for possible solutions. Consider all possibilities. You may say, "I wonder if there is another way to handle this problem," but don't suggest any solution.
4. Help the children choose a solution.	Do not give any hint of what you think they should do—it is their decision.

NAEYC then applies this philosophy to international relations with the following quote:

"After hearing early news about the fighting in the 1991 Gulf War, a four-year-old who practices conflict resolution at home and school remarked, 'They should have used their words!'" – p. 59

The effort to indoctrinate children into environmentalist thinking is evident in the following quote:

When should environmental education begin—in the third grade; first grade; kindergarten? Even earlier. Environmental education based on life experiences should begin during the very earliest years of life. Such experiences play a critical role in shaping life-long attitudes, values, and patterns of behavior toward natural environments (Tilbury, 1994; Wilson, 1994 as quoted in Wilson, Clearinghouse for Science, Mathematics, and Environmental Education, June 2003)

BRAIN RESEARCH:

"For the most part, brain research does not offer clear evidence about the right time to begin programmatic interventions in young children's lives or the types of care and instruction that should be provided." - Joel Alter, Judy Randall, and Leah Goldstein, "The Early Childhood Programs", Minnesota Office of the Legislative Auditor, report 01-01, January 12, 2001, p. 72

“...it may be useful to question the simplistic view that the brain becomes unbendable and increasingly difficult to modify after the first few years. Although clearly much of brain development occurs late in gestation through the first few years of postnatal life, the brain is far from set in its trajectory, even at the end of adolescence.” – C.A. Nelson and F.E. Bloom, “Child Development and Neuroscience,” *Child Development* 68 (5):983, 1997 as quoted in John Bruer, *The Myth of the First Three Years*, The Free Press division of Simon and Schuster, New York, 1999, p. 23

“But there is already plenty of evidence that the biggest obstacle to learning is the belief that one cannot learn. By encouraging parents and teachers to accept this self-fulfilling prophecy, your story with its imagery of windows of opportunity slamming shut, may well do more to stunt children's futures than any deficiencies in their early upbringing. So far as we know, it is never too late for a child to get on the path to learning.” - Dr. Seymour Pappert, Lego Professor of Learning Research at MIT, and Dr. Daniel Dennett, Director of the Tufts University Center for Cognitive Studies (Newsweek, 3/11/96, p.15)

“Assertions that the die has been cast by the time the child enters school are not supported by neuroscience evidence and can create unwarranted pessimism about the potential efficacy of interventions that are initiated after the preschool years.” - Jack Schonkoff and Deborah Phillips, ed., “From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development, National Academy Press”, 2000, p. 216

“There is quite a mystique in our culture about the importance of early intervention, [yet] there is no evidence [for it] whatever.” - Sandra Scarr, “Developmental Theories for the 1990s: Development and Individual Differences,” *Child Development* 63, no. 1 (February 1992): 1516.

“What neuroscientists know about synaptogenesis does not support a claim that zero to three is a critical period for humans. ... Finally, there is no evidence, or even the suggestion, that specific kinds of learning experiences or early childhood environments influence the rate, duration, or outcome of synaptogenesis and synaptic pruning.” - John Bruer, “Education and the Brain: A Bridge too Far,” *Education Researcher*, November, 1997

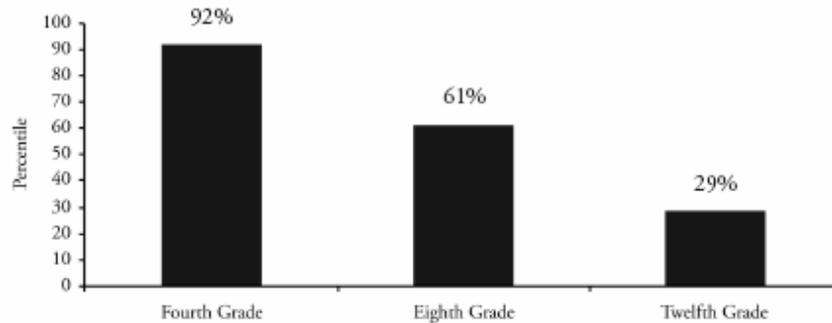
KINDERGARTEN READINESS:

“Evaluations of the School Readiness Program have not provided definitive evidence of its effects. The department has sometimes declared that School Readiness has a positive impact without acknowledging other possible explanations for the results of its evaluations.” - Joel Alter, Judy Randall, and Leah Goldstein, The Early Childhood Programs, Minnesota Office of the Legislative Auditor, report 01-01, January 12, 2001

According to the U.S. Department of Education Study “America’s Kindergartners,” (NCES 2000-070, February, 2000), 94% are proficient at recognizing numbers, shapes, and counting to ten, 92% are eager to learn and 97% are in good health

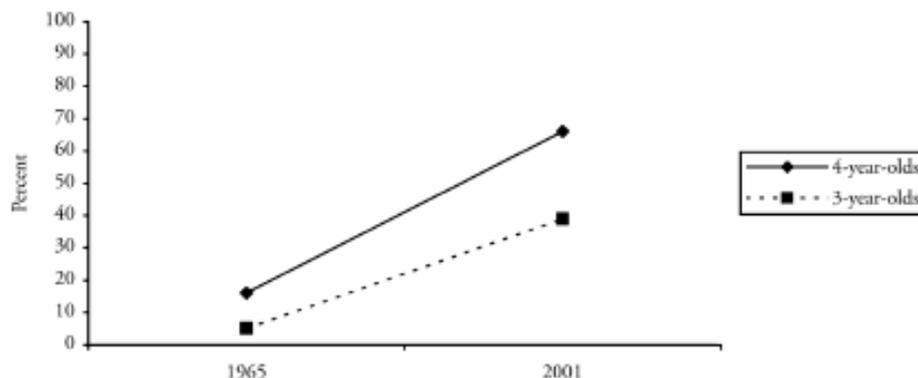
“It’s also in the early years when American students are most competitive internationally. Consider France, England, Denmark, Spain and Belgium where more than 90 percent of 4-year-olds attend public preschools. International tests show that by age 9, when the benefits of preschool should be most apparent, American children outscore nearly all of their universally preschoolled peers on tests of reading, math, and science.” – National Center of Education Statistics, “Elementary and Secondary Education: An International Perspective,” Department of Education, March, 2000, pp. 50-56 as quoted by Olsen, Cato Institute, in *Human Events*, 9/1/2000

Figure 6: Decline in U.S. Science Performance by Grade Level



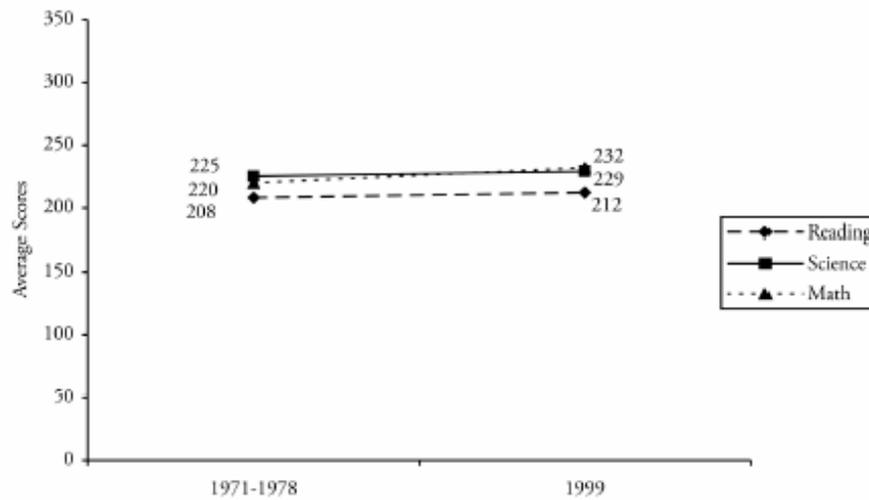
Sources: Fourth grade: “TIMSS highlights from the Primary Grades,” Boston College, June 1997: 2, Table 2, based on 1994-1995 TIMSS data, available at isc.bc.edu/timss1995i/TIMSSDF/P1HiLite.pdf. Eighth grade: “TIMSS Highlights from the Middle School Years,” Boston College, November 1996: 2, Table 1, based on 1994-1995 TIMSS data, available at isc.bc.edu/timss1995i/HiLightB.html. Twelfth grade: “TIMSS Highlights from the Final School Years,” Boston College, February 1998: 2, Table 2, based on 1995-1996 TIMSS, available at isc.bc.edu/timss1995i/TIMSSPDF/C_Hilite.pdf.

Figure 1: Percentage of Three- and Four-year-olds Enrolled in Preprimary Programs, 1965-2001



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics, 2003*, Table 43, available at nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d03/tables/dt043.asp.

Figure 2: Fourth Grade Reading, Science and Math Scores on the NAEP, 1971-1999



[All three above charts quoted from Darcy Olsen, President of the Goldwater Institute, *Assessing Proposals for Preschool and Kindergarten: Essential Information for Parents, Taxpayers and Policymakers*, 2/8/05 at <http://www.goldwaterinstitute.org/pdf/materials/542.pdf>]

“In other words, preschool conferred no apparent gains on participating children. Reports also show that GKAP scores are essentially the same as they were before the adoption of universal preschool. Georgia State School Superintendent Linda Schrenko expressed the state’s disappointment, saying, ‘The only message you can get from it is that our kindergarten non-ready rate is the same, regardless of what we do.’” - James Salzer, “School Readiness the Same for Tots; Results Unchanged Despite Pre-K,” *The Florida Times-Union*, November 1, 1999.

EFFECTS OF CHILD CARE/PRESCHOOL ON CHILDREN:

“Most out of home child care cannot provide a number of [these] essential building blocks...We need to gradually bring about social arrangements that maximize at home care of young infants by their parents.” – Stanley Greenspan, MD, professor of pediatrics and psychiatry and speaker for Clinton White House Conference on Early Childhood, George Washington University School of Medicine

“Children who experience long hours of child care over the first four years of life are more at risk for showing behavior problems, particularly aggression. Not only were these children more likely to engage in assertive, defiant, and even disobedient activities, but they were also more likely to bully, fight with, or act mean to other children.” - The NICHD Early Child Care Research Network as quoted on the Society for Research on Child Development website at <http://www.srcd.org/pp1.html>

“For the average child, these stable, reliable, tension-relieving inner images [of parents] are not in place much before 36 or 45 months of age...In the meantime, the child will be prone to feelings of abandonment, accompanied by some degree of anxiety or even panic, when the parents are not available and the inner images he has of them cannot be summoned up...The stability and availability of the child’s inner parent images make an indispensable contribution to the child’s self-image.”- Donald Rinsley, MD as quoted in *Who Will Rock the Cradle?* (Eagle Forum Education and Legal Defense Fund, 1989), p. 46

“But evidence suggests that the mother-infant bond...is unique and cannot be fully substituted for by even the most sensitive and caring surrogate mother figures. Much less can it be substituted for by even the best-trained day caretakers, who also may be responsible for several or more other outplaced children who make time consuming and often enervating demands.”- Donald Rinsley, MD as quoted in *Who Will Rock the Cradle?* (Eagle Forum Education and Legal Defense Fund, 1989), p. 47

“Since the 1960’s a vast body of research has stressed the importance to the developing child of the physical presence and emotional accessibility of both parents. ...the loss of a parent through death, divorce, illness, or a time demanding job contributes to many forms of emotional disorder, especially the anger, the low self esteem, and the depression that accompany adolescent suicide.” – Armand Nicholi, MD, *The Harvard Guide to Psychiatry*, 3rd edition, Belknap/Harvard Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1999, p. 623

This last quote ties in quite well to the studies showing the enormous increase in the prescription rates of antidepressants and stimulants for preschool aged children. These include the Journal of the American Medical Association study showing the prescription of psychotropic drugs, particularly Ritalin, for 2 to 4 year old children, increased 300% between 1991 and 1995. (Zito, J., et al. (2/23/00) Trends in the prescribing of psychotropic medications to preschoolers. Journal of the American Medical Association, 283:1025-1030) A study published in January 2003 in the Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine by the same author found a 300% increase in psychotropic drug use in children between 1987 and 1996, that 6% of ALL children in the study were on psychiatric medications, and a sharp rise in use of antipsychotic in poor children. The latter finding led the author to theorize that medications were being used as a social control tool in low-income populations. (Zito, J., et al, (1/13/03) Psychotropic Practice Patterns for Youth A 10-Year Perspective. Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine, 157:17-25)

“There is no evidence that such early instruction has lasting benefits, and considerable evidence that it can do lasting harm...If we do not wake up to the potential danger of these harmful practices, we may do serious damage to a large segment of the next generation...” (David Elkind, *Miseducation: Preschoolers at Risk* (New York: Knopf, 1997): 4, as quoted in Olsen, 2005).

“There is a large body of evidence indicating that there is little if anything to be gained by exposing middleclass children to early education... Those who argue in favor of universal preschool education ignore evidence that indicates early schooling is inappropriate for many four-year olds and that it may even be harmful to their development.” (Edward Ziglar, co-founder of Head Start and director of the Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy at Yale University, *Formal Schooling for Four-Year-Olds? No*" in *Early Schooling: the National Debate*, ed. Sharon L. Kagan and Edward F. Zigler (New Haven, Conn.:Yale University Press, 1987, as quoted in Olsen, 2005)