

# UC Irvine

## UC Irvine Previously Published Works

### Title

Introduction: A Decade Review of Adolescence Research

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/13h9z0qk>

### Journal

Journal of Research on Adolescence, 31(4)

### ISSN

1050-8392

### Authors

Card, Noel A  
Morris, Amanda Sheffield  
Salmivalli, Christina  
et al.

### Publication Date


2021-12-01

### DOI

10.1111/jora.12691

Peer reviewed

## Introduction: A Decade Review of Adolescence Research

Noel A. Card   
*University of Georgia*

Amanda Sheffield Morris  
*Oklahoma State University*

Christina Salmivalli  
*University of Turku*

Gustavo Carlo   
*University of California, Irvine*

This paper provides an introduction to the Special Issue, A Decade Review of Adolescence Research. In this paper, we describe the goals of the special issue and the process of planning and reviewing reviews. We describe other special issues of JRA in the past decade, and preview upcoming changes and special issues in the journal.

We are pleased to introduce the *Journal of Research on Adolescence (JRA)* special issue: Decade in Review. The *Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA)* is now over 35 years old, and *JRA* was launched over 30 years ago. Both the society and the journal are well into adulthood, given any definition of adolescence, but that does not imply a slowing in development. There exist dozens of journals devoted largely or primarily to adolescent development, including generalized journals such as *JRA* and more specialized journals (e.g., *Journal of Adolescent Health*). There are also numerous *Handbooks of Adolescence* (e.g., Crockett, Carlo, & Schulenberg, in press; Lerner & Steinberg, 2009). This body of research is invaluable to our understanding, and ultimately improving, the lives of adolescents. However, an undesirable consequence of this rapidly expanding literature is that it has become impossible to stay abreast of the innovation and advances in the many subfields of study that are included among adolescence researchers. Thus, it seems important to take stock and review advances in our field at the end of this decade. The current issue follows a previous *JRA* Decade in Review (Russell, Card, & Susman, 2011) to provide an update of advances over the last 10 years.

We began planning this issue about 3 years ago, with our first planning meeting at a restaurant in Minneapolis at the 2018 Biennial Meeting (this meeting is remembered both for the cutting-edge research presented and the record snowfall that extended many of our stays). Our goal was to build upon the 2010 Decade in Review to provide

an updated review of a decade of advances in the interdisciplinary field of adolescence science. In the following months, we identified topic areas and invited leaders in the field to contribute reviews of scholarship published during the second decade of the 21st century (roughly, 2010–2020) in their subfields of expertise. Invited authors were asked to consider work from multiple disciplines, influential theoretical contributions and important methodological innovations, and key empirical findings with attention to diversity in adolescents.

The guest editors provided some guidance but essentially asked the invited authors to define the scope of emphasis for their review. Therefore, the reviews in this special issue necessarily rely on authors' perspectives of the field. The conclusions derive inevitably from their own disciplinary perspectives and research experience, although good authors strive to look beyond the boundaries of their own discipline's ways of framing the issues, and beyond themselves and their circle of collaborating scholars. Different authors from different disciplines would inevitably produce different decade reviews. Although the authors of this issue were invited, all papers went through rigorous peer review. For each submission, one of the guest editors solicited reviews from at least two experts in the field, often striving to secure reviews by experts holding different perspectives than the authors. For all submissions, the reviewers required major revisions, in most cases broadening the scope of the review and in all cases providing careful scrutiny of authors' conclusions. We appreciate our colleagues who provided these valuable critiques, and we are grateful to the authors for

---

Requests for reprints should be sent to Noel A. Card, Human Development and Family Science, University of Georgia, 123 Dawson Hall, 305 Sanford Dr., Athens, GA 30602. E-mail: Noel-Card@uga.edu

their responsiveness and commitment to preparing reviews that represent a broad perspective.

Of course, much has happened since we began planning this special issue in 2018. The rapid and deadly spread of COVID-19 in early 2020 led to the shutdown of many aspects of life, including universities and other settings in which adolescence researchers work, and the schools and other important contexts in which adolescents develop. This has affected this Decade in Review in multiple ways, including the timing and scope. In terms of timing, we would have preferred to publish this as the first issue of 2021. In terms of scope, the special issue that follows is missing some important topics, not because they are irrelevant (e.g., problems of adolescent substance use have not miraculously disappeared in the past decade), but by the challenges of the pandemic. We also sought to represent the entirety of the past decade, while not ignoring the reality that we have experienced (and in many ways continue to experience) an unprecedented global event that is likely to have long-lasting impacts on both research and the lives of young people. In this Decade in Review, we have tried to maintain focus on the past decade in its entirety, and we note that a special issue of JRA on the impact of COVID-19 on adolescents was published in the last issue of JRA. The COVID-19 special issue included 21 empirical papers across four continents and was supported by SRA's COVID-19 Response Team with a commentary and as reviewers (see Branje & Morris, 2021; Hussong et al., 2021).

In the past decade, JRA has published special issues advancing new understanding in several areas of long-standing interest to adolescence researchers, including puberty (Dorn & Susman, 2019), intimate relationships (Kerig, 2014), gangs (Boxer, 2014), and religion (Hardy & King, 2019). The past decade has also seen increasing attention to the diversity of adolescents and their experiences (e.g., Hussong & Jones, 2018), as well as a more global perspective (Raffaelli, Lazarevic, Koller, Nsamenang, & Sharma, 2013) and increased attention to preparing adolescents for a rapidly changing world (Tolan, 2014). Importantly, advances in methodologies and analysis approaches have also furthered our ability to study adolescence and are reflected in JRA special issues on network analysis (Veenstra, Dijkstra, Steglich, & Van Zalk, 2013), neuroimaging approaches to understanding risk and resilience (Morris, Squeglia, Jacobus, & Silk, 2018), and ambulatory assessment

(Modecki, Goldberg, Ehrenreich, Russell, & Bellmore, 2019).

More recently, JRA has expanded its age range to include young adulthood (19–25) to be in line with research indicating that brain development extends into the mid-twenties and because young adulthood is an important developmental and transitional period (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2019). In 2022, JRA is launching its first special series, four special issues/sections on Dismantling Oppression. Issues include *Black Lives Matter; Discrimination and BIPOC Youth; White Supremacy and Privilege*; and “Good Trouble, Necessary Trouble” which focus on youth activism. Indeed, the end of the last decade has included many challenges and opportunities for adolescents, which will be studied for decades to come.

We are hopeful that this Decade in Review will be a clear summary of advances in understanding adolescent development over the past decade, with an eye toward the future. We also hope that it will influence adolescence research in the coming decade by providing a foundation of knowledge on which to continue to build. We are pleased that the past President of SRA, Robert Crosnoe's Presidential article (Crosnoe, 2021), is included in this issue as well. It was originally planned as an inaugural address, but due to the pandemic, the conference and address were canceled. Crosnoe's address is an excellent compliment to the Decade in Review. We are grateful to the contributing authors, reviewers, the Society for Research on Adolescence, and Wiley Publishers for support for planning, publishing, and marketing the special issue.

## REFERENCES

- Boxer, P. (2014). Youth gangs and adolescent development: New findings, new challenges, and new directions: Introduction to the special section. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 24*(2), 201–203.
- Branje, S., & Morris, A. S. (2021). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on adolescent emotional, social, and academic adjustment. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 31*(3), 486–499. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12668>
- Crockett, L. J., Carlo, G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (Eds.). (in press). *APA handbook of adolescent and young adult development*. New York: American Psychological Association.
- Crosnoe, R. (2021). Contextualizing the social and educational journeys of adolescents within the life course. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 31*(4), this volume.

- Dorn, L. D., & Susman, E. J. (2019). The new biobehavioral developmental science of puberty. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 29(1), 1–3.
- Hardy, S. A., & King, P. E. (2019). Processes of religious and spiritual influence in adolescence: Introduction to a special section. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 29(2), 244–253.
- Hussong, A. M., Benner, A. D., Erdem, G., Lansford, J. E., Makila, L. M., Petrie, R. C., & SRA COVID-19 Response Team (2021). Adolescence amid a pandemic: Short-and long-term implications. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 31(3), 820–835. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12671>
- Hussong, A. M., & Jones, D. J. (2018). Parenting adolescents in an increasingly diverse world: Defining, refining, and extending theory and research. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 28(3), 568–570. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12398>
- Kerig, P. K. (2014). Introduction: For better or worse: Intimate relationships as sources of risk or resilience for girls' delinquency. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 24(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12076>
- Lerner, R. W., & Steinberg, L. (2009). *Handbook of adolescent psychology*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Modecki, K. L., Goldberg, R. E., Ehrenreich, S. E., Russell, M., & Bellmore, A. (2019). The practicalities and perils of ambulatory assessment's promise: Introduction to a special section. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 29(3), 539–791. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12532>
- Morris, A. S., Squeglia, L. M., Jacobus, J., & Silk, J. S. (2018). Adolescent brain development: Implications for understanding risk and resilience processes through neuroimaging research. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 28(1), 4–9.
- National Academies of Sciences, Engineer, and Medicine (2019). *The promise of adolescence: Realizing opportunity for all youth*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25388>
- Raffaelli, M., Lazarevic, V., Koller, S. H., Nsamenang, A. B., & Sharma, D. (2013). Introduction: Special issue on adolescents in the majority world. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 23(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12000>
- Russell, S. T., Card, N. A., & Susman, E. J. (2011). Introduction: A decade review of research on adolescence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 21(1), 1–2. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2010.00710.x>
- Tolan, P. (2014). Forward thinking: Preparing our youth for the coming world. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 24(3), 411–416. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12155>
- Veenstra, R., Dijkstra, J. K., Steglich, C., & Van Zalk, M. H. W. (2013). Network-behavior dynamics. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 23(2), 399–412. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12070>