

Biography 2-2-17

Dr. Beverly Ulrich is considered one of the world's leaders in motor development, more precisely, the development of neuromotor control. She was one of the earliest researchers to lead motor developmentalists to adopt a dynamic systems (a.k.a. complexity theory) approach to understanding change in patterns of motor behavior over time. This work was epitomized by her co-authorship with Dr. Esther Thelen in 1991 of a ground-breaking monograph published by the Society for Research in Child Development, which served as a tutorial for scholars in developmental science (cognitive, social, and motor) enabling and encouraging scientists to test the principles of this approach. Her career was characterized by her commitment to maintaining a line of basic science research leading to translation of this new knowledge into testable clinical applications, particularly for infants with Down syndrome and myelomeningocele. The ultimate goal of her work was to generate empirical evidence for the impact of early and sustained intervention on the development of infants and young children born with developmental neuromotor control problems.

Her studies were known for utilizing sophisticated technologies, such as multi-camera motion capture, electromyography, computerized spinal reflex testing, DEXA scans, and brain imaging. She frequently took equipment into homes to obtain the most inclusive and family friendly datasets. She was PI on numerous federal and foundation grants as well as co-investigator and consultant on additional grants. Over 32 years of publishing 85 refereed manuscripts, chapters, and monographs, her work appeared in journals such as *Child Development*, *Human Movement Science*, *Physical Therapy*, and *Experimental Brain Research*.

One of her greatest joys was mentoring doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows. They challenged and sharpened her scientific thinking and went on to make their own research and leadership marks in science. She led the field as well by serving as president of both NASPSPA and the National Academy of Kinesiology and received numerous societal awards for her accomplishments. Adding an administrative post late in her career, she served for a decade as head of Kinesiology at the University of Michigan, leading it from Division to School status and becoming the School's first Dean.