



Adult Development and Aging (5th Edition)

By K. Warner Schaie, Sherry L. Willis

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

PREFACE

The "graying of America" proceeds at a rapid pace. The post-World War II baby boom generation, comprising 1 out of every 3 people in the United States, is now at middle age. One out of every 4 Americans is already 50 years of age or older. By the year 2025, 64 million Americans will be 65 years of age or older.

We are finally beginning to come to grips with the implications of the burgeoning population of older people. Our increasing longevity and the need for understanding its ramifications have also resulted in considerable scientific research, especially during the last four decades. The demand has grown on college and university campuses for courses that focus their attention on the broad period of adulthood. Exploring the development of an individual's career, marriage, family life, and psychological functioning as he or she is affected by a rapidly changing society have become vital issues.

The objective of this textbook is to encourage the student to consider the phenomenon of adult development and aging from a behavioral point of view in a readable but comprehensive and scientifically well-documented manner. We introduce current theory and research on the major psychological issues, and we provide background on those social and biological aspects of development that are essential to understanding behavioral age changes.

We continue to believe that the study of adult development is best served by using a combined chronological and topical approach that we have consistently used in previous editions and the sequence of presentation first introduced in the third edition has been retained. Adult Development and Aging, fifth edition begins with an introductory chapter that sets the stage for our study. This chapter examines demographic changes in our society and the current state of research in the field. To provide an overview, we next consider the broad issues of adult development in three chronological chapters: young adulthood, middle age, and late life. We then provide a research methods chapter that focuses on the quasi-experimental methods prominent in the study of development, and also provides a brief exposition of relevant experimental designs. Our experience in teaching earlier editions of the text suggested that students were often overwhelmed when research methods were introduced in the first chapter before some substantive material was covered. The methodology chapter is now placed at the point where that material seems to be needed for a proper understanding of the topical chapters that follow.

The topical chapters are placed roughly in the life-stage order at which particular developmental processes become most salient. First, we consider topics that are important in young adulthood: families, gender issues, and careers. The gender issues chapter comes immediately after the family chapter because issues first raised under the rubric of the family are considered further in the chapter on men and women. The second group of topics consists of personality development, motivation, learning and memory, and intellectual development, areas in which age changes become important as people move from midlife into old age. The final three chapters cover lifelong processes that become most salient in old age: biological aging, mental disorders associated with old age, and bereavement.

The material that we cover in the topical chapters, however, is not limited just to the life stage within which it happens to be particularly relevant. The flow of human lives can not be segmented that easily. Initial career

choices, for example, may be of paramount importance to young adults, but matters relating to career development permeate much of adulthood. Although our chapter on careers is placed early in the book, it also includes material on occupational development in middle age, career reevaluation, change in later life, and the retirement experience.

What we hope to accomplish is to present an integrated picture of the psychological processes involved in adult development and the stages of human experience. We therefore, whenever appropriate, use a life-span approach in following psychological processes as they develop from young adulthood to the end of life.

During the five years since the fourth edition of this book was published, research on aging has continued at a furious pace. In this fifth edition, we have attempted to incorporate new findings that occurred during the previous decade as well as to provide further documentation for our discussion. Unfortunately, much of the newly added material can not always replace older findings. Thus the research literature cited in this volume keeps expanding and now numbers over 2,000 references. In order to understand behavioral aging, we continue to provide limited discussions of the necessary context to be found in concurrent biological and societal changes. We have further updated the material on family relationships in rapidly changing circumstances, such as the increasing number of women in the workforce and the increasing frequency of dual careers. And we continue to monitor the recent advances in work on Alzheimer's disease and the relationship between cardiovascular disease and behavior.

The methodology chapter covers design issues important to descriptive studies of human aging, but it also summarizes principles of research employing experimental paradigms. A thorough understanding of human development requires data that are collected over time on the same individuals, the longitudinal approach. Wherever possible, we therefore present data from at least short-term longitudinal follow-up studies. We have tried to present a sound and thorough review of scientific research methods that avoids jargon and unnecessary technical detail while providing the student with the essential details needed to understand the studies described in this volume as well as other relevant research literature.

Tables and graphs have been updated wherever more recent information was available. However, the reader should note that the results of the 2000 census were not available at the time this edition went into production, and population figures must therefore rely on census publications from the 1990s. The illustration program was also reviewed and substitutions were made where we thought improvement was indicated.

In order to keep the size of this textbook manageable, we have once again tried to make room for the most recent work by trimming some older materials that are now primarily of historical interest or material that is not directly essential to an understanding of the aging processes. For students who wish to pursue major issues in greater depth, we continue to include suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter and a listing of major reference volumes and journals at the end of the book.

We are pleased to know that previous editions of *Adult Development and Aging* have had wide circulation outside of North America. But we must admit that the book retains a somewhat "Americanocentric" orientation and content. Although the great bulk of the psychological aging literature continues to originate in North America, there has been a steadily increasing amount of work on aging in Europe and elsewhere. In the present edition, we continue our attempt to overcome our past avoidance behavior by including materials on international studies in each chapter whenever possible and by including citations to books and journals published outside of North America. This effort was enhanced by the fact that significant portions of this edition were written in Berlin, Germany, while we were guests of the Max-Planck-Institute for Human Development and the Division of Geropsychology of the Geriatric Klinikum at the Free University of Berlin. We would like to thank our hosts Paul Baltes and Jacqui Smith as well as the many researchers and students

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K.W.S.

S.L.W.

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