

TWELFTH EDITION

# DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LIFE

A Psychosocial Approach



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A Psychosocial Approach

Barbara M. Newman

*University of Rhode Island*

and

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# Preface

**THE FIRST EDITION OF** *Development Through Life* was published in 1975. Since that time the science of human development and changes in longevity have converged to create a remarkable revision of our understanding of the life course including: new insights about the prenatal period and infancy; new ideas about the transition from adolescence to adulthood; recognition of diverse pathways through adulthood; and new views about aging. Insights about human development have emerged in a vibrant research environment with new approaches to research, greater inclusion of diverse samples, both in the United States and internationally, and new statistical techniques to manage multiple observations and multiple variables.

Today, the years of infancy and childhood comprise a smaller percentage of the life span than was the case in 1975. At the same time, researchers have looked in much greater detail at the prenatal stage as a dynamic period when learning begins, the environment impacts the developmental trajectory, and conditions of pregnancy influence fetal growth. Research on infant development, particularly development in the first days and weeks of life, has flourished and resulted in a greater appreciation for the cognitive and sensory capacities of the newborn. The expanding field of evolutionary psychology has shed new light on the adaptive capacities of infants and the features of the parent-infant relationship that contribute to survival and long-term growth. There is a growing consensus about what constitutes effective or “good” parenting and the cascading impact of harsh or neglectful parenting.

The application of developmental systems theory has provided many new insights into the way change occurs. We view development as a product of the interaction of many levels at once, each potentially altering the other. For example, neuroimaging studies illustrate how various areas of the brain interact and influence each other as a person engages in cognitive tasks such as face recognition, problem solving, and risk assessment. Studies of the genetic basis of behavior have shown that the same genotype can result in vulnerability or resilience depending upon the nature of the parenting environment.

In 1975, we offered a revision of Erikson’s theory by introducing two stages of adolescence, early adolescence with the psychosocial crisis of group identity versus alienation, and later adolescence, with the psychosocial crisis of personal

identity versus role confusion. Contemporary scholars are describing an ever more gradual transition out of adolescence into adulthood so that the period we call later adolescence is lasting well into the decade of the 20s. Research on educational and occupational attainment, relationships with family, and the formation of intimate bonds all point to the idea that the life commitments that used to be formed in the decade of the 20s are being forestalled for many young people into their late 20s and 30s. Studies of brain development lend support to this view of a more gradual transition from adolescence to adulthood as capacities for executive function become increasingly coordinated with other brain regions governing emotional reactions and responses to stress.

Life expectancy in the United States has changed over the past 40 years so that today those who are already age 65 can expect to live an average of another 19 years. Those in the period of later life, which we call elderhood, are the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. population. As the baby boomers age, they will contribute to an even greater proportion of the population in elderhood. These elders will experience a period of life that is more active, more continuously informed about healthy lifestyle practices, and less constrained by traditional social scripts than ever before. At the same time, a new burst in commercialism is targeting older adults and making them potentially vulnerable to exploitation and poor quality care.

In the current edition of *Development Through Life*, we have included discussions about conditions of life in other industrialized countries. In that regard, we have been troubled to note many ways in which life in the United States, as exciting and promising as it is, does not compare favorably. As you read, you will find that infant mortality, student performance in math and science, teen pregnancies, school dropouts, children and adolescents who are victims of violent crime, children in poverty, children who experience multiple parental transitions, adults who are homeless, and longevity are all less favorable in the United States than in many other countries. These comparisons lead us to urge students and scholars in human development to address the challenges of how to continue to promote optimal development through the life span.

One of the troubling realities of the current historical period is extreme income inequality in the United States. Despite the knowledge about effective interventions and best

practices, greed among the very top segment of the population is preventing the level of investment in programs that would improve many of the conditions mentioned above. From a psychosocial perspective, we see evidence of stagnation among the very wealthy that has serious implications for future societal well-being.

## The Stage Approach

The text provides a thorough chronological introduction to the study of human development from conception through elderhood. We examine physical, intellectual, social, and emotional growth in each of the 11 stages, emphasizing that development results from the interdependence of these areas at every stage. This strategy gives attention to important developmental themes that recur in different stages of life. For each life stage, the process of development is linked to internal conflicts, changing self-awareness, and a dynamic social environment. As a result, students gain a sense of a multidimensional person, striving toward new levels of competence and mastery, embedded in multiple contexts.

Scholars are actively pursuing new directions in each of the life stages. Many new journals have emerged over the past 10 years that offer insights into each and every topic covered in this text. The selection of topics included in the text represents only a portion of the countless fascinating aspects of development in each period of life. If you are captivated by one or more of the life stages, and as your career directions become clarified, you will want to take additional coursework in one or more of these periods.

## Advantages of the Psychosocial Framework

Psychosocial theory provides an organizing conceptual framework, highlighting the continuous interaction and integration of individual competencies with the demands and resources of culture. Development is viewed as a product of genetic, maturational, societal, and self-directed factors. The psychosocial framework helps students think about how people make meaning of their experiences and how efforts at meaning making change over the life span. Applying the psychosocial framework to an analysis of human development has the following advantages:

- Helps to identify and emphasize themes and directions of growth across the life span.
- Helps readers assess the influence of experiences during earlier life stages on later development.
- Clarifies how one's past, present, and expectations of the future are systematically connected to the lives of people who are older and younger, highlighting intergenerational transmission and the reciprocal influences of the generations.

- Offers a hopeful outlook on the total life course, including positive psychological capacities such as hope, purpose, love, and caring.
- Clarifies how a personal worldview develops within the context of cultural influences and historical events.
- Locates development within a framework of significant relationships, emphasizing the simultaneous and complementary processes of autonomy and connection.

## The Life-Span Perspective

When we wrote the first edition of *Development Through Life*, we had just completed graduate study, had two young children, and were in the midst of early adulthood. Now, at the publication of the 12th edition, we are looking forward to the birth of our fourth grandchild; our three adult children are all married, living in cities across the country and thriving in their careers; and we are experiencing the challenges of later adulthood.

The psychosocial life-span perspective has been a valuable orienting framework for our scholarly work as well as our personal lives. It has provided insights into the birth and parenting of our children and grandchildren; the deaths of our parents; the successes, disappointments, and transitions of our work lives; and the conflicts and delights of our relationship as husband and wife. The themes of this book have allowed us to anticipate and cope with the challenges of adult life and to remain resilient in the face of crises. We hope that the ideas presented in this text will provide these same benefits to you.

In addition to enhancing self-understanding, the life-span perspective helps us understand the conflicts, opportunities, and achievements of people who are at different stages than our own. The life-span perspective helps guide interactions with others so they can be optimally sensitive, supportive, and facilitative for growth at each life stage.

## Effects of Cultural and Historical Contexts

The developing person exists in a changing cultural and historical context. Studying development over the course of life requires awareness of the ways societies change over time. Events since the 11th edition of *Development Through Life* was published include

- The rapid spread of social media, with reports that 93% of U.S. youth are online, including 5.6 million children ages 12 and under who have Facebook accounts (Jones and Fox, 2009; Krier, 2012). Recent estimates suggest that Facebook has somewhere between 500 million and 1 billion users. Research on the impact of social media cannot possibly keep up with the expanding array of

apps, websites, and new online experiences available to appeal to every age, interest, and social demographic.

- The wide acceptance of marriage equality in the United States, including new state-level recognition of same-sex marriages and a recent Supreme Court ruling striking down the Defense of Marriage Act. This is a major civil rights achievement of the 21st century. We believe that much of the research carried out by human development and family science scholars has helped confirm the positive family environments of same-sex couples.
- Growing evidence confirming global warming which seems to be impacting weather, drought, changing water levels, erosion of land masses, and environments for arctic species. Concerns about global warming are being translated into new policies aimed at reducing reliance on fossil fuels, conservation, and international agreements regarding air and water pollution.

These are just a few examples of the contexts in which development takes place that may dramatically alter people's lived experiences. Nothing could be more fascinating than trying to understand patterns of continuity and change over the life course within the context of a changing environment.

## Effects of Poverty, Discrimination, and Other Forms of Societal Oppression

The number of children in the United States who lived in families with incomes below the poverty level in 2012 was more than 16 million or 22% of all children. This is an increase of 14% since 2010. Economic conditions for families are deteriorating. The National Center for Children in Poverty at Columbia University estimates that a family of four actually needs twice the income of the poverty level (\$23,550 a year) to cover basic expenses in 2012. Using this statistic, the Center estimates that 45% of children live in low-income families. The impact of poverty cascades through life from increased risks during the prenatal period through disruptions in physical, cognitive, and emotional development in infancy, childhood, adolescence, and into adult life.

Numerous examples of the ways that poverty, discrimination, and various forms of societal oppression affect individual development are interwoven throughout the text. At the same time, research on resilience illustrates the remarkable capacities for growth and adaptation at every period of life.

## Organization

The following summarizes the basic organization of the text.

## Introducing the Field: Chapters 1 to 3

Chapter 1 describes the orientation and assumptions of the text and introduces the life-span perspective. Chapter 2 introduces the role of theory in human development and outlines significant ideas about change and growth from seven theoretical perspectives. The presentation of each theory emphasizes its basic features, its implications for the study of human development, and its links to the psychosocial framework. Chapter 3 introduces basic concepts of psychosocial theory, including an analysis of its strengths and weaknesses. The chapter on the research process was shortened and moved to the appendix in response to user feedback.

## The Latest on Fetal Development and Genetics: Chapter 4

In Chapter 4, fetal development is presented, highlighting the bidirectional influences of the fetus and the pregnant woman within her social and cultural environments. Continuing discoveries in the field of behavioral genetics have been included in this revision. The chapter traces changes in physical and sensory development across the three trimesters. We have emphasized research on the risks to fetal development associated with a pregnant woman's exposure to a wide range of substances, especially nicotine, alcohol, caffeine, other drugs, and environmental toxins. Poverty is discussed as a context that increases risks for suboptimal development. This chapter includes a detailed description of cultural differences in the way pregnancy and childbirth are conceptualized, providing a first model for considering the psychosocial process as it will unfold in subsequent chapters.

## Growth and Development from Infancy to Elderhood: Chapters 5 to 14

Chapters 5 through 14 trace basic patterns of normal growth and development in infancy, toddlerhood, early school age, middle childhood, early adolescence, later adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood, later adulthood, and elderhood. In these chapters we consider how individuals organize and interpret their experience, noting changes in their behavior, attitudes, worldview, and the coping strategies they use in the face of changing environmental demands.

Each chapter begins with an examination of four or five of the critical developmental tasks of the stage. These tasks reflect global aspects of development, including physical maturation, sensory and motor competence, cognitive maturation, emotional development, social relationships, and self-understanding. We consider the psychosocial crisis of each stage in some detail. We also show how successfully resolving a crisis helps individuals develop a prime adaptive



ego quality and how unsuccessful resolution leads to core pathology. Although most people grow developmentally—albeit with pain and struggle—others do not. People who acquire prime adaptive ego qualities are more likely to lead active, flexible, agentic lives, and be resilient in the face of stressors. People who acquire core pathologies are more likely to lead withdrawn, guarded lives; they are more vulnerable to stressors resulting in greater risk of mental and physical health problems.

## Applied Topics at the End of Each Chapter

We conclude each chapter by applying research and theory to a topic of societal importance. These applied topics provide an opportunity for students to link the research and theory about normative developmental processes to the analysis of pressing social concerns. Table 3.1 contains an overview of the basic tasks, crises, and applied topics for each stage of life.

## Understanding Death, Dying, and Bereavement: Chapter 15

The book closes with a chapter that addresses end-of-life issues within a psychosocial framework. As with the developmental stage chapters, the topic illustrates the interaction of the biological, psychological, and societal systems as they contribute to the experiences of dying, grieving, and bereavement. The chapter includes definitions of death, the process of dying, death-related rituals, grief, and bereavement, including a focus on the role of culture in shaping ideas about death and expressions of grief. We conclude the chapter with a discussion of the opportunities for psychosocial growth that are a result of bereavement and the considerations of one's own mortality.

## New to This Edition

The 12th edition has retained the basic structure and positive developmental emphasis of previous editions. We continue to strive to make the text clear, readable, and thought provoking, while still capturing the complexities and novel concepts that make the study of human development so fascinating. In this edition, each chapter begins with case material that is intended to help bring important themes from the chapter into focus. References to the cases are spread throughout the chapter, providing opportunities to apply concepts to real-world examples. The chapters have been rewritten with an effort to streamline and reorganize the material to ensure a clearer and more focused discussion. The text has been completely updated. New research findings, recent census data, updated results of ongoing studies that collect data on new cohorts, and results of ongoing

longitudinal studies have been integrated into the narrative. The following list highlights examples of the new material in each chapter.

### Chapter 1: The Development Through Life Perspective

Chapter opening case: Ruth Hamilton (1898–2008).

Addition of a new basic assumption about diversity: Diversity is a product of the biological, psychological, and societal systems.

Illustrations of the ways the biological, psychological, and societal systems work by providing examples from the Ruth Hamilton case.

New emphasis is given to the topics of identity and meaning making in the discussion of the psychological system.

Discussion of the ways in which the societal system worked to constrain the role of women and how Ruth Hamilton pushed against these constraints.

New definitions about the poverty threshold and the problems with the federal government's definitions of poverty.

Updates of the percentages of adults and children living in poverty.

List of family characteristics that are associated with negative academic and health outcomes for children living in poverty.

New discussion of the Social Security system, including how the government set the age of 65 as the time for a person to receive social security and how that has been changing.

New population graphs showing how the percentages of people at different ages have changed over time from 1900–2010.

New section on group differences in life expectancy that highlights gender differences and racial differences.

Reorganization of the section on factors that contribute to longevity including education, social integration, diet, and exercise.

Increased integration of the topics of the biological, psychological, and societal systems throughout the chapter.

### Chapter 2: Major Theories for Understanding Development

Chapter opening case: Jack Manasky and his daughter Marilyn.

At the end of the discussion of each theory, there are Case Analysis: Using What You Know questions referring students back to the opening case.

New discussion explaining the differences between theory, research, and facts.

Reorganization of introduction with new sections on requirements of a theory and requirements of a theory of development.

For evolutionary theory, a section has been added about the work of John and Stephanie Cacioppo on the adaptive value of social connections.

In cultural theory, increased discussion of enculturation and culture carriers and the way parenting practices transmit cultural values.

In social role theory, there is an expanded discussion of social identity.

For systems theory, there is a more succinct definition of the concept of system; expanded discussion of the characteristics of open systems; more detailed explanation of the concept of adaptive self-organization; expanded emphasis of ecological systems theory; added discussion of Bronfenbrenner's later work in which he discusses the ways individuals influence their environments.

New section entitled "A Systems View of Families".

### Chapter 3: Psychosocial Theory

Explanation of how the textbook builds upon and expands upon Erikson's psychosocial theory.

Insertion of the organizational chart that includes the major concepts of psychosocial theory for each life stage.

Examples of how work on developmental tasks might vary from stage to stage including cross-cultural and generational differences.

Clarified and expanded discussion of the central process for resolving the psychosocial crises.

Explanation of how relationships are comprised of complex networks of interacting members in the discussion of the radius of significant relationships.

### Chapter 4: The Period of Pregnancy and Prenatal Development

New chapter opening case: Interview with a woman in the 8th month of an unplanned pregnancy.

Previews of the applied topic throughout the chapter to help students see the connections between the material in the text and the applied topic of abortion.

Expanded explanation of the work of Gregor Mendel to help students understand how his discoveries continue to influence the field of genetics.

New example to help explain how epigenetic marks are related to disease.

New example using PTC gene (phenylthiocarbamide) to illustrate how genes contribute to individuality.

New figure (Figure 4.5) that illustrates how the genes and the environment interact to show how different

environmental conditions can alter the expression of genes.

Revised discussion about the norm of reaction to show the relationship between the genetic potential for intelligence and environmental conditions of adequate nutrition and malnutrition.

Added discussion of the reactions of men to infertility including a case vignette.

New data on assisted reproductive technologies from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Updated international comparisons of infant mortality.

Discussion of how disrupting a pregnant woman's housing arrangements increases the risk of having a preterm or low-birth-weight baby.

Update of live birthrates by age showing a decline in the birthrate for those in the age range 15–19.

New research on damage to fetal brain structures caused by alcohol use during pregnancy.

Discussion of new study following children who had been prenatally exposed to methamphetamines.

Update on the state-level changes in the response of child welfare agencies to women who are using illegal drugs during pregnancy.

New discussion of the controversy concerning the treatment of depression during pregnancy.

More detailed discussion of exposure to environmental toxins including exposure to mercury.

New examples from Australian cultures about the ways pregnancy is viewed.

Expanded discussion of the how the use of violence by the anti-abortion movement has substantially reduced the number of licensed abortion clinics and physicians willing to perform abortions.

New data about the number of abortions and the characteristics of women who have abortions in the United States .

### Chapter 5: Infancy (The First 24 Months)

New chapter opening case: the interchange between a mother and her 6-month-old infant that illustrates infant meaning-making.

In box about very small babies, new data have been added about survival rates and risks of chronic conditions for infants born between 22 and 25 weeks of gestational age. In addition, there is a new discussion of evidence-based early intervention programs.

Expanded discussion of research on prenatal and infant taste that shapes flavor and food preferences.

Increased detail about the emergence of reaching and grasping in the first 6 months of life.

New discussion of individual differences in the achievement of motor milestones.

New table of motor milestones for 5 age periods in the first 24 months.

Expanded definition of causal schemes.

Expanded discussion of intersubjectivity as an important feature of early communication with gestures.

New table of early communication milestones for 3, 6, 12, and 18 months.

Expanded discussion of how mutuality is established through sensory and motor interactions and the ability of caregivers to accurately read an infant's signals.

New discussion about the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendations regarding breastfeeding.

## **Chapter 6: Toddlerhood (2 to 4 Years)**

Recommendations from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education about physical activity for toddlers.

New table of language milestones from 24 months to 4 years.

New discussion of pragmatics in the communicative competence section.

New section called "Where does time-out fit as a form of discipline?" in the section on discipline strategies and impulse control.

New discussion on research about the effects of harsh discipline in the section on discipline strategies and impulse control.

New discussion on the link between harsh parenting, difficulties regulating impulse control in toddlerhood and the development of internalizing and externalizing problems.

New examples of how families differ in the ways they encourage talking about emotions and the links to impulse control.

Summary of findings about cognitive benefits based on participation in Head Start or Early Head Start.

Discussion of proposal by President Obama to create a universal prekindergarten program.

## **Chapter 7: Early School Age (4 to 6 Years)**

New chapter opening case: Gloria Remembers Being Five Years Old.

Expanded discussion of the theme that gender is a product of the biological, psychological, and societal systems.

In the box on children raised by gay or lesbian parents, new information about positive adjustment of children when their parents can live openly in their community without fear of threat. In addition, child's adjustment is based more on having a warm, open relationship with parents rather than on parents' sexual orientation.

In section on moral development, new cross-cultural examples have been introduced.

Update on the Supreme Court ruling regarding video games as a protected form of free speech.

Update of the recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics regarding television viewing for children.

New research on the relationship of playing prosocial video games and real-life prosocial behavior.

Elaborated discussion of how the brain processes information related to the self-concept.

New research on the influence of family and school environments on self-esteem. Updated information about children's media use.

Added discussion of how media is integrated into family life, including how much time parents spend watching television with their children.

New research about the social and cognitive benefit of having good friends.

New discussion of how "hard-to-manage" children who have tendencies toward aggressiveness tend to find aggressive best friends who accentuate their antisocial behavior.

New discussion of the social benefits of being involved in both mixed-sex and same-sex play groups.

New discussion of how the psychosocial sense of initiative contributes to effective functioning in the school environment.

Added discussion of how the prime adaptive ego quality—a sense of purpose—is a resource across the life span.

Historical review about how the federal priority for access to early childhood education has developed since the 1960s.

## **Chapter 8: Middle Childhood (6 to 12)**

New chapter opening case: College Students' Recollections of Their Childhood Friends.

New discussion of the ways parents of securely attached children enhance their children's social competence.

In the discussion about intelligence, the addition of a cross-cultural analysis indicating that ideas about and definitions of intelligence differ from one society to the next.

Updated cross-national research on mathematics ability based on research from 2011.

In section on the self-fulfilling prophecy, expanded discussion of the research on the impact of erroneous expectations on student performance.

New Figure 8.15 illustrating the relationship of parents' gender-role beliefs and behavior to children's beliefs and behaviors.

Added presentation of cross-cultural research on the effects of parents' expectations on school performance. Elaboration on the contributions of team membership to development.

Increased details about how teachers' expectations about their students influence the kind of educational climate they create.

Update on data about the millions of children who are exposed to violence in the form of direct physical abuse, domestic violence in their home, and violent crime in their neighborhood or school, and the number and kinds of violent crimes committed in public schools.

### Chapter 9: Early Adolescence (12–18)

New chapter opening case: Evelyn Cabrera—Balancing Autonomy and Closeness .

In box about sleep, there is a report of an intervention in which delaying the start time of school one-half hour has benefits for sleep quality and reduced depression.

New Case in physical development: Jordyn Wieber—Gold Medal Gymnast.

New discussion of sexuality that contrasts sexual arousal and sexual motivation.

Elaboration of description of the variety of contexts in which adolescents experience romantic and sexual relationships.

Presentation of new research on the risks associated with disclosing minority sexual orientation.

New section on dating violence.

New figure demonstrating the neurological interplay between emotion and cognition and an expanded discussion of this relationship.

New discussion of how new executive control leads to new ability to monitor and manage emotion.

Added data about cyberbullying as part of the discussion about delinquency.

Biological, psychological, and societal analysis of risk factors associated with delinquency.

Expanded discussion of ethnic group identity detailing how the ethnic identity of White children influences their attitudes toward other ethnic groups.

In the box on gangs, there are new definitions of types of gangs including youth gangs and street gangs.

In the discussion of alienation, there is a new discussion about parental alienation (PA).

Expanded report by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism about the risks of underage drinking and its effects on brain functioning.

New research about how teens assess the risks of binge drinking.

New discussion about how easy or difficult it is for teens to buy alcohol in their community.

### Chapter 10: Later Adolescence (18–24)

New chapter opening case: Growing Up Through Divorce—A College Student's Insights.

In the section on autonomy from parents, new data on the percentage of 18 to 24 year-olds living in poverty and the extent of student loans and credit card debt experienced by college students.

Discussion of immigrant youth and the role of culture in shaping gender identity.

New research on the sequence of milestones in the formation of a sexual identity.

New figure on factors influencing career choice.

New discussion on the role of the family environment in supporting effective career decision making.

New discussion of career counseling and career preparation.

Results of a national survey about how students entering college assess their abilities in various areas of study; one result is that female students feel that they have less ability in math and science than their male peers.

Expanded presentation to clarify the relationship between personal identity and self-concept.

Expanded discussion of a developmental progression in identity formation.

In the box on ethnic identity, a new first-person narrative about multiracial identity and report of the study that found that people from multiracial backgrounds have greater acceptance of more nuanced identities.

In the discussion of psychological moratorium, a new discussion of a “gap year.”

In the discussion of dropping out of college, an added factor that students may have unrealistic expectations about their ability to do college work.

### Chapter 11: Early Adulthood (24–34)

New chapter opening case: Changing Work to Recapture Love and Happiness.

Expanded discussion of the factors that support stability in gay and lesbian relationships.

New case, The Best Valentine's Day, in the developmental task about exploring intimate relationships describes how a woman's partner helped her change the way she feels about love.

Added explanation about the nature of constructive conflict resolution in intimate couples.

New discussion of the growing gap between the quality of “good jobs” and “bad jobs.”

In the psychosocial crisis of intimacy versus isolation, a new discussion on social anxiety.

In the central process, mutuality among peers, an explanation of John Gottman's concept of emotional attunement.

## Chapter 12: Middle Adulthood (34–60)

New chapter opening case: Reinventing Family in Middle Adulthood.

Updated Table 12.1 about unemployment rates by ethnicity and educational attainment containing 2012 data from U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013 report.

Expanded discussion in the section on balancing work and family life that indicates when either partner is in a work situation where there is a great deal of work pressure and role demands and little support from the boss or supervisor, there is more marital conflict, less quality time with each other, and more conflict with adolescent children.

Expanded discussion that reports when couples have a shared view of one another as co-providers, they experience less stress associated with role overload and higher levels of marital satisfaction.

New discussion about the importance of continued ego development and adaptive restructuring of personal identity for providing a core of personal strengths in vital marriages.

New discussion of the ways happy couples express love and affection for each other including some ways that men and women differ in how they express their love.

New discussion of co-parenting when parents are not living together but are both involved in raising their children.

New research about how the well-being of children contributes to the sense of personal fulfillment for parents.

New research showing that adult children and their parents are more involved in each other's lives than was true 30 years ago.

New research about patterns of daily life for people who live alone.

New research that links feelings of generativity to environmental values and behavior.

New evidence linking stagnation, depression, and suicide among middle adults.

Extended discussion of career stagnation.

New discussion of how struggling with ideas about meaningfulness can serve as a stimulus for new growth.

New discussion of the archeological evidence regarding human creativity.

Linking the prime adaptive ego quality of care to care work jobs.

In the applied topic on discrimination an expanded discussion that includes new reports of workplace bullying and harassment.

Discussion of two new approaches to coping with discrimination—identity switching and identity redefinition.

## Chapter 13: Later Adulthood (60–75)

New chapter opening case: Reflections on Retirement by an Emeritus Professor of Psychology and Women's Studies.

Expanded analysis of two related coping strategies that contribute to life satisfaction.

Added explanation of personality as both stable in relation to other people and changing over time.

New discussion of the U-shaped curve of feelings of well-being and age and explanations for this pattern.

Results of research about training strategies to improve memory of older adults.

In the developmental task of promoting intellectual vigor, a new discussion about solving loosely defined problems.

New research about grandsons who reported on how their grandfathers helped them make meaning out of fatherhood.

New research with grandmothers who reflected on their experiences with breastfeeding and discussed their observations about how social norms about breastfeeding have changed over time.

New discussion of research about the benefits of volunteering for older adults.

Expanded discussion of the concept of integrity versus despair linking it to themes from earlier life stages.

Introduction of the concept of coherence which has been linked to integrity in later life.

New discussion of research on the connection between generativity in middle adulthood and integrity in later adulthood.

In the discussion of reminiscence, two new effective coping strategies are described.

New research on wisdom showing that older adults make more use of multiple perspectives and compromise than younger adults.

In the applied topic on retirement, a new section on income loss and factors that keep people in the labor market at an advanced age.

New discussion of the idea of a psychological portfolio and a description of how different people construct their lives after retirement.

Discussion of both benefits and difficulties of retirement. New section on retirement for couples.



## Chapter 14: Elderhood (75 Until Death)

New chapter opening case:: Fred Hale—  
Supercentenarian.

New research on the genetic factors that contribute to  
resilience in advanced old age.

New research that focuses on food insecurity in later  
adulthood and elderhood and subsequent health risks  
associated with food insecurity.

New evidence of plasticity and adaptive reorganization  
in brain functions in older adults.

New estimate by the Department of Health and  
Human Services of the number of elderly Americans  
who will use some form of nursing home or skilled  
care during their lifetime.

In the discussion of the psychosocial crisis, new in-  
formation about conditions in long-term care facilities  
that might contribute to the development of a sense of  
extinction.

New discussion explaining that elders differ in the  
composition of their social networks and that members  
of the network provide different kinds of resources.

New discussion of the community resources that are  
useful for elders who want to remain in their com-  
munity with two examples: the Red Tape Cutter in  
Chicago and Project Care in San Diego.

Introduction of new concept called naturally occur-  
ring retirement communities (NORC).

## Chapter 15: Death, Dying, and Bereavement

New discussion of what happens when a patient stops  
breathing and does not have a “do not resuscitate”  
directive.

Updated information about physician-assisted suicide  
in the three states where it is legal.

## Appendix: The Research Process

In the study of development, diverse methods includ-  
ing qualitative and quantitative methods are required.

New discussion about the challenges of evaluating  
published research, research fraud, and the reluctance  
of journals to publish replication studies and studies  
that have null findings.

Expanded discussion of online websites including  
international websites as sources of information.

Expanded discussion of ethical guidelines for research  
with humans noting five key dimensions that serve as  
guidelines for ethical, medical, and behavioral research.

Discussion of considerations that might be stressful  
for children involved in research.

Expanded discussion of the fact that certain groups  
are eliminated from research studies because it is  
difficult to arrange for consent.

New discussion about the need to be sensitive to  
cultural practices when seeking parental permission  
for children’s participation in research.

Expanded discussion of how university pressures for  
promotion and tenure can create a conflict of interest  
for faculty members who are involved in behavioral  
research.

## Features That Support Learning

Several features are included in the 12th edition that we  
expect will contribute to the learning process.

1. **Organizational Chart:** There is a chart, Table 3.1,  
which provides a two-page overview of the organization  
of the text.
2. **Chapter Outlines:** A detailed outline of the chapters is  
provided at the beginning of the book. A chapter out-  
line is also presented at the start of each chapter.
3. **Chapter Learning Objectives:** Each chapter begins  
with Learning Objectives. These objectives have been  
stated using the six thinking processes: remember,  
understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create.  
These chapter learning objectives are restated at the  
opening of each section to help highlight the primary  
goal for that section of the text.  
The chapter learning objectives are stated again in the  
chapter summary to help students review and integrate  
concepts from the chapter.
4. **Opening Case:** Each chapter starts with a case which  
brings to life one or more issues addressed in the  
chapter. These cases are followed by a set of questions  
labeled “Case Analysis: Using What You Know.” The  
purpose of these cases is threefold: to bring to life in-  
dividual experiences and narratives that help students  
become more personally attached to the concepts of  
the chapter; to provide a shared life experience that  
can serve as a basis for class discussion; and to  
encourage the application of concepts from the text  
and the course.
5. **Further Reflection:** At the end of each section within  
the chapter, there are one or more suggestions labeled  
“Further Reflection.” These are intended to prompt  
students to stop and think a bit about what they have  
just read. These suggestions and questions encourage  
students to engage in critical thinking, to evaluate the  
information, and to link the information to related  
concepts or to personal life experiences.
6. **Boxes:** Two types of boxes are included in the chapters:  
**Applying Theory and Research to Life and Human  
Development and Diversity.** At the end of each box, a  
series of critical thinking questions encourage students  
to evaluate and apply information. The boxes are  
intended to provide added detail to the text. In the  
boxes labeled **Applying Theory and Research to Life,**



students are encouraged to see the relevance of human development theory and research to issues in contemporary life. In the boxes labeled **Human Development and Diversity**, topics that are covered in the text are expanded to illustrate how differences in culture, ethnicity, family structure, economic resources, and disability can influence developmental pathways.

7. **Case material:** Throughout the chapters there are longer cases and short vignettes that complement the more general descriptions of developmental issues. These cases highlight the real-life experiences of individuals, sometimes illustrating how individuals cope with challenges at various points in life; and sometimes illustrating the diversity of experiences that are possible at a certain period of life.
8. **End of Chapter Summary:** The chapter summary is organized around the learning objectives. These summary paragraphs are intended to remind the reader of the big ideas but will not replace a careful reading of the text.
9. **Key Terms:** Key terms are boldfaced in the text and listed at the end of the chapter with page numbers. These terms are typically defined within the text, and most of them can also be found in the glossary.
10. **Glossary:** A very comprehensive glossary with brief definitions can be found at the end of the text.
11. **References:** A detailed list of references is provided including references to books, chapters, articles, and websites.
12. **Index:** There are both an author index and a subject index.

## Acknowledgments

The works of Erik Erikson and Robert Havighurst have guided and inspired our own intellectual development. Their writings shaped the basic direction of psychosocial theory and have guided an enormous amount of research in human development. They directed us to look at the process of growth and change across the life span. They recognized the intimate interweaving of the individual's life story with a sociohistorical context, emphasizing societal pressures that call for new levels of functioning at each life stage. In their writing, they communicated an underlying optimism about each person's resilience, adaptability, and immense capacity for growth that finds new expression in the work of positive psychology. At the same time, they wrote with a moral passion about our responsibility as teachers, therapists, parents, scholars, and citizens to create a caring society. We celebrate these ideas and continue their expression in the 12th edition of *Development Through Life*.

We want to acknowledge the hundreds of scholars upon whose work this revision is based. The science of human development is a growing, multidisciplinary field. Over the

many editions of *Development Through life*, we have been gratified to see the increasing use of basic concepts from the psychosocial perspective to inform the research agenda. Key constructs including developmental tasks, psychosocial crisis, the radius of significant relationships (social support), trust, autonomy, shame and guilt, industry, competence, group identity, personal identity, intimacy, isolation, generativity, integrity and wisdom have become cornerstones of the life-span perspective on development.

We want to express our thanks to our many students, colleagues, and friends who shared their experiences and expertise. Through the years, our mentors, Bill McKeachie and Jim Kelly, have been the voices of wisdom we count on, reminding us of the values of good scholarship and a generous heart. In the early part of our careers, a few friends stand out as people who encouraged us and trusted in our ability to forge this collaboration: Catherine Chilman, Margaret and Harold Feldman, Gisela Konopka, and Freda Reblsky. Our former students Brenda Lohman and Laura Landry Meyer were excellent collaborators on our life-span development case book. With each new edition, we turn to our children and their families to offer new observations, try out ideas, and talk over controversies. At each stage, they bring new talents and perspectives that enrich our efforts.

The 12th edition was produced under the guidance of our product manager Jaime Perkins; the outsource development manager Jeremy Judson; and content developer Gary O'Brien. Their advice, encouragement, support, and vision have been instrumental in bringing this edition to fruition. We are very lucky to have had the benefit of their creative energy. In addition, we would like to express our appreciation to the other professionals at Cengage who have helped make this book possible: Michelle Clark, Production Project Manager; Jennifer Wahi, Art Director; Paige Leeds, Content Coordinator; Audrey Espey, Associate Media Developer; Melissa Larmon, Executive Market Development Manager; and Angeline Low, Marketing Coordinator.

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## Supplements: Video and Electronic

*Development Through Life: A Psychosocial Approach*, 12th edition, is accompanied by a wide array of supplementary resources prepared for both the instructor and student.

## For the Instructor

### **Online Instructor's Manual with Test Bank**

ISBN-13: 9781285460048

The Instructor's Manual contains resources designed to streamline and maximize the effectiveness of your course preparation. The content includes lecture suggestions, discussion topics, teaching notes, class projects, and video suggestions. The Test Bank offers over 2,000 questions, including multiple-choice, true/false, matching, and essay questions. The multiple-choice questions include section references, difficulty, and question-type, along with the correct answer. Test Bank questions are keyed to chapter objectives.

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## For the Student

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Written by Barbara M. Newman (University of Rhode Island), Philip R. Newman (University of Rhode Island), Laura Landry-Meyer (Bowling Green State University), and Brenda J. Lohman (Iowa State University), *LIFE-SPAN DEVELOPMENT: A CASE BOOK* uses lively, contemporary case studies to illustrate development transitions and challenges in every stage of life. The authors have chosen these cases for their ability to fascinate, engage, and stimulate. Together with thought-provoking questions for analysis, the case studies create a learning experience that helps readers use multiple perspectives to analyze and interpret life events.

### **MindTap for Psychology**

MindTap for *Development Through Life: A Psychosocial Approach* puts everything you need for class in one, easy-to-navigate place. MindTap includes an integrated eBook, assignments, practice quizzes, videos, and more, all designed to help you be a more successful student. MindTap for *Development Through Life: A Psychosocial Approach* can be purchased at [www.cengagebrain.com](http://www.cengagebrain.com).

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# Brief Author Biographies

**PHILIP R. NEWMAN** (Ph.D., University of Michigan) is involved in research on the transition to high school and on group identity and alienation. His current projects include a book about how high schools can meet the psychosocial needs of adolescents and the development of a protocol for counselors to assess psychosocial maturity and problems in living based on the framework presented in *Development Through Life*. He has taught courses in introductory psychology, adolescence, social psychology, developmental psychology, counseling, and family, school, and community contexts for development. He served as the director for research and evaluation of the Young Scholars Program at the Ohio State University and as the director of the Human Behavior Curriculum Project for the American Psychological Association. He is a fellow of the American Psychological Association, the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), and the American Orthopsychiatric Association. For fun, Phil enjoys photography, reading mysteries, attending concerts and Broadway plays, and watching baseball. He homeschooled his three children through elementary and middle school.

**BARBARA M. NEWMAN** (Ph.D., University of Michigan) is a professor in the department of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Rhode Island. She has also been on the faculty at Russell Sage College and the Ohio State University, where she served as department chair in Human Development and Family Science and as associate provost for faculty recruitment and development. She teaches courses in life-span development, adolescence, human development and family theories, and the research process. Also an active researcher, Dr. Newman's interests focus on social and



Courtesy of Philip and Barbara Newman

emotional development in adolescence, parent-child relationships in early adolescence, and factors that promote success in the transition to high school and college. Her current research is an analysis of the sense of belonging among college freshmen. For fun, Barbara enjoys reading, practicing the piano, making up projects with her grandchildren, taking walks along Narragansett Bay and Block Island Sound, and spending time with her family.

Together, the Newmans have worked on programs to bring low-income minority youths to college and have studied the processes involved in their academic success. They are co-authors of 13 books, including a recent book on theories of human development, and numerous articles in the field of human development. They met by the Mason Hall elevator at the University of Michigan, fell in love at first sight, and have been married for 47 years.



Art Resource, NY

Through play, children extend their ideas about what is possible in the present and in the future. A child with a toy car can be a police officer, a fire fighter, or a space traveler on the way to a far planet. A bag of marbles can be a secret treasure, something to trade, or a set of magic crystals. In the study of human development, we strive to understand how individuals make meaning and shape the direction of their lives from the playful inventions of childhood to the creative and inspiring wisdoms of elderhood.

# THE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LIFE PERSPECTIVE

## CASE STUDY RUTH HAMILTON

*Ruth Hamilton was born in 1898 and died in 2008. Over her long life, she was a teacher, wife, mother, businesswoman radio talk-show host, legislator, and world traveler. Ruth's advice: "No matter what your age, keep learning. Put this motto on your mirror so that you'll see it: Every day without learning something is a day lost" (Enkelis, 2000, p. 95).*

Ruth grew up in the farming town of Alta, Iowa, where she graduated from high school and went on to Iowa State Teacher's College. "At that time, they needed teachers so badly in the country schools that they had crash courses," Ruth recalls. "We could get the two years of training that was needed for a teaching certificate in twelve weeks, but we had to go to school night and day to do it" (Enkelis, 2000, pp. 91–92). She began teaching in a one-room country schoolhouse with children in first, second, fourth, and eighth grades. "All the kids could hear all of the recitations. It was fascinating. I think all the kids benefited," Ruth noted (Enkelis, p. 92).

In July 1920, Ruth met Carter Hamilton while she was watching a sandlot baseball game during a 4th of July celebration. She

and Carter fell in love. Carter had been drafted by the Cleveland Indians, and when he came to say goodbye, he said he'd like her to come with him, but he knew her parents wouldn't agree unless they were married, so he thought getting married would be a good idea. Ruth took a half day off from teaching, and they went to Des Moines and were married 8 months after they met. Since married women couldn't teach, (a widespread practice in the United States at the turn of the 20th century) she tried to keep it a secret. But her students found out and told other teachers. She had to go before the school board, and they agreed to change the rules.

Carter played baseball in the summers and went to college and later to medical school in the off-season. Once Carter completed his internship they settled in Iowa for a while. Carter wanted Ruth to give up teaching and stay at home, but Ruth could never accept this role. She was an energetic, curious, and active person. Even after they adopted their son Peter, she continued to pursue her own interests.

While in Iowa, Ruth continued teaching. Then Carter's specialization as a radiologist took them to Philadelphia. When they

### CASE STUDY: Ruth Hamilton

#### Assumptions of the Text

#### A Psychosocial Approach: The Interaction of the Biological, Psychological, and Societal Systems

- The Biological System
- The Psychological System
- The Societal System

### Overview of the Psychosocial Approach

#### CASE STUDY: Rose

#### The Life Span

- Life Expectancy
- Factors That Contribute to Longevity

#### Chapter Summary

#### Key Terms



## CHAPTER LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explain the basic assumptions that guide the orientation of the text.
2. Describe the psychosocial approach to the study of development, including the interrelationship among the biological, psychological, and societal systems.
3. Compare historical changes in life expectancy and analyze the implications of these changes for the study of development over the life span.

moved to Philadelphia Ruth expanded her professional life by teaching over the radio. In the 1930s Ruth was one of America's first female radio talk-show hosts. On a whim, Ruth got a loan and bought a building where she set up a women's dress shop. She operated the shop successfully for two years and then sold the building for \$2,000 profit. With that money, she bought a log cabin and 10 acres of land in New Hampshire, where she and her husband vacationed.

In 1937, Ruth began what was to become a life-long interest in travel. She took a 2 month trip to Europe to explore her family history, including travel to Denmark and Sweden. At this time, she went to Berlin where she remembers seeing Adolph Hitler and having a glimpse of his magnetism and the way women swooned when they saw him. She became well aware of how dangerous he was and tried to talk to people back home about this.

Following Carter's death in 1948, Ruth moved into the cabin in New Hampshire. From the ages of 50 to 90, Ruth developed a life of international travel and political leadership. She traveled extensively beginning in the 1950s through 1990, giving lectures and writing articles about the countries she visited. She became involved in politics, including the political campaigns of Eugene McCarthy, George McGovern, and Jimmy Carter. She was the first woman elected to the New Hampshire legislature, where she was elected twice from 1964 to 1973. She took an active role in legislative issues, including reducing the legal voting age, issues related to wiretapping and eavesdropping, and legislation to have

**IF YOU ARE** intrigued by the life of Ruth Hamilton, if you wonder how and why people make the choices that they make, how they cope with adversity, and how they maintain a sense of purpose you have come to the right place—the study of human development. You are about to explore the theory and research that have accumulated over the last 125 years about how individuals make sense of their experiences, make decisions and take actions to adapt to their environments, cope with challenges, and continue to develop from one period of life to the next. This process is as individual as each person's life story. It is influenced by the quality of one's social relationships, as well as such factors as gender, ethnicity, cultural identity, health, socioeconomic status, education, sexual orientation, physical abilities and disabilities, and historical and social contexts (Figure 1.1). Even though each person's life is unique, common patterns of experience and meaning allow us to know and care for

inspections and licensing for residential homes that care for senior citizens. In 1986, she was honored as an "Unsung Heroine" by the Claremont New Hampshire Commission on the Status of Women.

In her 90s Ruth moved to an assisted living community in Florida where she became a member of "Growing Bolder," a social networking site for older adults. She is recognized on that site as the world's oldest video blogger. You can watch her first blog at <http://growingbolder.com/media/health/aging/ruths-first-blog-start-here-140968.html>

Ruth was an amazingly active, enthusiastic, outgoing person. She once said, "I just wish I could live to be one thousand years old because there are so many things that I want to see improved" (Enkelis, p. 95).

Imagine for a moment living for more than 100 years into an unknowable future. Think of Ruth Hamilton, starting out as a teacher in a one-room country school and eventually sharing her thoughts over the Internet as a video blogger. Finding love in a most unexpected way, adopting a son, hosting a radio talk show, traveling the world, building a new political career after the early death of her husband, advocating for the young and the old—these are all segments of a life built on intelligence, resilience, and optimism. Ruth's sense of agency—her ability to set goals and make things happen to achieve these goals—her curiosity, and her love of learning propelled her through challenges, losses, and accomplishments from one chapter of her life to the next.

one another and contribute to one another's well-being. As you study the life-span approach to human development, you will learn to identify and evaluate patterns of transition and transformation from one period of life to another. In this process, you will come to recognize that there are both intergroup differences and individual variations within groups. ●

This chapter provides a brief introduction to three topics that are central to the study of the **life span**. First, we outline six **assumptions** about human development that guide the orientation of the text. Second, we introduce the concept of a **psychosocial approach** to development. Third, we review data about **life expectancy** to start you thinking in a concrete way about the course of your life and the decisions you make that may directly influence your life story.





Ariel Skelley/Corbis

**FIGURE 1.1** Growth occurs at every stage of life. Within a large family, we have opportunities to observe family resemblances and individual differences, patterns of continuity from year to year, as well as evidence of maturation and change.

## Assumptions of the Text

❖ **OBJECTIVE 1.** Explain the basic assumptions that guide the orientation of the text.

Our perspective on development through life makes the following six assumptions that are critical to the orientation of this book:

1. *Growth occurs at every period of life, from conception through very old age.* At each period, new capacities emerge, new roles are undertaken, new challenges must be faced, and, as a result, a new orientation toward self and society unfolds. The concept of life-span development implies **plasticity**, a capacity for adaptive reorganization at the neurological, psychological, and behavioral levels.
2. *Individual lives show both continuity and developmental change over time.* An awareness of the processes that contribute to both continuity and change is central to an understanding of human development. **Continuity** refers to stability in characteristics from one period of life to another. It also refers to a sense of sameness over time built on a history of memories, identity, and reflected self. **Developmental change** refers to patterns of growth and reorganization. Change may be attributed to biological maturation, systematic socialization, self-directed striving, and the interaction of these forces.
3. *We need to understand the whole person, because we function in an integrated manner.* To achieve such an understanding, we need to study the major
4. *Behavior must be interpreted in the context of relevant settings and personal relationships.* Human beings are highly skilled in adapting to their environments. The meaning of a given behavior pattern or behavior change must be interpreted in light of the significant physical and social environments in which it occurs. While individuals are changing, so are their environments. As children grow older, they may have new siblings, their parents' age, they may encounter new technologies, health care interventions, or educational approaches that alter the nature of daily life. As a result, we need to be able to consider how changes in the nature of the person are impacted by changes in the environments in which they function.
5. *People contribute actively to their development.* These contributions take many forms, including the expression of tastes and preferences, choices and goals, and one's willingness to embrace or resist cultural and societal expectations. One of the most critical ways in which a person contributes to his or her development is through the creation of significant social relationships, which then form a context for social support and

socialization. Some societies offer more opportunities for choice and promote a person's ability to mold the direction of development, whereas others have fewer resources, are more restrictive, or place less value on individuality (Veenhoven, 2000).

6. *Diversity is a product of the interaction of the biological, the psychological, and the societal systems.* Diversity refers to the differences that exist among people. Diversity is built into the architecture of the human genome. It increases as individuals encounter new settings and make unique meaning of their experiences. Social identities, economic resources, and educational opportunities are all aspects of the societal system that contribute to diversity. The differences that exist among people are part of what protects the human species and allows it to adapt across a wide and changing range of environments. Throughout the chapters, we will highlight the nature of individual, group, and cultural differences and feature some specific examples in the **Human Development and Diversity** boxes.

**FURTHER REFLECTION:** Describe three examples that illustrate how people's decisions and goals influence the course of their development.

## A Psychosocial Approach: The Interaction of the Biological, Psychological, and Societal Systems

❖ **OBJECTIVE 2.** Describe the psychosocial approach to the study of development, including the inter-relationship among the biological, psychological, and societal systems.

Erik Erikson (1963, p. 37) wrote that human life as the individual experiences it is produced by the interaction and modification of three major systems: the biological system, the psychological system, and the societal system. Each system can be examined for patterns of continuity and change over the life course. Each system can be modified by self-guided choices. The integration of the biological, psychological, and societal systems leads to a complex, **biopsychosocial** dynamic portrait of human thought and behavior.

In many developmental analyses of behavior, you may come across the terms “nature” and “nurture.” These terms are often used as shorthand for thinking about the roles of genetics and environments in guiding development. Typically, nature refers to genetic predispositions or potentials and inborn or innate qualities that guide the unfolding of capacities and traits. Nurture refers to the patterns of

socialization and care that the person receives. The science of development has often been presented as the study of the ways nature and nurture interact to produce a certain outcome, for example intelligence, assertiveness, or hopefulness.

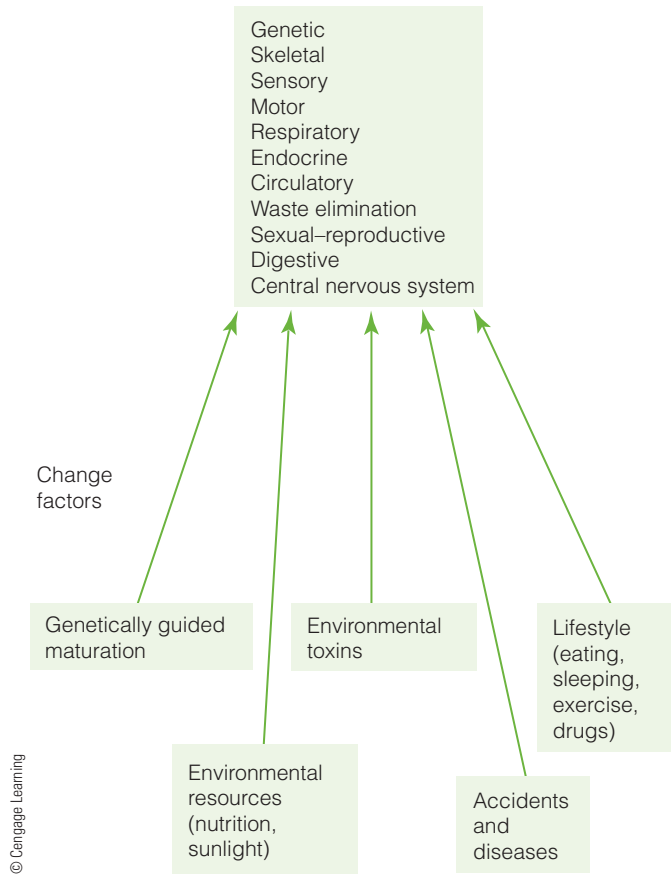
In *Development Through Life* we take a somewhat different approach by expanding the analysis to three interrelated systems: the biological, the societal, and the psychological systems. Rather than thinking of the developing person as passively shaped by forces of nature and nurture, we think of the person as actively engaged in the developmental process through the application of the psychological system. The psychological system is the **meaning-making** system that seeks out information, integrates information from many sources, and evaluates experiences as positive or negative, encouraging or threatening. Depending on their experiences and predispositions, some people are more likely to take the initiative in shaping the course of their development while others are more passive. The psychosocial approach is an attempt to sketch the ways that a person's worldview and sense of self in society change as a product of the interaction of these three dynamic systems over the course of life.

## The Biological System

The **biological system** includes all those processes necessary for the physical functioning of the organism and for mental activity (see Figure 1.2). The brain and spinal cord (the central nervous system) and the peripheral nervous system are components of the biological system through which all sensory information is received, processed, and transmitted to guide behavior. Biological processes develop and change as a consequence of genetically guided maturation; environmental stimulation and resources, including social interactions, cognitive challenges, and nutrition; exposure to environmental toxins; encounters with accidents and diseases; and lifestyle patterns of behavior. We can imagine that when Ruth Hamilton fell in love with Carter, this resulted in many changes to her biological system including changes in hormones, sexual behavior, eating and sleeping patterns, and physical activity. Falling in love is a major change factor that brings out a cascade of modifications to the biological system. As a result of some feature of the biological system which is not disclosed, Ruth and Carter were not able to have children. This biological problem posed new challenges to Ruth's self-concept and led to the eventual decision to adopt a son, thereby altering her social role.

Cultures differ in their support of physical growth and health, depending on the availability of adequate nutritional resources, approaches to the treatment of illness, exposure to environmental toxins and hazardous conditions, and the availability of information about healthy lifestyle choices.

Some components of the biological system influence the maturation of other components of the biological



**FIGURE 1.2** The Biological System

system. For example, when the infant's limbs achieve a certain length and muscle strength, the baby is able to reach out from a sitting position to begin crawling—a new form of locomotion. This results in new opportunities for exploration of the environment which in turn results in new neural networks and changes in the organization of the brain. The biological system is itself a multilevel, dynamic system in which maturation at one level can have profound, and sometimes unexpected, consequences for maturation at another level.

In the case of Ruth Hamilton, two examples of the influences of the biological system on her life experiences are her **longevity** and her good health. Looking at Figure 1.1, try to formulate a list of other aspects of the biological system that may have been important in shaping Ruth Hamilton's life story.

## The Psychological System

The **psychological system** includes those mental processes central to a person's ability to make meaning of experiences and take action (see Figure 1.3). Emotion, memory, perception, motivation, thinking and reasoning, language, symbolic abilities, and one's orientation to the future are

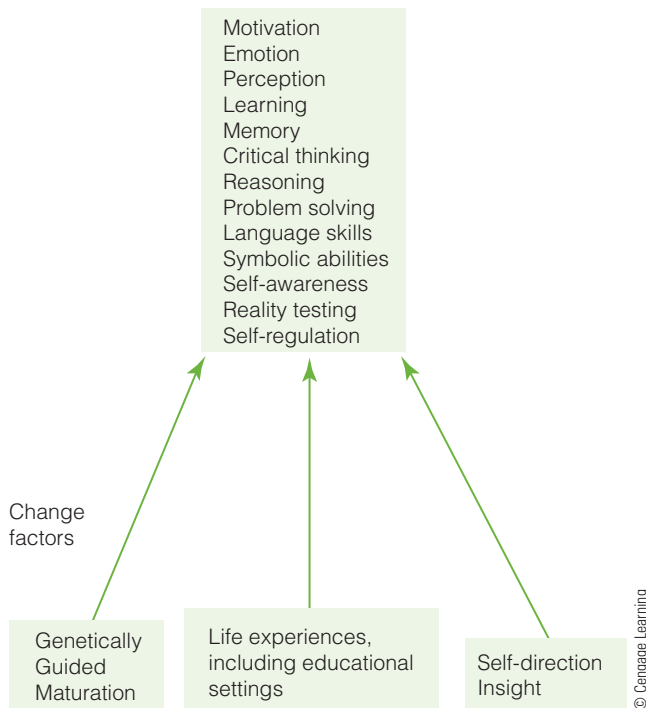
examples of psychological processes. When these processes are integrated, they provide the resources for processing information, solving problems, and navigating reality. In the case of Ruth Hamilton, the influence of the psychological system can be analyzed considering motivation, persistence, independence, ingenuity, personal goals, and feelings of self-determination. At the age of 39, Ruth decided that she needed to travel to Europe to “find herself” and explore her roots. Can you think of psychological factors that may have led to this unusual personal decision for self-exploration at this time in her life? Can you analyze this decision to evaluate its possible impact on her subsequent development?

Like the biological processes, psychological processes develop and change over one's life span. Psychological change is guided in part by genetic information. The capacity for intellectual functioning and the direction of cognitive maturation are genetically guided. A number of genetically transmitted diseases result in intellectual impairment and a reduced capacity for learning. Psychological change also results from the accumulation of experiences and from encounters with various educational settings which impact brain development and result in new cognitive structures and new approaches to problem solving. Psychological processes can be enhanced by numerous life experiences including the quality of parenting one receives, interactions with friends, opportunities for play of all types, travel, reading, exposure to music, art, poetry, and the dramatic arts, and schooling.

Finally, psychological change can be self-directed. A person can decide to pursue a new interest, learn another language, or adopt a new set of ideas. Ruth Hamilton took time for self-discovery through travel, which expanded her worldview. By retreating to New Hampshire after the death of her husband, she gave herself time for reflection and recovery in a place that she and Carter enjoyed together. People can strive to achieve new levels of **self-insight**, to be more aware of their thoughts and feelings and to be less defensive. There is evidence to suggest that self-insight is a vital component of positive mental health (Wilson, 2009). What strategies do you use to alter your worldview or achieve new levels of self-insight?

## Meaning Making

The meaning we make of our experiences changes over the course of life. Think about the concept of love as an example. In infancy, love is almost entirely physical. It is the pervasive sense of comfort and security that we feel in the presence of our caregivers. By adolescence, the idea of love includes loyalty, emotional closeness, and sexuality. In adulthood, the concept of love may expand to include a new emphasis on companionship and open communication. The need to be loved and to give love remains important throughout life, but the self we bring to a loving relationship, the context within which the relationship is



**FIGURE 1.3** The Psychological System

established, and the signs we look for as evidence of love change with age.

Meaning is created out of efforts to interpret and integrate the experiences of the biological, psychological, and societal systems. A primary focus of this meaning making is the search for **identity**. Humans struggle to define themselves—to achieve a sense of identity—through a sense of connectedness with certain other people and groups and through feelings of distinctiveness from others. We establish categories that define to whom we are connected, about whom we care, and which of our own qualities we admire. We also establish categories that define those to whom we are not connected, those about whom we do not care, and those qualities of our own that we reject or deny. These categories provide us with an orientation toward certain kinds of people and away from others, toward certain life choices and away from others. The psychosocial perspective brings to light the dynamic interplay of the roles of the self and the others, the I and the We, as they contribute to the emergence of identity over the life course.

## The Societal System

The **societal system** includes social roles; social support; **culture**, including rituals, myths, and social expectations; media; leadership styles; communication patterns; family organization; ethnic and subcultural influences; political ideologies and forms of government; religions; patterns of economic prosperity or **poverty**; conditions of war

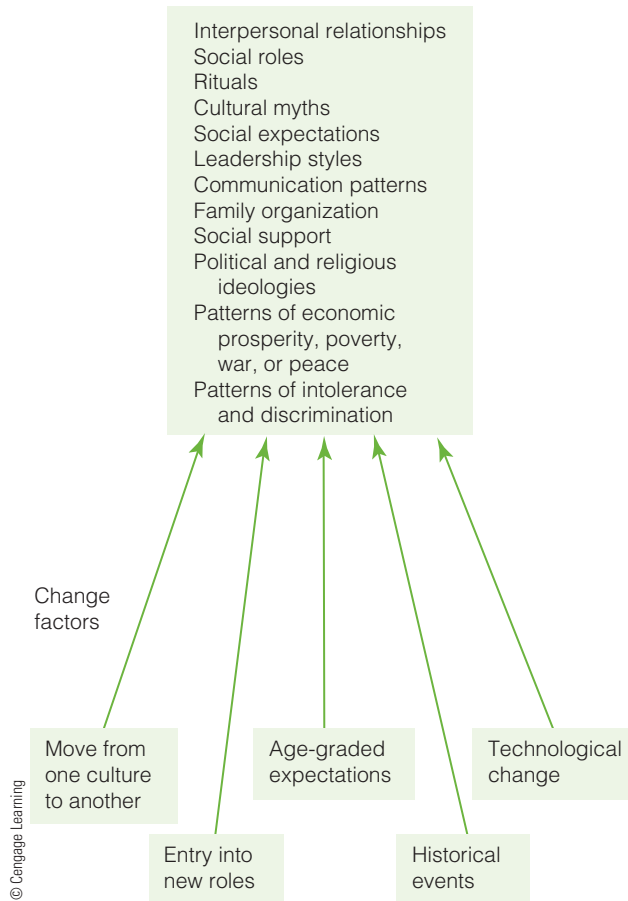
or peace; and exposure to racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination, intolerance, or intergroup hostility. The societal system encompasses those processes that foster or disrupt a person's sense of social integration and social identity (see Figure 1.4). Through laws and public policies, political and economic structures, and educational opportunities, societies influence the psychosocial development of individuals and alter the life course for future generations (de St. Aubin, McAdams, & Kim, 2004). Societal processes may change over one's life span. The process of modernization may bring exposure to new levels of education, new technologies, encounters with more diverse groups of people, and new forms of work. These changes are likely to result in more individualistic values, new priorities about which skills are valued, and changing patterns of family life (Greenfield, 2009).

Technological innovations can modify the societal system. For example, television, cell phones, personal computers, and the Internet are some of the technological innovations that have modified people's access to information and relationships. These technologies have altered children's roles, providing them with resources that can allow them to function at new levels of autonomy and competence. In many families, children teach their parents and grandparents how to make use of new technologies, thus expanding their role. Cell phones reduce barriers to communication, a change that has multiple impacts on patterns of communication—some positive and some negative

Historical events can also influence the societal system, altering social roles, access to resources, economic conditions, and one's sense of personal safety or security. For example, although we do not yet have a systematic analysis of the societal impacts of the events of the Japanese tsunami of 2011 or the economic collapse of 2008, we can hypothesize that these events will have an enduring influence on people's sense of safety, economic security, and confidence in key social institutions. Some researchers speculate that recent experiences of economic instability may result in revised aspirations about accumulating material wealth, leading to the adoption of a more modest standard of living, and a greater desire to be part of more meaningful and caring social communities (Novotney, 2009).

In this text, the role of culture is emphasized as it contributes to the pattern, pace, and direction of development. Societies differ in their **worldviews**, including the emphasis placed on collectivism or individualism, ideas about the major sources of stress and ways to alleviate stress, and beliefs about which groups are viewed as more powerful or more important than others. Societies differ in their emphasis on and belief in science, spirituality, and fatalism. They differ in their **age-graded expectations**, such as when a person is considered to be a child, an adult, or an elder, and how people in these age roles should be treated. They differ in their definitions of morality, beauty, bravery, wealth, and other ideals that may define individual and group





**FIGURE 1.4** The Societal System

aspirations. As you read the text, you will encounter **Human Development and Diversity** boxes. These boxes provide examples of how norms of development might be viewed differently in different cultures or ethnic groups. We hope these examples will help sensitize you to the role of culture in defining what may be viewed as appropriate, optimal, or normal behavior.

The societal system is illustrated in several ways in the case of Ruth Hamilton. Early in her life, there was a teacher shortage. The societal system responded by providing training opportunities, and Ruth took advantage of this program. When she married Carter, the policies of the school prohibited married women from teaching. In the early part of the 20th century it was considered improper for married women to work. There were many social constraints about the behaviors of women, including limitations on their dress, their activities in the community, and their interactions with men. Although many women were trained as teachers, they were forced to leave their profession once they were married (Enkelis, 2000). Ruth, however, pushed back against these restrictions, hoping to continue in her work. Due to her good performance and the need for teachers in her town, the societal system changed in order to keep her in the school. You can analyze this specific

example in order to identify the different levels of the societal system that might influence a person's life path.

## The Psychosocial Impact of Poverty

In thinking about the impact of societal factors on development, we want to highlight the context of poverty as a major obstacle to optimal development. (See the **Applying Theory and Research to Life** box Poverty.) Racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia, and discrimination against individuals with physical, intellectual, and emotional disabilities are other examples. However, under conditions of poverty, individuals have fewer options and less opportunity to escape or avoid these other societal deterrents. Poverty has powerful and potentially pervasive effects on the biological and psychological systems across the life span.

The government, as an arm of the societal system, defines poverty in order to determine who is eligible for certain resources and services. The **poverty threshold** is defined as the minimum cash income needed to support a person or a family in meeting basic needs of daily living. The poverty threshold varies by family size, number of children, and the age of the householder (Bishaw, 2012). Certain terms are used in the literature to refer to the level or intensity of poverty: Extreme poverty—income less than 50% of the poverty threshold; Poverty—income less than 100% of the poverty threshold; and Low income—income less than 200% of the poverty threshold. Since these federal guidelines were established in the 1960s, an enormous amount of research has been carried out which documents the vulnerabilities of individuals and families who fall into these three categories.

In and of itself, poverty does not place inevitable limits on development. There are many instances of children who grew up in poverty and achieved eminence (Harrington & Boardman, 2000). Many children flourish under conditions of meager family resources. However, it is well documented that poverty increases the risks that individuals face, including risks associated with malnutrition, poor quality health care, living in poor quality and overcrowded housing, living in a hazardous or dangerous neighborhood, and attending ineffective schools. Poverty is linked with reduced access to basic resources associated with health and survival (Crosnoe & Huston, 2007; Yoo, Slack, & Holl, 2009). Exposure to these risk factors early and continuously throughout childhood is associated with higher incidences of health problems, greater challenges in achieving the developmental tasks of each life stage, disruptions in family and work trajectories, and reduced life expectancy (Hayward, Crimmins, Miles, & Yang, 2000; Knitzer, 2007).

Because of the complex and pervasive impact of poverty on development, we introduce it as a fundamental societal theme. Issues related to the impact of poverty on patterns of individual development and family life will be addressed in more detail in subsequent chapters.