

PREFACE

The late 20th and early 21st centuries demonstrated that having a solid grounding in research and theory about adult development and aging is essential even for understanding the evening news. The U.S. Presidential election in 2000 saw two of the most central issues having direct relevance: Social Security and Medicare. Other stories about genetic breakthroughs, interventions for cognitive decline, and the latest advice on lifestyle factors affecting longevity were reported quite frequently. To understand why these issues were so critical, of course, one must understand aging in a broader context. That is why *Adult Development and Aging* is now in its fourth edition.

The first few decades of this century will witness a fundamental change in the face of the population—literally. Along with many countries in the industrialized world, the United States will experience an explosive growth in the older adult population due to the aging of the Baby Boom generation. Additionally, the proportion of older adults who are African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, and Native American will increase rapidly. To deal with these changes, new approaches will need to be created through the combined efforts of people in many occupations—academics, gerontologists, social workers, health care professionals, financial experts, marketing professionals, teachers, factory workers, technologists, government workers, human service providers, and nutritionists, to mention just a few. Every reader of this book, regardless of his or her area of expertise, will need to understand older adults in order to master the art of living.

This fourth edition of *Adult Development and Aging* continues to provide in-depth coverage of the

major issues in the psychology of adult development and aging. The fourth edition adds numerous topics and provides expanded coverage of many of the ones discussed in earlier editions.

MAJOR NEW FEATURES

The most exciting addition to the fourth edition is Fredda Blanchard-Fields as a new co-author. Fredda is a world-renowned expert in social cognition, and she brings 20 years of research and teaching experience to the project. In addition to the new chapter on Social Cognition, Fredda also handled the extensive revisions of the cognition chapters, personality, and the chapter on work, leisure, and retirement.

The fourth edition represents a thorough revision and, in some areas, a reordering of the chapters from the third edition. The most obvious content changes include a new, separate chapter on social cognition, placing the mental health material after the physical health chapter, recasting the material on nursing homes, person–environment interactions, and prevention into a thoroughly revised chapter, chapter opening vignettes describing real people as a way of introducing key concepts, embedding the material on diversity throughout the text rather than in a separate chapter, eliminating the material on neighborhoods and housing, and eliminating the material about looking into the future. These changes reflect shifts in the field, especially regarding the rapid growth of the social cognition literature.

The strong pedagogical helps introduced in the third edition have been improved. The goal of embedding a study guide within the text is achieved even better by including several Web sites at the end of each chapter that will allow students to find additional information about topics emphasized in the text. Terminology has been updated and considerable recent research has been added (while retaining classic studies).

Each chapter received a thorough revision; among the most important changes in each chapter are:

- Chapter 1 now includes a discussion of the demographics of aging, a separate discussion of ethics in conducting research, and boxes concerning culture and ethnicity and concerning the degree to which personality in young adulthood determines personality in old age.
- Chapter 2 reorders topics from the most visible to the most microscopic, provides expanded coverage on genetic theories of aging and research on Tai Chi as a means for improving mobility, and restructures the discussion of brain changes into central and autonomic nervous systems.
- Chapter 3 represents a major reorganization of health topics and provides a discussion of the meanings of health and illness and more thorough presentations of chronic conditions and pharmacology and medication adherence.
- Chapter 4 provides a new section on developmental issues in assessment and therapy, discussion of genetics research on Alzheimer's disease, and coverage on substance abuse.
- Chapter 5 includes a more thorough treatment of how older adults respond to patronizing speech, a new discussion of decision-making capacity and individual choices in nursing home residents, and a new section on optimal aging.
- Chapter 6 eliminates the section on psychomotor speed and replaces it with a more up-to-date section on speed of processing, highlights the current controversy on speed of processing as general slowing or process-specific slowing, and includes a new section on attentional resources and eliminates the section on feature integration theory.
- Chapter 7 reviews hot topics in memory research including false memory, automatic retrieval, source

memory, how memory functioning relates to vulnerabilities in older adults' everyday information processing, and recent developments in situation models and the influence of social context on memory.

- Chapter 8 provides an updated definition of intelligence that includes mechanics and pragmatics, a discussion of the controversy of whether lifestyle affects intelligence, and research including decision making and more recent work on wisdom.
- Chapter 9 (a new chapter on social cognition) interweaves what we know about basic cognitive abilities and how they influence reasoning in a social context, questions the role processing capacity plays in social cognition (it plays a major role in mainstream cognitive aging), and includes the topics social knowledge and social beliefs, stereotypes, collaborative cognition, motivation and social processing goals, and the social context of memory.
- Chapter 10 illuminates the hot controversy pitting intraindividual change with stability of personality traits, and provides more thorough coverage of intraindividual variability, personality change, and well-being.
- Chapter 11 provides a new box on the topic of elder abuse, and reorganized presentations on the family life cycle and intergenerational relationships.
- Chapter 12 includes more detailed discussions of research on the degree to which older adults can be retrained when their jobs become obsolete and research on planning for retirement.
- Chapter 13 includes a new section on end-of-life issues and creating a final scenario and more thorough discussions of physician-assisted suicide and hospices.

WRITING STYLE

Although *Adult Development and Aging* covers complex issues and difficult topics, we use clear, concise, and understandable language. We revised all of the chapters to achieve this goal, and many were com-

provided. Included in the manual are numerous test items, which are also available in electronic format.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As usual, it takes many people to produce a textbook; such is the case with the fourth edition. The editorial group at Wadsworth is excellent. Publisher Edith Beard Brady shepherded the new edition through the editorial process. We also appreciate the assistance of Senior Development Editor Sherry Symington, Senior Project Editor Lisa Weber, Editorial Assistant Maritess Tse, and Marketing Manager Marc Linsenman. We also want to thank Carol O'Connell of Graphic World and Photo Researcher Sue Howard.

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Thanks to you all. Live long and prosper!

John C. Cavanaugh
Fredda Blanchard-Fields