

## Book Reviews

### ***Adult Development and Aging, 3rd ed.***

**B. Hayslip Jr. and P. E. Panek**  
**Malabar, Florida: Krieger, 2002. 253 pp.**  
**ISBN 1-57524-046-7**

**Reviewed by Bonnie K. Lee**

The third edition of Hayslip and Panek's *Adult Development and Aging* demonstrates that a textbook does not have to be a dry and neutral repository of facts and figures but can indeed have a personality. This inviting, reader-friendly, over-sized text is laid out in double columns. Boxed inserts throughout the book highlight quotations and high-interest topics. Photographs of healthy older adults at work and at play enliven the text.

An integrated, holistic conceptual framework of adult development and aging underlies the book's structure and presentation. The chapters flow naturally from the biophysiological processes of aging, then moving into its psychosocial aspects, including a discussion of personality, families, social networks, retirement, and mental health, and finally closing with death and dying. The authors discuss these various topics in a way that illustrates how changes in one stage of life weave into developments in other stages.

Multidimensionality, life-span development, and interrelatedness guide the descriptions of key issues. Physical health interacts with mental health, person with environment, socio-economic and occupational status with retirement timing and satisfaction. Examples of the pluralities of contemporary families, funeral rites, and types of mental health interventions impress upon the reader the range of options available to seniors today. Traditionally accepted definitions of normality, intelligence, learning, mental health, and family configurations are gently questioned. Although mention is made of differences in kinship networks in a few ethnic groups, the treatment of multicultural issues is cursory, especially given the authors' valuing of plurality.

The book does not treat only issues of the elderly, but covers topics across the span of adult development. Topics such as "Why Marry?," "Why Individuals Are Attracted to Each Other," and "Date Rape" are of interest to adults in their twenties. Other topics, such as "Caregiver Concerns" and "Women's Career Development," will engage middle-aged adults. However, the text is at times unclear as to how these topics

pertain to aging. It is evident that the authors are appealing to readers of different ages in order to help them develop insights into their own lives and at the same time strengthen their relationships with members of another generation. Health providers will gain an appreciation of the broad spectrum of concerns facing adults across the life span.

The authors use straightforward, non-technical language in fluent narrative and avoid the use of statistical charts, graphs, and figures. Research findings are incorporated into the narratives in both a digested and a digestible form. Throughout each chapter, key terms appear in bold type in the text with periodic "Check Your Learning" sections and end-of-chapter summaries to enhance comprehension and recall. With the many interesting topical issues raised throughout, it would be a bonus to have each chapter feature questions to stimulate students to reflect, discuss, apply, assess, evaluate, compare, and synthesize the material presented. This would encourage students to take the material one step beyond recall and use the text's information for further knowledge construction and higher-level critical thinking.

The strength of this text is the authors' presentation of research-based material in a friendly and accessible way without inundating the reader with dense and overwhelming technical research details. However, this is also the text's greatest drawback in that the authors do not go into depth regarding the nature of research questions, methods, and the richness of research findings. Compared to other textbooks with a biopsychosocial orientation, this work leans towards the psychosocial. Overall, this book would make a very good introductory undergraduate text on adult development and aging due to its open, engaging style and its implicitly hopeful and positive philosophy of aging grounded in the realism of current empirical research.

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***Researching Ageing and Later Life:  
The Practice of Social Gerontology***

Edited by Anne Jamieson and Christina R. Victor  
Buckingham, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2002. 275 pp.  
ISBN 0-335-20821-5

**Reviewed by Catherine Ward-Griffin**

*Researching Ageing and Later Life* is the result of a collaboration between the editors, Anne Jamieson and Christina Victor, and the British Society of Gerontology to complement Sheila Peace's (1990) text on research methods in social gerontology. This book is intended to provide the reader with an update of social gerontological research in Britain and to reflect on the methodological innovations that have taken place in the last two decades.

The book has four parts. Part 1, comprising two chapters, introduces the reader to the field of social gerontology and addresses basic questions such as "the who, what and how of social gerontology." Part 2 provides examples of many different ways that researchers make use of data sources: social surveys conducted in England between the 1890s and the 1940s, photographic images of fishing communities between 1850 and 1950 in Scotland and northeast England, a mass-observation archive, and "cultural products." In addition, chapter 4 in this section is a useful overview of secondary data analysis (definition, examples of types of qualitative and quantitative data sources, advantages and limitations of secondary data analysis, types of research questions, and ethical issues). Part 3 presents five different ways of "doing research" when collecting data from individuals (longitudinal, life history, case study, use of diaries, and evaluation). Each chapter is written in a how-to style, providing practical examples of the use of the research method. Part 4, titled "The Roles and Responsibilities of the Researcher," addresses specific methodological and ethical issues in social gerontological research, such as investigating aging in different cultures and the use of gerontological research in policy and practice. Overall, the book takes a comprehensive approach to social gerontology that will be useful to educators and researchers in a variety of disciplines, including nursing.

One of the strengths of *Researching Ageing and Later Life* is its description and critique of theoretical and methodological developments in British social gerontology. Although the book does not look at comparative or global aspects of social gerontology, it addresses common theoretical and methodological trends and issues shared by social gerontologists

worldwide. It is an excellent resource for both its rich descriptions of specific research studies and its practical suggestions for potential data sources and methods. Indeed, it has much to offer Canadian gerontological nurse educators and researchers. The book is a valuable resource for both senior undergraduate and graduate students with an interest in gerontology. Since many of the chapters provide extensive descriptions of gerontological research projects, students are introduced to current issues and trends in the field. For instance, a chapter by Peace illustrates the increasingly prominent role of older people in research and a chapter by Nolan and Cook addresses the challenge of having gerontological research put into practice. The participation of older people in research and the utilization of research are key issues for nurses.

*Researching Ageing and Later Life* is invaluable not only for established nurse researchers but also for new investigators interested in aging and health. British scholars in the field of gerontology provide detailed accounts of the potential of different data sources and research methodologies; they also provide practical examples of their research. Researchers will find this book a useful complement to more theoretically focused works on research methods.

### Reference

Peace, S. (Ed.). (1990). *Researching social gerontology*. London: Sage.

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