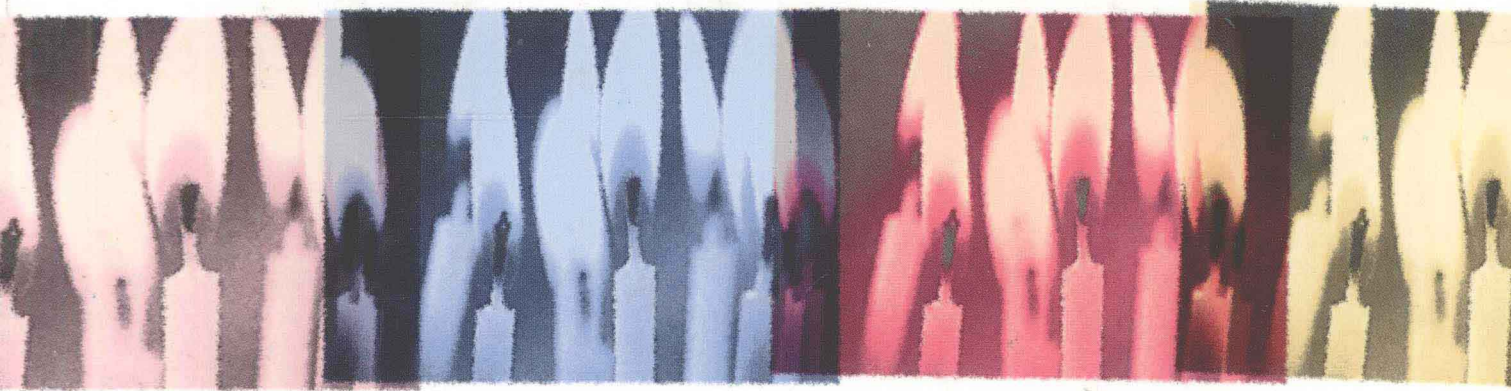


# *The Journey of Adulthood*

FOURTH EDITION



HELEN L. BEE



# THE JOURNEY OF ADULTHOOD

F O U R T H   E D I T I O N

HELEN L. BEE  
BARBARA R. BJORKLUND

PRENTICE HALL  
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WHOSE OWN JOURNEY THROUGH  
ADULTHOOD HAS ALWAYS BEEN  
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# THE JOURNEY OF ADULthood

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# PREFACE

The fourth edition of *The Journey of Adulthood* continues to be about the *process* of adult development, the way people change all along the way from early adulthood to old old age. I have cut through the large-scale findings by including cultural differences, gender differences, and individual differences. To avoid presenting a catalog of disease and decline, much new material has been included on compensation, prevention, and gains that come with age. I have sought out work conducted by researchers around the world dealing with diverse populations and have balanced up-to-date research findings with sound theoretical concepts both new and old. Throughout, I have endeavored to cushion scientific information with warmth and humor.

The chapters in the book fall into three main categories. The first two chapters lay the groundwork for the book: defining terms, describing key concepts, and presenting major theories of adult development. The next chapters are based on empirical findings from a variety of fields, including health and medicine, behavior genetics, cognitive development, social psychology, sociology, economics, social development, and other areas that deal with all the aspects of adult development. In the last five chapters, I cover some topics that are not so easily pigeonholed into one or another field of science but are nevertheless important parts of adulthood, such as the growth of meaning, dealing with stress, the debate about how best to conceptualize the transitions of adulthood, and confronting death. In these last chapters, I try to pull the threads together and tie up some loose ends.

## NEW IN THIS EDITION

First and most important, every chapter has been updated to reflect substantial changes in this field in the past few years. Due to the increasing number of people in the world who are living into their 70s, 80s, and later, the study of adult development and aging has become extremely popular in both the academic world and among the general public. There has been an increase in research and publications, and an increase in college and university programs for students who are interested in working with aging adults. The increase in research interest and funding has resulted in the development of new technologies, new research paradigms, and new subfields of study. Although it is dizzying to keep up with all the changes, it is exciting to be part of it, and I have included some of the most interesting new work in this edition of the book.

Some of the changes that have occurred since the last edition have been in the classroom. Students taking adulthood and aging courses these days are more diverse. They come from a variety of countries and a variety of cultural groups within the United States. For many, English is often a second language. Classes are no longer made up mostly of psychology majors. To respond to these changes, I have included a little more explanation of basic terms within the text and almost doubled the number of glossary entries while keeping the level of writing and content the same as before. Another change I have found in the classroom is that many students taking these courses have a personal interest in the topic, being either aging adults themselves or family members of aging adults. Because of this, I have included some self-help books in the selected readings section and added more applied research in some of the chapters. The chapter divisions have stayed basically the same as in the third edition, but the chapter on individual differences is gone, with the material being dispersed throughout the relevant chapters.

There has also been a personnel change with this edition, although I hope you will find it a minor change. Helen L. Bee has found that her journey of adulthood has brought her so many new roles as she approached retirement that she has decided to devote more time to those adventures and less to writing. Although the book is still clearly her book, I was asked to revise it for this edition. I have used Dr. Bee's books both as a student and as a professor, and I have tried above all to preserve her basic framework, philosophy, and tone. I would welcome your comments.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF CHANGES AND ADDITIONS

**Theories of aging** have been updated to exclude some that have fallen into disuse and to include updated research findings on the most promising theories. This section is no longer divided into categories of theories because new research findings have blurred those boundaries.

The section on **body changes** has been expanded to include some of the ways in which these changes can be prevented or remedied. A table on **body weight** is included to allow easy calculation of body mass index, and new USDA recommendations on weight gain are given.

Information on **sexual activity** has been expanded to include new information that shows exactly which sexual responses change with age and what those changes are. This section also includes a model of factors that determine whether or not older adults will be sexually active or not.

The table on **calculating your own longevity** has been updated or reflect recent research. A section on residential options for older adults has been added.

The section on health and aging has more information on **Alzheimer's disease**, and the mental health section has expanded coverage of mental disorders that occur at various ages. There is also updated information on individual differences in health.

The chapter formerly known as Intellectual Changes, expanded and renamed Cognitive Changes, now includes new research on **adult cognition**. In addition, a section has been added on **human factors research**, and a recent theoretical approach to the study of wisdom using a **theory of mind** explanation is included.

There is an update on gender roles and stereotypes to include Bem's **social schema theory**, and also a new framework for **theories of love**, new research on **adult attachment**, more research on **homosexual partnerships** in middle and late adulthood, and a new section on **sibling relationships** across adulthood.

The chapter on career paths includes new research on change (or lack of change) in **job performance** with age, and new theoretical ideas about **women's career paths**, **women and retirement**, and the **economic problems of older women**.

The chapter on personality includes some new **behavior genetic research**, and the chapter on stress has new health psychology findings on **stress and social support** as factors in health and healing.

I have continued to use **critical thinking questions** throughout the chapters and also **summary tables** of empirical findings that show principal changes or continuities of different abilities or attributes with age, **chapter-ending summaries**, highlighted terms that are defined in the **glossary**, and an annotated list of **suggested readings** at the end of each chapter.

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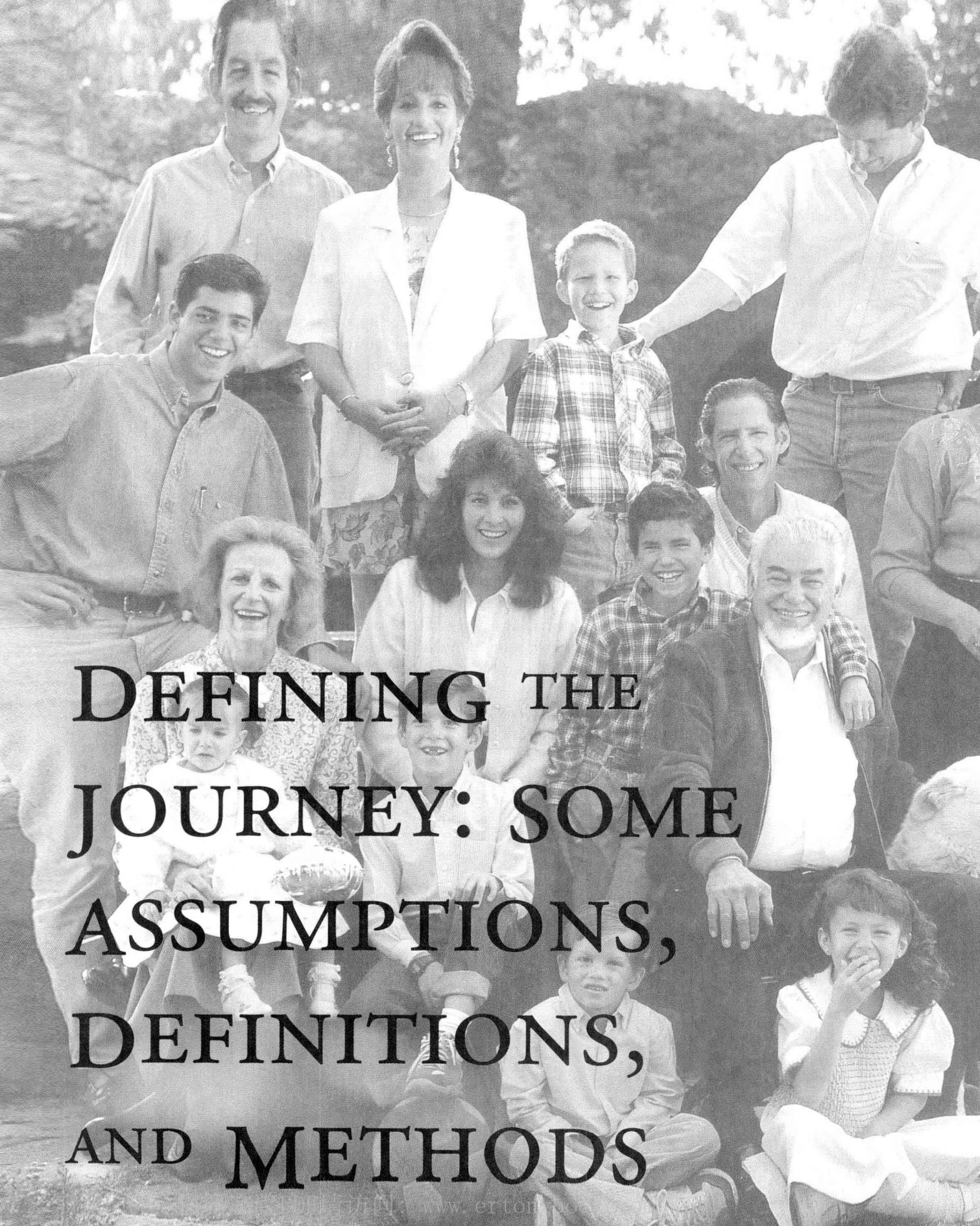
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Finally, much thanks goes to my editor, Anita Castro, who has been a combination cheerleader and counselor throughout the project.

*Barbara R. Bjorklund  
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida*





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