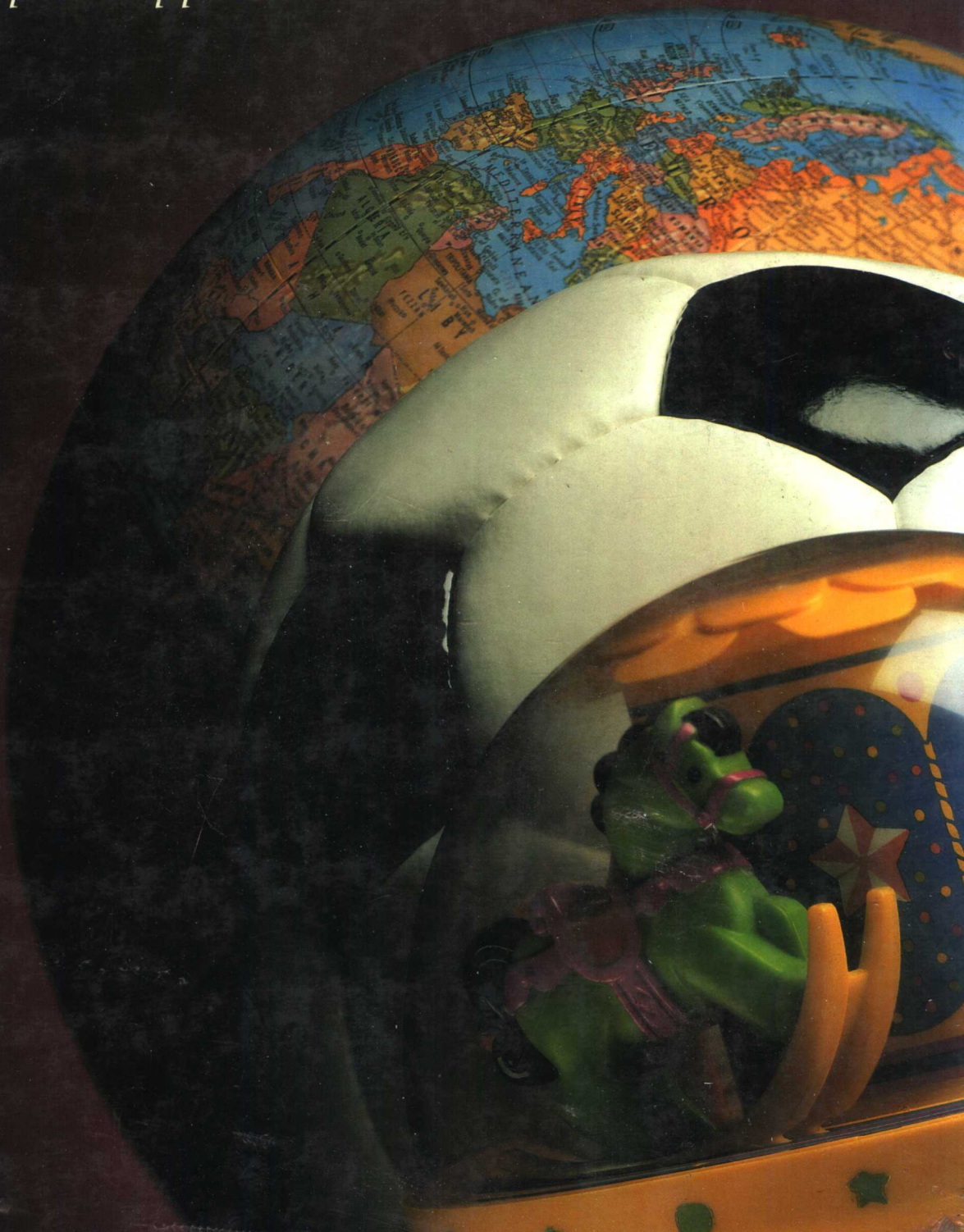
DANUTA BUKATKO & MARVIN W. DAEHLER

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

A Topical Approach



CHILD DEVELOPMENT

A Topical Approach

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PREFACE

Those of us who teach courses on child development share the opportunity to consider an exciting and complex topic: the factors that influence and shape an individual in his or her most formative years. Yet, as instructors, we also share a dilemma: How do we capture the remarkable breadth and depth of the child's psychological development in the mere thirteen (or fewer) weeks that the course is scheduled? The task is made all the more challenging by the veritable explosion of research that our field has witnessed in the last two decades, research that is often necessarily quite specialized. How, then, do we help students to sift through the enormous number of developmental "facts" so that they carry away the central knowledge of our field? Furthermore, how do we give students a meaningful sense of the "whole" child, given the specialized study of so many different "parts" of the individual?

It is with these special challenges in mind that we wrote this text. Our goal has been to provide for the undergraduate student a comprehensive, topically organized, up-to-date picture of child development from conception through adolescence. We emphasize the classic and contemporary research and theory at the core of developmental psychology. Wherever possible, we draw on the growing body of cross-cultural research that helps to elucidate certain fundamental questions about development.

Most important, however, we explicitly draw the student's attention to the themes that replay themselves throughout the course of development, those fundamental, overarching issues that continually resurface and that provide coherence among seemingly disparate research findings. We highlight six basic themes in our discussion of child development:

- What roles do nature and nurture play in development?
- How does the sociocultural context influence development?
- How does the child play an active role in development?
- Is development continuous or stagelike?
- Are there sensitive periods in development?
- How do the various domains of development interact?

These themes have been part of the rich theoretical tradition of past decades and continue to play a prominent role in contemporary thinking about development.

By drawing out these themes, we hope to give the reader a means of discovering the "big picture," a way of making sense of the myriad facts that compose the child development literature and a way of understanding the child as a complex, yet integrated being. Moreover, we believe these themes will serve as a tool to stimulate critical thinking among students about the nature of development and how it is best conceptualized. They encourage the student to think

about the *process* of development, or *why* development proceeds as it does. After all, many of the student's questions, and ultimately our goals as teachers and researchers, center on explaining rather than merely describing development. Furthermore, understanding why development proceeds as it does can have important ramifications for applied areas such as parenting practices, education, and social policy regarding children, which are ultimately concerns for us all.

ORGANIZATION AND COVERAGE

We begin the text with two chapters that set the stage for the balance of the book. Chapter 1 considers the historical roots of developmental psychology and the research methodologies the field typically employs. Along with many of our colleagues, we firmly believe that students must have a basic understanding of how researchers operate in order to understand and evaluate the findings they report. Consequently, we describe the most common research tactics, including newer approaches such as meta-analysis. Chapter 2 introduces six developmental themes followed by major theories of development. We include discussion of how various theorists have taken explicit or implicit positions on the six themes.

The next three chapters deal primarily with the biological underpinnings and physical changes that characterize child development. Chapter 3 explains the mechanisms of heredity that contribute to human development and evaluates the role of genetics in the expression of many human traits and behaviors. The chapter discusses the developmental implications of several gene disorders, such as the fragile X syndrome, that have been brought to light by advances in molecular biology. The chapter also addresses recent conceptualizations of gene–environment interactions espoused by behavior geneticists. Chapter 4 sketches the major features of prenatal development and focuses on how environmental factors such as teratogens can modify the genetic blueprint for physical and behavioral development. Chapter 5 outlines the major features of physical and motor skill development and includes a special section on brain growth and differentiation.

The next group of chapters focuses on the development of the child's various mental capacities. Chapter 6 reviews both the traditional literature on children's learning as well as more recent formulations that center on cognitive processes and the social aspects of the learning situation. The chapter also documents the development of perception, including the most recent findings on early intermodal perception as well as perceptual development in older children. Chapter 7 describes language development, highlighting the contemporary research on infant language and the social context of language acquisition and considers several different roles, in addition to communication, that language plays in development. Chapter 8 features contemporary explanations of children's thinking skills generated by information-processing theorists and, building on theoretical ideas introduced in Chapter 2, includes a treatment of Piaget's approach to cognitive development. Chapter 9 provides students with a picture of traditional models of intelligence along with more recent views, such as Sternberg's triarchic theory and Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences.

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The child's growing social and emotional achievements constitute the focus of the next group of chapters. In light of the enormous growth of interest in children's emotions, we devote all of Chapter 10 to this topic. Within this context, we consider recent debates about the measurement and developmental significance of attachment. Chapter 11 covers another rapidly expanding area of interest: social cognition, the child's understanding and regulation of self and the development of perspective-taking and attribution skills in the understanding of others. Chapter 12 covers the most recent ideas about sex-role development, including substantial treatment of gender schema theory. Chapter 13, devoted to moral development, describes not only traditional ideas about moral judgment but also covers two specific aspects of moral behavior—altruism and aggression.

In the final portion of the text, we consider the most important external forces that shape the path of child development—the family, the peer group, and the schools and media. Chapter 14 adopts a family systems approach to emphasize how various family members continually influence one another. Specific topics include fatherhood, maternal employment and day care, and divorce. A separate chapter entirely dedicated to the influence of peers, Chapter 15, covers the burgeoning research on this topic. Chapter 16 considers the special influence of schools on child development, along with another powerful aspect of contemporary culture—television. The chapter makes special note of how computers can influence the child's growing skills and abilities.

SPECIAL FEATURES

We have incorporated several features in this text to achieve the goals we initially set for this project:

Key Themes in Development Within each chapter, some or all of the six developmental themes listed above serve to organize and provide coherence for the material. As already noted, we see these themes as pedagogical tools designed to help students discern the importance and interrelatedness of various facts, and as vehicles for instructors to encourage critical analysis among students. The themes are highlighted for students in several ways. First, the themes most immediately relevant to a chapter are listed at its start. Throughout the body of the chapter, marginal indicators point to the discussion of a relevant theme. Finally, each chapter closes with a brief synopsis of how the key themes are illustrated in the chapter. Students may, of course, find other themes and additional instances of the six we explore; in fact, we encourage them to do so. Our point is to set in motion in the reader a search for integration and coherence in the vast material that constitutes the scientific study of child development.

Chronology Charts From our own experience as teachers who have adopted a topical approach to child development, we know that students often get so immersed in the theories and research on a given topic that they lose a sense of the child's achievements over time. Consequently, within most chapters, we include one or more Chronology charts, which summarize the child's specific developmental attainments at various ages. One of the points we

emphasize in this text, of course, is that there are individual differences in rates, and sometimes in paths, of development. We therefore caution students that these tables are meant only to give a picture of the overall trajectory of development, a loose outline of the sequence of attainments we expect to see in most children. Nonetheless, we believe that these rough guidelines will give students a sense of the patterns and typical timing of important events in the life of the child and that they will serve as another organizing device for the material related to each domain of development.

Controversies Important questions about development often have no clear-cut answers. In fact, decisions must frequently be made about children and their families in the face of conflicting research findings or theoretical beliefs. Should children serve as eyewitnesses in courts of law? Should infants be taught how to read? Should children be academically tracked in school? A special feature found in each chapter considers questions like these to help students critically assess the opposing positions that experts take and to appreciate some of the applied implications of developmental research and theory. These controversies (and others in the research literature that are introduced in the text but not specifically highlighted) can serve as the foundation for debate and extended discussion in the classroom.

Study Aids The chapter outlines, chapter summaries, marginal and end-of-text glossaries all serve to underscore important themes, terms, and concepts. We hope that students will actively utilize these aids to reinforce what they have read in the chapter body.

In addition, we employ several strategies to make the material in this text more accessible to students: opening vignettes to capture the reader's interest, the liberal use of examples throughout the text, and an extensive program of illustrations accompanied by instructive captions.

The result, we hope, is a text that captures for the reader all the excitement and wonder we ourselves feel when we watch a child growing up.

ANCILLARIES

The Test Bank, Instructor's Resource Manual, and Study Guide that accompany this text were prepared by Carolyn Greco-Vigorito of St. John's University, Staten Island, and Michael Vigorito of Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ. A shared set of learning objectives unifies all three supplements.

Test Bank The Test Bank contains 1600 multiple-choice items (100 per chapter). All items are keyed to the learning objectives presented in the Instructor's Resource Manual and Study Guide. Each question is accompanied by a key that provides the learning objective number, text page on which the answer can be found, type of question (Fact/Concept or Application), and correct answer.

Computerized Test Bank All test items are available on disk in IBM or Macintosh formats. Instructors may integrate their own test items with those on disk.

Instructor's Resource Manual The Instructor's Resource Manual contains a complete set of chapter lecture outlines and learning objectives. The manual also contains specific teaching aids such as lecture topics, classroom exercises, demonstrations, and handouts.

Study Guide The Study Guide contains the same set of learning objectives that appear in the Instructor's Resource Manual and the Test Bank. In addition, each chapter of the Study Guide includes a detailed chapter outline, a key terms review section, and a self-quiz consisting of 30 multiple-choice questions. An answer key tells the student not only which response is correct but why each of the other choices is incorrect.

Transparencies The set of forty transparencies, most in full color, features images from the text.

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No project of this magnitude could come to completion without the assistance of numerous colleagues, friends, and others who have provided their professional opinions, time, and inspiration. Our first thanks, though, go to our students at Holy Cross and the University of Massachusetts, who enroll in our classes in child development and show us so visibly how they appreciate what they learn. Because the material is important to them, it becomes even more important to us to try to tell this saga in the best way possible. It is the students who have served as the initial and primary inspiration to write this book.

The transformation from first draft to final printed book was a process that could be completed successfully only with the assistance of reviewers whose questions, comments, and helpful criticisms provided the impetus for a more accurate, complete, and readable discussion of children and their development. For their many generous contributions in reviewing these chapters, we thank the following individuals:

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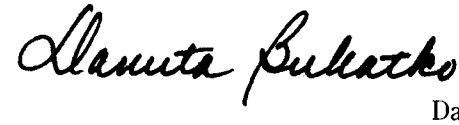

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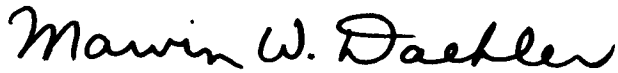

Marvin W. Daehler

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