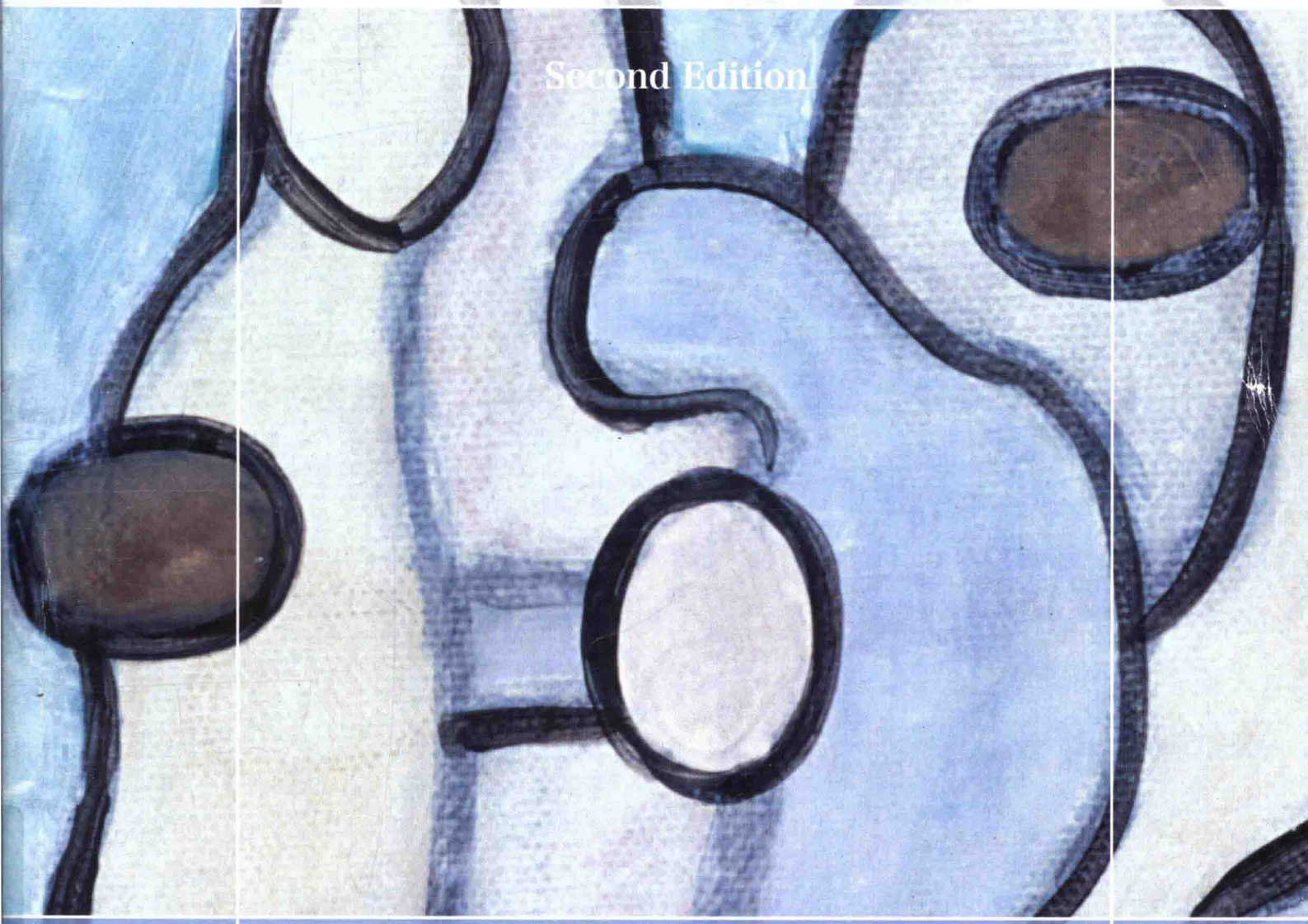
ASHE Reader Series

COLLEGE STUDENT DEVELOPMENT THEORY

Second Edition



Edited by
Maureen E. Wilson

Foreword by Marcia B. Baxter Magolda

Series Editor
Jerlando F. L. Jackson

Praise for *College Student Development Theory*

"Wilson has created an exceptional compilation of sources related to college student development theories. The organization is creative and forward-thinking in approach while being respectful of the origins of the theoretical perspectives. This text is a must for graduate preparation of professionals planning to work in higher education and seeking to understand the complicated development processes occurring with the students they serve. Practitioners will want to use this resource to update the way they conceptualize approaches to their work. In fact, everyone in the academy should have this in their office."

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Department of Counseling and Human Development Services, University of Georgia

"The second edition of the ASHE Reader on *College Student Development Theory* is an excellent compilation of foundational sources reflecting cutting-edge and contemporary theoretical directions in student development. Adopting an organizing framework that reflects newer theoretical conceptualizations provides a fresh window into the rich array of articles and chapters included in this comprehensive text. When combined in one volume, the result is an excellent resource for all those interested in student development theory."

Dr. Susan R. Jones, Associate Professor, Higher Education and Student Affairs Program
School of Educational Policy and Leadership, The Ohio State University

"Wilson has done an admirable job in sorting through the burgeoning literature base in student development theory. The outline of the volume provides an excellent roadmap both for faculty constructing syllabi and for newcomers seeking to understand the landscape of student development theory. The editor has certainly identified and reproduced exemplar articles and chapters; however, the additional recommended reading lists will also be of great assistance to students and professionals alike who wish to enhance their understanding of the research and theory of student development."

Dr. Patrick Love, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
Rutgers University

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COLLEGE STUDENT DEVELOPMENT THEORY

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College Student Development Theory

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Edited by
Maureen E. Wilson
Bowling Green State University

Series Editor
Jerlando F. L. Jackson
University of Wisconsin

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"Conceptualizing Heterosexual Identity Development: Issues and Challenges," by Rose Marie Hoffman, reprinted from *Journal of Counseling and Development* 82 (Summer 2004), by permission of the American Counseling Association.

"Disabled Students in Higher Education: Negotiating Identity," by Sheila Riddell, Teresa Tinklin, and Alastair Wilson, reprinted from *Disabled Students in Higher Education: Perspectives on Widening Access and Changing Policy* (2005), by permission of Cengage Learning.

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A Note to the Reader

I anticipate that this edition of the *ASHE Reader on Student Development Theory* will be in print for about three years, at which time a revised edition is expected. Your assistance in shaping the contents (e.g., what is particularly useful, what should be added) will be appreciated.

Please send your suggestions, comments, and recommendations to the *ASHE Reader* to the editor:

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INTRODUCTION

Background of the Reader

Courses in college student development theory examine ways in which students and other adults make meaning of their experiences and how faculty and administrators can promote their learning, growth, and development. The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS Standards) includes student development theory as one of five required areas of study for master's level graduate programs for student affairs professionals. These theories examine a wide range of development in college students.

Student development theory is a foundation upon which the profession of student affairs administration rests. Many of the policy and practice decisions made by professionals in the field are based on the belief that students learn, develop, and grow in certain predictable ways and that it is the responsibility of colleges and universities to create environments that facilitate that development. Faculty in student affairs and higher education graduate programs have the responsibility of educating their students about these theories and their application. The students in higher education and the developmental issues they confront are more diverse and complex than ever. The growing body of literature on student development reflects these changes, but comes from a variety of disciplinary areas and therefore is not readily accessible by faculty who teach these subjects, by graduate students who study them, or by professionals in the field who use them. This reader compiles some of the best work available on student development theory.

Choosing an organizing framework for the reader was a great challenge and reflects new conceptualizations in the study of student development theory. In his oft-cited chapter, Rodgers (1991) described four major families of theories: psychosocial, cognitive-structural, person-environmental interaction, and topological [sic]. The first edition of *Student Development in College* (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998) had three major sections on theory: 1) psychosocial and identity development theories, 2) cognitive-structural theories, and 3) typology theories. In the second edition of that book (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010) there are also three main theory sections, but they are different than those in the first edition: 1) foundational (e.g., psychosocial identity, Chickering, Perry, moral development, later cognitive structural theories, and Kolb); 2) integrative theories (i.e., ecological approaches, self-authorship, faith and spirituality, and transition theory); and 3) social identity development (e.g., race, ethnicity, multiracial, sexual, gender, and gender identity development). Baxter Magolda, Abes, and Torres (2008) described epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal development. Jones and Abes (2011 and in this volume) addressed psychosocial, cognitive, and social identity theories, emerging theoretical perspectives (e.g., critical race theory, queer theory, and intersectionality), and theories emphasizing holistic development (e.g., Kegan, Baxter Magolda). They also include other theories not focused directly on student development theory. Clearly, how scholars conceptualize student development is evolving and this volume reflects that evolution. The discussion among advisory board members that led to the current structure was lively. The organization of this reader is similar to the first edition, but has fewer subsections and includes a new section on critical theory. The framework is described in greater detail in the "Overview of the Reader," in the next section.

Another challenge that faces all ASHE Reader editors is deciding which readings to include and which to exclude. Working with the advisory board, I selected key and representative pieces highlighting different theories and theory types. Some classics that laid a foundation upon which others built are included as newer works that show the current status of student development theory. Many advisory board members felt strongly that a section on critical theory was important to include. When possible, I use primary sources but concerns for length and cost resulted in the selection of some summary pieces that include the work of many scholars. The explosion of work on

social identity theories is truly noteworthy and is reflected in the length of the recommended readings list in that section. Based on my searches, it appears the volume of work in this area in recent years is greater than in any other.

Space constraints also led to the exclusion of other important theories not directly addressing student *development* such as typology, student success, organizational development, and campus environments theories. In terms of selecting among individual pieces addressing similar themes within sections, I typically chose the more recent article and/or included pieces that were more difficult to find. Each Unit of the Reader concludes with a list of additional recommended readings, some of which present empirical studies based on a variety of theories.

Purpose of the Reader

This reader is intended to serve as a resource of primary source literature on college student development theory and as a text for courses on student development theory. Graduate students and other scholars and practitioners are introduced to a wide variety of student development theories by reading original works of theorists, contemplating the context in which development occurs, and considering how theory can be applied to practice and how practice can inform theory. The reader is also useful in on-going professional development efforts for student affairs practitioners who lack formal study of student development theory or who wish to become familiar with more recent work on the topic. Professionals who work with college students and want to create programs and services to promote their learning, growth, and development will find a wealth of resources here to aid in those efforts.

Baxter Magolda, M. B., Abes, E., & Torres, V. (2008). Epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal development in the college years and young adulthood. In M. C. Smith & N. DeFrates-Densch (Eds.), *Handbook of research on adult learning and development* (pp. 183–219). New York, NY: Routledge.

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OVERVIEW OF THE READER

Unit 1: Introduction to the Study of Student Development Theory

The first unit of the reader provides an overview of student development theory, particularly as a field of study. The two chapters in the unit provide an overview of the nature and uses of theory within a student affairs context, discuss the evolution of the concept of student development, and present a framework of propositions as an agenda for scholars and practitioners in the field.

Unit 2: Integrated Developmental Models

One of the major advances in contemporary student development theory is work that considers development from a more holistic or integrated fashion, rather than focusing on individual aspects of development without considering how it is affected by other factors. For instance, is cognitive development impacted by one's race or gender? How are psychosocial tasks influenced by one's sexual orientation? Integrated developmental models are presented in this unit. The theory section of the reader is introduced with these integrated or holistic models because they provide an overarching framework through which to understand the more specific dimensions of development that follow.

In Chapter 3, Baxter Magolda discusses a holistic perspective on college student development. Next, King and Baxter Magolda address the development of one desired outcome of college, intercultural maturity. Kegan and Lahey discuss mental capacity and the challenge of change, followed by Abes, Jones, and McEwen's updated Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity. Love's piece on spiritual development and cognitive development concludes this section.

Unit 3: Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Development: Psychosocial and Social Identity Theories

Intrapersonal dimensions of development address how individuals actively construct their sense of self while interpersonal dimensions relate to the sense of self in relation to others. As noted in the introduction to this text, the volume of work on social identity theories in particular is massive. This growth is reflected in this ASHE Reader as this unit contains one-third of the chapters in the book and the recommended reading list is quite lengthy. In contrast to early theories that were often developed using samples of White men, contemporary work has expanded considerably to address the roles of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, social class, first-generation student status, and other factors in developing identity and in other dimensions of development.

In Chapter 8, Torres, Jones, and Renn focus on understanding how identity development is conceptualized in student affairs and how this understanding can help practitioners better promote students' learning and development. The revision of Chickering's classic seven vectors of development is presented next. Then, Arnett argues that emerging adulthood (ages 18–25) is a distinct developmental period. The remaining chapters focus on a range of characteristics and their role in identity development. Chapter 11 addresses models of racial oppression and sociorace followed by a review of research on ethnic identity. Women's and men's identity are considered next. Bilodeau and Renn analyze lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender identity development models and Hoffman tackles heterosexual identity development. The final three chapters of this unit focus on identity development of students with disabilities, students of different social classes, and first-generation college students.

Unit 4: Cognitive Dimensions of Development (Intellectual and Moral)

Cognitive theories address how people come to know and believe. The first half of the unit is focused on cognitive development and includes models developed by Perry, Clinchy (along with Belenky, Goldberger, and Tarule), King and Kitchener, and Baxter Magolda. The unit concludes with moral development as presented by Kohlberg, Gilligan, and Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, and Bebeau.

Unit 5: Critical Theoretical Perspectives on Development

In content new to the reader, critical theoretical perspectives are addressed in Unit 5. Abes lays the foundation, arguing that the use of multiple theoretical perspectives can be used to challenge inequitable power structures in student development theory. Next, Sólorzano, Villalpando, and Oseguera employ critical race theory in analyzing the educational progress of Latina/o undergraduate students. Finally, Zaytoun examines the relationship between Kegan's theory and the capacity for social consciousness and action.

Unit 6: Theory to Practice

An important aspect of student development theory is applying it to practice and exemplars of theory-based practice are included in this unit. The unit begins with Parker's classic piece reflecting on how theory can be useful to practitioners, which is followed by Strange and King's chapter on the purposes and functions of student development theory in professional practice. Next, Ortiz and Rhoads present a theoretical framework advancing a multicultural perspective from which to explore and deconstruct Whiteness. Finally, Baxter Magolda describes the Learning Partnerships Model, a framework for promoting self-authorship.

Foreword

Marcia B. Baxter Magolda
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Higher education promotes the free exchange of ideas, critical analysis of complex problems, and exploration of diverse perspectives in the process of learning to construct and judge knowledge claims. Effective participation in these learning opportunities requires certain capacities: the epistemological capacity to acknowledge multiple points of view, the intrapersonal capacity to construct an internal identity to guide belief formation, and the interpersonal capacity to mutually negotiate relationships in which beliefs differ. These meaning making capacities, which developmental psychologist Robert Kegan (1994) coined as the mental demands of modern life, undergird adults' ability to learn, lead, and live in the complexity of contemporary society. These capacities develop when adults engage in complex work and life challenges, particularly when others around them: respect their thoughts and feelings, work collaboratively with them to address these challenges, and encourage them to generate their own solutions (Baxter Magolda, 2009). Jack Mezirow described this as transformational learning:

> . . . the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mind-sets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action. (2000, pp. 7–8)

Some students arrive at college with these capacities; however, more collegians arrive on campuses dependent on authorities for knowledge and peers for identity and relationship formation. College student development theories portray the multitude of possibilities for how collegians make meaning and the processes that enable them to develop the complex epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal capacities to meet the demands of college and adult life. This ASHE *Reader* offers a diverse body of research on these meaning making capacities to help educators promote them during college.

Demands for meaning making vary across contexts. Some educational contexts reward learners for uncritically adopting authority's views whereas others reward learners for constructing their own views by critically analyzing existing evidence. Some collegians come from privileged backgrounds in which others shielded them from life's complexities and authority figures supported their interests. Others come from marginalized backgrounds in which life's complexities emerged from oppression and authority figures did not support their interests. Support for developing the capacities to handle life's complexities also differs across contexts. Families and educators who solve problems constrain opportunities for collegians to develop complex meaning making capacities. Families and educators who help collegians solve their own problems offer opportunities to develop more complex meaning making capacities. Collegians' personal characteristics—gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, faith traditions, social class—intertwine with these contextual variations to shape their experiences and how they approach life's challenges. These layers of complexity require a nuanced vision of college student development theory—a vision of theory as *possibility*.

Robert Coles' (1989) story about his psychiatric residency illustrates this vision of theory as possibility. Coles struggled during his medical internship to reconcile diverse perspectives of his two supervisors—one who encouraged him to formulate theories to explain his patients and another who encouraged him to listen and understand as their stories unfolded. The latter supervisor

introduced him to the Greek derivation of the word *theory* as meaning *to behold*, leading Coles to arrive at the insight, "theory is an enlargement of observation" (p. 20). College student development theories emerge from "observations" (often in the form of interviews) of students' meaning making and are thus interpretations of what the observer witnessed. As Coles' supervisor astutely pointed out, "what you are hearing . . . is to some considerable extent a function of *you*, hearing" (p. 15). Many pioneers in college student development theorizing emphasized these notions by explicitly articulating that the foundations of their theories were particular students, in particular contexts, and shaped by their own interpretive lenses. For example, William Perry (1970), Mary Belenky and colleagues (1986), and Carol Gilligan (1982) all explicitly addressed these notions in the prefaces or beginning chapters of their seminal books. Yet educators, often with the good intent to understand and facilitate students' development, inappropriately generalized these theories to students whose experiences differed from these scholars' research participants.

I, too, struggled with this tendency to generalize when I first studied student development theories in graduate school. In my eagerness to apply theories in my residence life work I paid insufficient attention to theorists' cautions. However, I came face-to-face with the limits of generalizing in the midst of conducting my own longitudinal study of college student development. Rereading the cautions in seminal texts prompted me to interpret my data as particular to its context and to explicitly address the contextual nature of my theorizing (Baxter Magolda, 1992). Now that my longitudinal study is in its 25th year, I am increasingly aware of how my participants' unique lives, *me* hearing, and the theoretical grounding of my work intersect to shape my interpretations. Despite my emphasizing these nuances over the years, well-intentioned educators continue to inappropriately generalize this and other work beyond its context.

Contemporary theorists, many of whose work the editor includes in this *Reader*, have extended the observation to multiple contexts and student populations (something William Perry advocated in the preface of his 1970 book), yielding new possibilities for understanding students' meaning making. Some of these theorists have also brought to the foreground socially constructed assumptions that mediate our ability to hear and interpret students' stories to further emphasize the limits of our hearing and thus our theorizing. To effectively construct and apply student development theories, we have to resist the tendency to generalize beyond particular contexts and avoid static categorizing of students' meaning making. To fully respect students' meaning making, we should construct theory "in situ" *with* students, that is, to co-construct how we interpret our observations. Developing theory as possibility and as co-constructed with particular students alleviates the concern many educators share about overgeneralization and applying theory *to* students. The partnerships interwoven through many of the *Reader*'s chapters articulate this vision of the relationship of theory and practice.

This vision of *theory as possibility* makes a mental demand on the meaning making of theorists and educators. This vision requires openness to possibility, critical examination of one's socialization and ideology, willingness to explore one's biases, integrating theoretical perspectives to understand holistic development, and embracing the complexity of sharing authority with learners to name a few. To fashion integrative theoretical perspectives, to generate new theoretical possibilities, and to work across seemingly inconsistent theoretical perspectives—as many of the chapter authors represented here do—necessitates these complex meaning making capacities. It necessitates facing what Kegan and Lahey (2009) call our immunity to change and working to transform our meaning making into the interdependent forms that allow authentic partnerships with others, including our research participants. This *Reader* supports educators in understanding students and supports us in understanding ourselves and fostering our own development.

This ASHE *Reader* offers an eclectic array of student development research to support a vision of theory as possibility. The editor's inclusion of primary sources helps readers access the parameters theorists outline in their original work that are sometimes lost when other scholars synthesize large bodies of research. The editor's inclusion of multiple theoretical perspectives and work on using multiple perspectives in an intersectional way honors the complexity of college student development theories and their use in creating inclusive educational practice. Their balance of integrative perspectives with work that brings forward the nuances of particular student populations enhances

our vision of the possibilities. The *Reader* places contemporary work in a historical context and reveals the current status of student development theorizing.

Sustaining a vision of *theory as possibility* necessitates viewing theory as continually evolving through the interaction of student characteristics and contexts, mediated by the theorists who enlarge those observations. Becoming overly attached to any one interpretation constrains our ability to see new possibilities. For example, just because we currently have not observed high numbers of students entering college with strong internal voices does not mean it is impossible, particularly if we reframed education to support it. At the same time, becoming overly attached to new possibilities constrains our ability to see existing theoretical threads that may weave through students' development. Holding multiple possibilities together, searching for meaningful intersections, and exploring new interpretations by using one perspective to look at another in a new way are necessary to sustain and expand theory as possibility. The ASHE *Reader* offers the opportunity to think differently about our theoretical foundations.

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