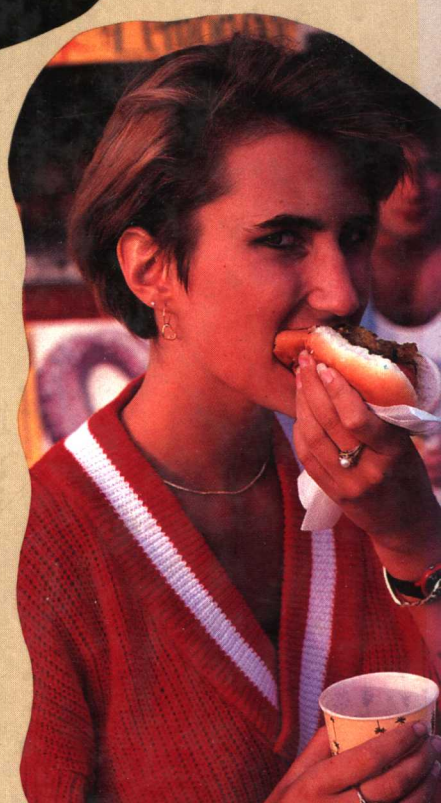




ADOLESCENCE, ADOLESCENTS

Barbara Schneider Fuhrmann



**SECOND
EDITION**

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EDITION**

ADOLESCENCE, **ADOLESCENTS**

Barbara Schneider Fuhrmann
Virginia Commonwealth University

All illustrations and selected photographs by Gary L. Waynick

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PREFACE

The basic premise and organization of this Second Edition of *Adolescence, Adolescents* have not changed since the first edition was published four years ago. These have stood the test of time and have proved meaningful to thousands of students taking a course in adolescent development. But, in some very important ways, society and the environment that adolescents live in *have* changed, and this new edition reflects those changes. For example, because of significant changes in the numbers of minorities in the United States, we have been forced to become more aware of the cultural diversity that is inherent in the youth population. Throughout the entire text, this new edition has incorporated a more sensitive analysis of how adolescence differs for young people from a variety of cultural backgrounds. In addition to this integration of cultural diversity, the second edition reflects the new research in all areas of adolescent life, from the newest findings concerning adolescent involvement with technology to the impact of the AIDS crisis.

A course in adolescent development should be designed to meet the needs of the students who enroll in it. Because those needs are likely to be diverse, such a course, and the book that provides its foundation, face a considerable challenge. Some students, primarily those who are majoring in the social sciences, will be interested in the actual phenomenon of adolescence, especially as it relates to other life stages, and will be attentive to the theory and research concerning adolescence. Others will be taking the course as part of their curricula in teacher education, social work, family life, nursing, public policy, pediatrics, or criminal justice; they will be interested not so much in the stage of development known as adolescence, but in the individuals we call adolescents. Consequently, the course must emphasize both themes: the scientific study of adolescence and the person-oriented understanding of adolescents.

The title of this text, *Adolescence, Adolescents*, was selected to convey these dual themes: the integration of theory and research concerning *adolescence* as a stage of development on the one hand, and concern for the individuals we know as *adolescents* on the other hand. The book is designed to be theoretical and experiential. academically sound and

practical. The reader will find it to be an encyclopedic compendium of research studies, as well as a survey of the most useful theories and findings concerning adolescence, tied together with an overriding consideration for the content's meaningfulness to readers who seek to understand both themselves and the young people with whom they are, or will be, interacting.

The premise of this book is that adolescence is not an isolated period, but rather a normal part of lifelong development. Adolescents are individuals experiencing new ways of thinking and being and dealing with the developmental changes of adolescence in various ways. Their heredity and their environments have interacted profoundly and dynamically to produce unique individuals who are coping with physiological, cognitive, emotional, and social changes. My dual goal is to achieve an understanding of the changes of adolescence that apply to all young people in all times and all places and to develop a concomitant appreciation of the impact that modern American society exerts on the adolescence experienced by today's youth. This text will prepare students to apply both developmental theory and environmental awareness to understanding adolescents and will enable them to reason about the meaning of adolescent behavior in their own experiences.

The first section of the book addresses the contexts of adolescence—those social environments that influence growth and make the experiences of one adolescent different from those of another. Included in Part I are the historical, societal, family, peer, and school contexts of adolescence. The range of topics is broad, and the coverage includes not only theory but also such real-life issues as the impact of stress, the significance of family roles and expectations, the need for peers against whom to measure oneself, the effects of the high school experience, and the role of the computer in the lives of adolescents.

Equipped with an understanding of the critical significance of the contexts in which an adolescent grows, we move on to the developmental aspects of adolescence that are common to all adolescents. Part II addresses normal, healthy aspects of adolescent development—those profound changes that occur as a result of maturation. Included here are physiological, sexual, cognitive, social/emotional, moral, and career development. In this section you will find comprehensive coverage of the most widely accepted and useful theories of development, together with the implications of these theories for understanding and working constructively with adolescents in all settings. Topics include the effects of early *vs.* late maturation, current attitudes toward health and nutrition, adolescent attitudes toward a variety of sexual practices, the reasons adolescents avoid the use of contraceptives, the school's role in sexual stereotyping, cognitive development and creativity, learning styles, the reasons for adolescent egocentrism, the role of religion and morality, and young people's "fear of failure" and "fear of success" attitudes.

Although the emphasis throughout the text is on normal, healthy adolescent development, Part III addresses the issues facing the approximately 20 percent of the adolescent population who experience serious problems. Topics include behavioral disorders such as anorexia and bulimia, juvenile delinquency, and drug use and abuse. The book explores both the possible reasons for disturbed behavior and current attempts to treat troubled adolescents and their families.

While this book has been divided into three distinct sections detailing different aspects of adolescence, we must emphasize that the sections do not necessarily stand in isolation from one another. The contexts of adolescence (Part I) are seen as vital to understanding differences in development (Part II), and both context and development are crucial to understanding the differences between healthy and unhealthy behavior (Part III). Therefore, the chapters are designed to be read in the sequence presented. Ample cross-references and a comprehensive index make it easy to locate topics and concepts. Photographs and illustrations provide immediate graphic reinforcement, and each was selected to illustrate an important concept. After studying this book, you should have a thorough and useful understanding of the complexities of adolescent development.

An undertaking of this magnitude is never a completely individual task, even though a single author's name appears on the title page. I remain indebted to Bill Bost and Chuck Ruch, who provided the support that made the first edition possible, and to Gary Waynick, some of whose original photographs remain in this edition along with his creative and relatively timeless illustrations. Chris Jennison and the staff at Scott, Foresman provided encouragement and challenge for the second edition, as did the reviewers of the first edition and those who critiqued the second:

Stephen A. Anderson, University of Connecticut
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Finally, I dedicate this book to David, the one-time adolescent, now a grown man, who provided me with all of my favorite stories about adolescence.

Barbara Fuhrmann

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