



Sylvaine Poitau/Alamy

THE CHINESE HAVE AN EXPRESSION FOR THE LIMITED WAY ALL OF US LEARN TO SEE THE WORLD: *jing di zhi wa*, meaning “frog in the bottom of a well.” The expression comes from a fable about a frog that has lived its entire life in a small well. Swimming around in the water, the frog assumes that its tiny world is all there is. The frog believes that its perception is complete, but it has no idea how vast the world really is. It is only when a passing turtle tells the frog of the great ocean to the east that the frog realizes there is much more to the world than it had known.

All of us are like that frog. We grow up as members of a culture and learn, through direct and indirect teaching, to see the world from the perspective that becomes most familiar to us. Because the people around us usually share that perspective, we seldom have cause to question it. Like the frog, we rarely suspect how big and diverse our human species really is.

The goal of this book is to lift you out of the well, by taking a cultural approach to understanding **human development**, the ways people grow and change across the life span. This means that the emphasis of the book is on how persons develop as members of a culture. **Culture** is the total pattern of a group’s customs, beliefs, art, and technology. In other words, a culture is a group’s common way of life, passed on from one generation to the next. From the day we are born, all of us experience our lives as members of a culture (sometimes more than one), and this profoundly influences how we develop, how we behave, how we see the world, and how we experience life.

“From the day we are born, all of us experience our lives as members of a culture”

Biology is important, too, of course, and at various points we will discuss the interaction between biological and cultural or social influences. However, human beings everywhere have essentially the same biological constitution, yet their paths through the life span are remarkably different depending on the culture in which their development takes place.

The tendency in most social science research, especially in psychology, has been to ignore or strip away culture in pursuit of universal principles of development (Jensen, 2011; Rozin, 2006). Research has focused mostly on studying human development in the American middle class, because most researchers were American and they assumed that the processes of development they observed in the United States were universal (Arnett, 2008). But this is changing, and in recent years there has been increasing attention in psychology and other social science fields to the cultural context of human development (Shweder, 2011; Shweder et al., 2006). By now, researchers have presented descriptions of human development in places all over the world, and researchers studying American society have increased their attention to cultures within the United States that are outside of the White middle class.

Central to this book is the view that an emphasis on cultural context is essential to understanding human development. What it is like to go through life in the American middle class is different in many ways from going through life in Egypt, or Thailand, or Brazil—and also different from going through life in certain American minority cultures,

such as urban African American culture or the culture of recent Mexican American immigrants. Throughout this book, we’ll explore human development from the perspectives of many different cultures around the world. We’ll also learn to analyze and critique research based on whether it does or does not take culture into account. By the time you finish this book, you should be able to *think culturally*.

Why is it important for you to understand human development using the cultural approach? Hopefully you will find it fascinating to learn about the marvelous diversity in the ways of life that people experience in different cultures, from prenatal growth to late adulthood, and even after death. In addition, the cultural approach has many practical applications. Increasingly the world is approaching the *global village* that the social philosopher Marshall McLuhan (1960) forecast over half a century ago. In recent decades there has been an acceleration in the process of **globalization**, which refers to the increasing connections between different parts of the world in trade, travel, migration, and communication (Arnett, 2002; Giddens, 2000; Ridl y, 2010). Consequently, wherever you live in the world, in the course of your personal and professional life you are likely to have many contacts with people of other cultures. Those of you going into the nursing profession may one day have patients who have a cultural background in various parts of Asia or South America. Those of you pursuing careers in education will likely teach students whose families emigrated from countries in Africa or Europe. Your coworkers, your neighbors, possibly even your friends and family members may include people from a variety of different cultural backgrounds. Through the Internet you may have contact with people all over the world, via e-mail, Facebook and other social media, YouTube, and new technologies to come. Thus, understanding the cultural approach to human development is likely to be useful in all aspects of life, helping you to communicate with and understand the perspectives of others in a diverse, globalized world.

Not least, the cultural approach to human development will help you understand more deeply your own life and your place in the world. Think for a moment, of which culture or cultures are you a member? How has your cultural membership shaped your development and your view of the world? I am an American, and I have lived in the United States all my life. I am also White (or European American), ethnically, and a man; I am middle class and an urban resident. I am married to a Dane, and our family has spent a lot of time in Denmark. Those cultural contexts have shaped how I have learned to understand the world, as your cultural contexts have shaped your own understanding.

In the course of this book I will be your fellow frog, your guide and companion as we rise together out of the well to gaze at the broad, diverse, remarkable cultural panorama of the human journey. The book will introduce you to many variations in human development and cultural practices you did not know about before, which may lead you to see your own development and your own cultural practices in a new light. Whether you think toddlers breast-feeding until age 3 is normal or abnormal, whether you think adolescents “naturally” draw closer to or farther away from their parents, whether you think continuing to be sexually active in middle adulthood is healthy or spiritually contaminating, you are about to meet cultures with assumptions very different from your own. This will enrich your awareness of the variety of human experiences and may allow you to draw from a wider range of options of how you wish to live.

In this chapter we set the stage for the rest of the book. The first section provides a broad summary of human life today around the world as well as an examination of how culture developed out of our evolutionary history. In the second section, we look at the history of theoretical conceptions of human development along with two current theories that contribute to human development research. Finally, the third section provides an overview of human development as a scientific field.

APPLYING YOUR KNOWLEDGE

In the profession you are in or will one day be in, what is one way the cultural approach to human development might be applied to your work?

human development way people grow and change across the life span; includes people’s biological, cognitive, psychological, and social functioning

culture total pattern of a group’s customs, beliefs, art, and technology

globalization increasing connections between different parts of the world in trade, travel, migration, and communication

SECTION 1 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT TODAY AND ITS ORIGINS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1 Distinguish between the demographic profiles of developed countries and developing countries in terms of population, income, and education.
- 2 Define the term *socioeconomic status* (SES) and explain why SES, gender, and ethnicity are important aspects of human development within countries.
- 3 Explain the process of natural selection and trace the evolutionary origins of the human species.
- 4 Summarize the evidence that human cultures first developed during the Upper Paleolithic period, and identify the features of the Neolithic period and early civilizations.
- 5 Apply information about human evolution to how human development takes place today.

Humanity Today: A Demographic Profile

Since the goal of this book is to provide you with an understanding of how human development takes place in cultures all around the world, let's begin with a demographic profile of the world's human population in the early 21st century. Perhaps the most striking demographic feature of the human population today is the sheer size of it. For most of history the total human population was under 10 million (McFalls, 2007). Women typically had from four to eight children, but most of the children died in infancy or childhood and never reached reproductive age. The human population began to increase notably around 10,000 years ago, with the development of agriculture and domestication of animals (Diamond, 1992).

Population growth in the millennia that followed was very slow, and it was not until about 400 years ago that the world population reached 500 million persons. Since that time, and especially in the past century, population growth has accelerated at an astonishing rate (see **Figure 1**; McFalls, 2007). It took just 150 years for the human population to double from 500 million to 1 billion, passing that threshold around the year 1800. Then came the medical advances of the 20th century, and the elimination or sharp reduction of deadly diseases like smallpox, typhus, diphtheria, and cholera. Subsequently, the human population reached 2 billion by 1930, then tripled to 6 billion by 1999. The 7-billion threshold was surpassed just 12 years later, in early 2011.

How high will the human population go? This is difficult to say, but most projections indicate it will rise to 9 billion by about 2050 and thereafter stabilize and perhaps slightly decline. This forecast is based on the worldwide decline in birthrates that has taken place in recent years. The **total fertility rate (TFR)** (number of births per woman) worldwide is currently 2.8, which is substantially higher than the rate of 2.1 that is the *replacement rate* of a stable population. However, the TFR has been declining sharply for over a decade and will decline to 2.1 by 2050 if current trends continue (Ridley, 2010).

total fertility rate (TFR) in a population, the number of births per woman

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

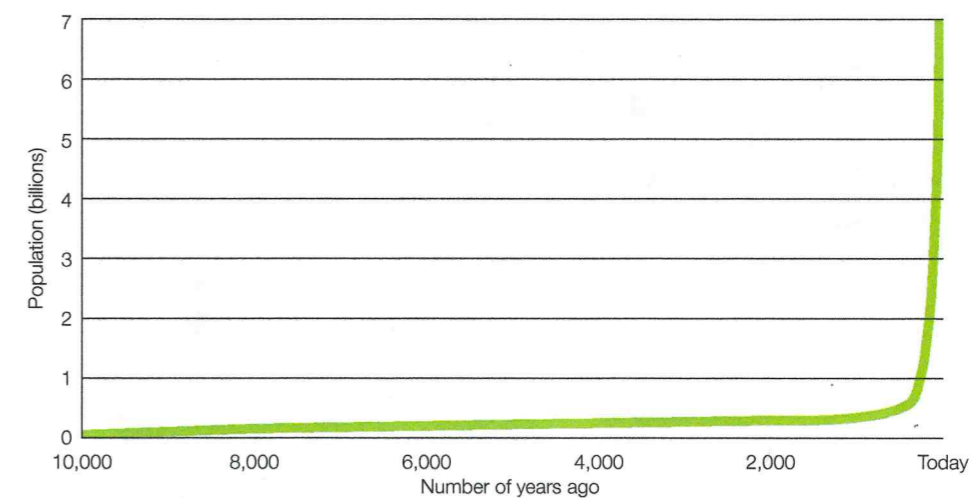


Figure 1 • **World Population Growth, Past 10,000 years** What happened in recent human history to cause population to rise so dramatically?
Source: Ember (2007).

Variations Across Countries

Distinguish between the demographic profiles of developed countries and developing countries in terms of population, income, and education.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

1

The population increase from now to 2050 will not take place equally around the world. On the contrary, there is a stark “global demographic divide” between the wealthy, economically developed countries that make up less than 20% of the world's population, and the economically developing countries that contain the majority of the world's population (Kent & Haub, 2005). Nearly all the population growth in the decades to come will take place in the economically developing countries. In contrast, nearly all wealthy countries are expected to decline in population during this period and beyond, because they have current fertility rates that are well below replacement rate.

For the purposes of this text, we'll use the term **developed countries** to refer to the most affluent countries in the world. Classifications of developed countries vary, but usually this designation includes the United States, Canada, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, Chile, and nearly all the countries of Europe (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2010). For our discussion, developed countries will be contrasted with **developing countries**, which have less wealth than the developed countries but are experiencing rapid economic growth as they join the globalized economy. A brief profile of the developing country of India is presented in the **Cultural Focus: Incredible India!** feature later in this chapter.

The current population of developed countries is 1.2 billion, about 18% of the total world population, and the population of developing countries is about 5.8 billion, about 82% of the world's population. Among developed countries, the United States is one of the few likely to gain rather than lose population in the next few decades. Currently there are about 310 million persons in the United States, but by 2050 there will be 439 million (Kotkin, 2010). Nearly all the other developed countries are expected to decline in population between now and 2050 (OECD, 2010). The decline will be steepest in Japan, which is projected to drop from a current population of 120 million to just 90 million by 2050, due to a low fertility rate and virtually no immigration.

There are two reasons why the United States is following a different demographic path than most other developed countries. First, the United States has a Total Fertility Rate of 2.0, which is slightly below the replacement rate of 2.1 but still higher than the TFR in most other

Read the Document Developed Countries (OECD Classification) at **MyDevelopmentLab**

THINKING CULTURALLY

What are some potential political and social consequences of populations rising in developing countries and falling in developed countries in the coming decades?

developed countries world's most economically developed and affluent countries, with the highest median levels of income and education

developing countries countries that have lower levels of income and education than developed countries but are experiencing rapid economic growth

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

Nearly all the world population growth from now to 2050 will take place in developing countries. Here, a busy street in Delhi, India.

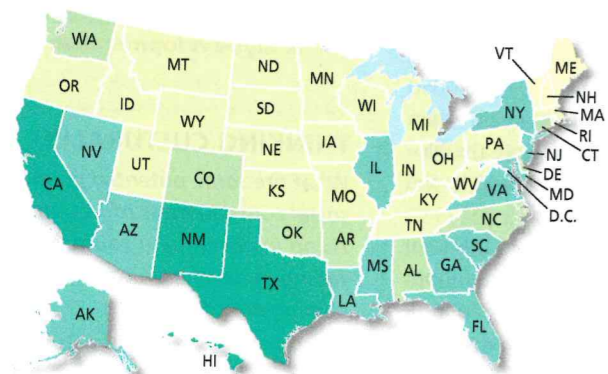


developed countries (Population Reference Bureau, 2010). Second, and more importantly, the United States allows more legal immigration than most other developed countries do, and there are tens of millions of undocumented immigrants as well. The increase in population in the United States between now and 2050 will result entirely from immigration (Martin & Midgley, 2010). Both legal and undocumented immigrants to the United States come mainly from Mexico and Latin America, although many also come from Asia and other parts of the world. Consequently, as **Map 1** shows, by 2050 the proportion of the U.S. population that is Latino is projected to rise from 16% to 30% (Martin & Midgley, 2010). Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia also have relatively open immigration policies, so they, too, may avoid the population decline that is projected for most developed countries (DeParle, 2010).

The demographic contrast of developed countries compared to the rest of the world is stark not only with respect to population but also in other key areas, such as income and

THINKING CULTURALLY

What kinds of public policy changes might be necessary in the United States between now and 2050 to adapt to nearly 100 million more immigrants and a rise in the proportion of Latinos to 30%?



Minority population as a percentage of population*

Less than 10%	10-24.9%	25-34.9%	35-49.9%	More than 50%
---------------	----------	----------	----------	---------------

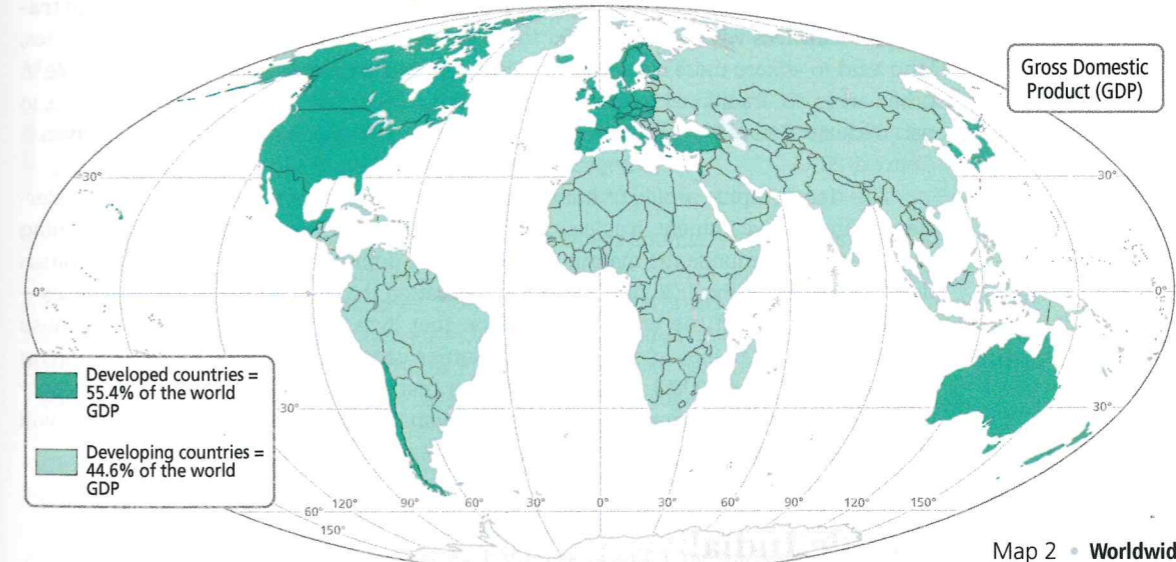
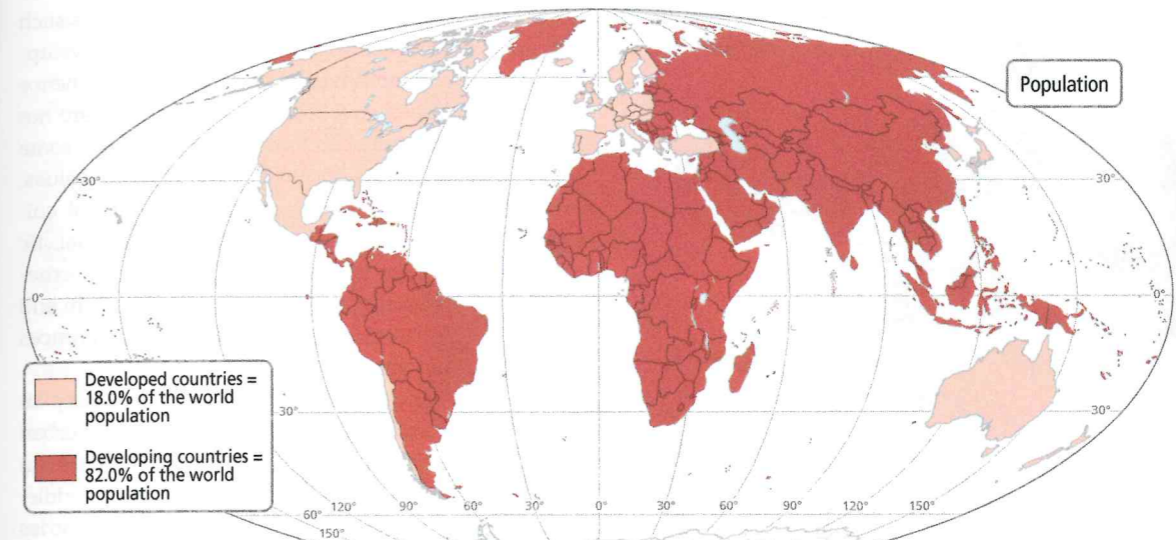
*Minority refers to people who reported their ethnicity and race as something other than non-Hispanic White alone

- Two or more races
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Asian American
- African American
- Latino
- White



Map 1 • Projected Ethnic Changes in the U.S. Population to 2050 Which ethnic group is projected to change the most in the coming decades, and why?

A Cultural Approach to Human Development



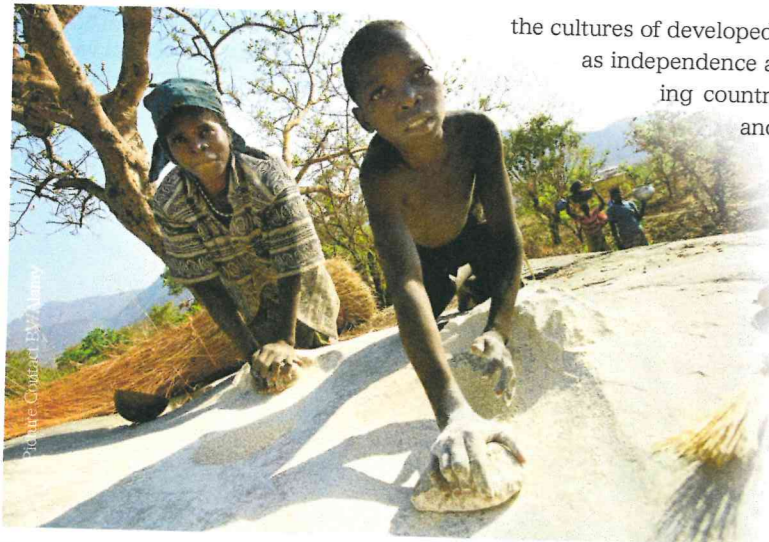
Map 2 • Worldwide Variations in Population and Income Levels Developed countries represent only 18% of the world population yet they are much wealthier than developing countries. At what point in its economic development should a developing country be reclassified as a developed country?

education (see **Map 2**). With respect to income, about 40% of the world's population lives on less than two dollars per day, and 80% of the world's population lives on a family income of less than \$6,000 per year (Kent & Haub, 2005; UNDP, 2006). At one extreme are the developed countries, where 9 of 10 persons are in the top 20% of the global income distribution, and at the other extreme is southern Africa, where half of the population is in the bottom 20% of global income. Africa's economic growth has been strong for the past decade, but it remains the poorest region in the world (McKinsey Global Institute, 2010).

A similar contrast between rich and poor countries exists regarding education. Your experience as a college student is a rare and privileged status in most of the world. In developed countries, virtually all children obtain primary and secondary education, and about 50% go on to tertiary education (college or other postsecondary training). However, in developing countries about 20% of children do not complete primary school and only about half are enrolled in secondary school (UNDP, 2006). College and other postsecondary education is only for the wealthy elite.

There are also some broad cultural differences between developed and developing countries, even though each category is very diverse. One important difference is that

A Cultural Approach to Human Development



By age 10, many children in developing countries are no longer in school. Here, a child in Cameroon helps his mother make flour.


Watch the Video Differences Between Collectivistic and Individualistic Cultures at [MyDevelopmentLab](#)

individualistic cultural values such as independence and self-expression

collectivistic cultural values such as obedience and group harmony

traditional culture in developing countries, a rural culture that adheres more closely to cultural traditions than people in urban areas do

caste system in Hindu culture of India, an inherited social hierarchy, determined by birth

the cultures of developed countries tend to be based on **individualistic** values such as independence and self-expression (Greenfield, 2005). In contrast, developing countries tend to prize **collectivistic** values such as obedience and group harmony (Sullivan & Cottone, 2010). These are not mutually exclusive categories and each country has some balance between individualistic and collectivistic values. Furthermore, most countries contain a variety of cultures, some of which may be relatively individualistic whereas others are relatively collectivistic. Nevertheless, the overall distinction between individualism and collectivism is useful for describing broad differences between human groups. 

Within developing countries there is often a sharp divide between rural and urban areas, with people in urban areas having higher incomes and receiving more education and better medical care. Often, the lives of middle-class persons in urban areas of developing countries resemble the lives of people in developed countries in many ways, yet they are much different than people in rural areas of their own countries (UNDP, 2006). In this book, the term **traditional cultures** will be used to refer to people in the rural areas of developing countries, who tend to adhere more closely to the historical traditions of their culture than people in urban areas do. Traditional cultures tend to be more collectivistic than other cultures are, in part because in rural areas close ties with others are often an economic necessity (Sullivan & Cottone, 2010).

This demographic profile of humanity today demonstrates that if you wish to understand human development, it is crucial to understand the lives of people in developing countries who comprise the majority of the world's population. Most research on human development is on the 18% of the world's population that lives in developed countries—especially the 5% of the world's population that lives in the United States—because research requires money and developed countries can afford more of it than developing countries can (Arnett, 2008). However, it is clear that it would be inadequate to focus only on people in developed countries in a book on *human* development. In this book, you will learn about human development as people experience it all over the world.

CULTURAL FOCUS Incredible India!

One of the most fascinating and diverse places in the world, for anyone interested in human development, is India. The current population of India is 1.2 billion, making it the second most populous country in the world (after China), and by 2050 it will have more people than any other country, 1.5 billion (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2011). Indians speak over 400 different languages, and there are over 200 distinct ethnic groups. Most Indians are Hindu (80%), but India also has millions of Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, and followers of other religions.

Although India is fabulously diverse, there are cultural traits across groups that are characteristically Indian (Kakar & Kakar, 2007). Family closeness is highly valued in India, and most households are multigenerational (Chaudhary & Sharma, 2012). Traditionally, women entered their husband's family household upon marriage, and the couples' children then grew up around the paternal grandparents and many aunts, uncles, and cousins. This system is still followed by most Indians, although in urban areas

some middle-class couples choose to have their own household. Most marriages are arranged by parents and other respected family members (Chaudhary & Sharma, 2012). Traditionally, bride and groom did not meet until their wedding today, but now in most cases they meet each other briefly before marriage, in the presence of other family members.

One unique feature of Indian society is the **caste system**, which is an inherited social hierarchy. Indians believe in reincarnation, and this includes the belief that people are born into a caste position in the social hierarchy that reflects their moral and spiritual conduct in their previous life. People in high ranked castes tend to have the most economic resources and the best access to education and health care, whereas people in the lowest castes tend to have little in the way of money or other resources. Attempts



A Cultural Approach to Human Development



S. Forster/Alamy

have been made to abolish the caste system in the past century, but it persists as a strong influence in Indian life (Kakar & Kakar, 2007).

India is a developing country, and most of its people live on an income of less than two dollars a day (UNDP, 2011). About half of Indian children are underweight and malnourished (World Bank, 2011). Less than half of Indian adolescents complete secondary school. Only about half of adult women are literate, and about three-fourths of adult men. About two-thirds of India's population lives in rural villages, although there is a massive migration occurring from rural to urban areas, led mostly by young people.

Like many developing countries India is rapidly changing. Its economy has been booming for the past 2 decades, lifting hun-

dreds of millions of Indians out of poverty (UNDP, 2011). India is now a world leader in manufacturing, telecommunications, and services. If the economy continues to grow at its present pace India will lead the world in economic production by 2050 (Price Waterhouse Coopers, 2011). Life is changing rapidly for Indians, and children born today are likely to experience much different economic and cultural contexts than their parents or grandparents have known. India

will be a country to watch in the decades to come, and we will learn about many aspects of human development in India in the course of this book.

Variations Within Countries

Define the term **socioeconomic status (SES)** and explain why SES, gender, and ethnicity are important aspects of human development within countries.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

2

The contrast between developed countries and developing countries will be used often in this book, as a general way of drawing a contrast between human development in relatively rich and relatively poor countries. However, it should be noted that there is substantial variation within each of these categories. All developed countries are relatively wealthy, but human development in Japan is quite different from human development in France or Canada. All developing countries are less wealthy than developed countries, but human development in China is quite different than human development in Brazil or Nigeria. At various points we will explore variations in human development within the broad categories of developed countries and developing countries.

Not only is there important variation in human development within each category of "developed" and "developing" countries, but there is additional variation within each country. Most countries today have a **majority culture** that sets most of the norms and standards and holds most of the positions of political, economic, intellectual, and media power. In addition, there may be many minority cultures defined by ethnicity, religion, language, or other characteristics.

Variations in human development also occur due to differences within countries in the settings and circumstances of individual lives. The settings and circumstances that contribute to variations in pathways of human development are called **contexts**. Contexts include environmental settings such as family, school, community, media, and culture, all of which will be discussed in this book. Three other important aspects of variation that will be highlighted are socioeconomic status, gender, and ethnicity.

The term **socioeconomic status (SES)** is often used to refer to a person's *social class*, which includes educational level, income level, and occupational status. For children and adolescents, because they have not yet reached the social-class level they will have as adults, SES is usually used in reference to their parents' levels of education, income, and occupation. In most countries, SES is highly important in shaping human development. It influences everything from the risk of infant mortality to the quality and duration of children's education to the kind of work adults do to the likelihood of obtaining health care in late adulthood. Differences in SES are especially sharp in developing countries. In a country such as India or Saudi Arabia

majority culture within a country, the cultural group that sets most of the norms and standards and holds most of the positions of political, economic, intellectual, and media power

contexts settings and circumstances that contribute to variations in pathways of human development, including SES, gender, and ethnicity, as well as family, school, community, media, and culture

socioeconomic status (SES) person's social class, including educational level, income level, and occupational status



Imagestate Media Partners Limited-Impact Photos/Alamy

Within each country, SES is an influential context of human development. Here, a low-SES family in the United States.

APPLYING YOUR KNOWLEDGE ... as a Nurse

You are treating a child from a middle-class family from Mexico City. The parents speak English, and they are comfortable in the hospital setting in the U.S. Do you think this family has more in common with those from the urban setting where you work, or are they more like people from rural areas?

THINKING CULTURALLY

What are some of the gender-specific expectations that exist in your culture (e.g., in the family, the school, the workplace, and the media)?

Study and Review at MyDevelopmentLab

ethnicity group identity that may include components such as cultural origin, cultural traditions, race, religion, and language

ontogenetic characteristic pattern of individual development in a species

phylogenetic pertaining to the development of a species

or Mexico, growing up as a member of the upper-class SES elite is very different from growing up as a member of the relatively poor majority, in terms of access to resources such as health care and education. However, even in developed countries there are important SES differences in access to resources throughout the course of human development. For example, in the United States infant mortality is higher among low-SES families than among high-SES families, in part because low-SES mothers are less likely to receive prenatal care (Daniels et al., 2006).

Gender is a key factor in development throughout the life span, in every culture (Carroll & Wolpe, 2005; Chinas, 1992). The expectations cultures have for males and females are different from the time they are born (Hatfield & Rapson, 2005). However, the degree of the differences varies greatly among cultures. In most developed countries today, the differences are relatively blurred: Men and women hold many of the same jobs, wear many of the same clothes (e.g., jeans, T-shirts), and enjoy many of the same entertainments. If you have grown up in a developed country, you may be surprised to learn how deep gender differences go in many other cultures. Nevertheless, gender-specific expectations exist in developed countries, too, as we will see.

Finally, **ethnicity** is a crucial part of human development. Ethnicity may include a variety of components, such as cultural origin, cultural traditions, race, religion, and language. Minority ethnic groups may arise as a consequence of immigration. There are also countries in which ethnic groups have a long-standing presence and may even have arrived before the majority culture. For example, Aboriginal peoples lived in Australia for many generations before the first European settlers arrived. Many African countries were constructed by European colonial powers in the 19th century and consist of people of a variety of ethnicities, each of whom has lived in their region for many generations. Often, ethnic minorities within countries have distinct cultural patterns that are different from those of the majority culture. For example, in the Canadian majority culture, premarital sex is common, but in the large Asian Canadian minority group, female virginity at marriage is still highly valued (Sears, 2012). In many developed countries, most of the ethnic minority groups have values that are less individualistic and more collectivistic than in the majority culture (Greenfield, 2005).

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What factors have contributed to the massive growth of the human population in recent centuries?
2. Why are the populations of the United States and Canada expected to increase between now and 2050?
3. How do developed countries and developing countries differ with respect to population, income, and education?
4. How do SES, gender, and ethnicity contribute to variations in human development within countries?

Human Origins and the Birth of Culture

Using a cultural approach to human development, we will see that humans are fabulously diverse in how they live. But how did this diversity arise? Humans are one species, so how did so many different ways of life develop from one biological origin? Before we turn our attention to the development of individuals—called **ontogenetic** development—it is important to understand our **phylogenetic** development, that is, the development of the

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

human species. Let's take a brief tour now of human evolutionary history, as a foundation for understanding the birth of culture and the historical context of individual human development today. For students who hold religious beliefs that may lead them to object to evolutionary theory, I understand that you may find this part of the book challenging, but it is nevertheless important to know about the theory of evolution and the evidence supporting it, as this is the view of human origins accepted by virtually all scientists.

Read the Document A More Extensive Account of Human Evolution at MyDevelopmentLab

Our Evolutionary Beginnings

Explain the process of natural selection and trace the evolutionary origins of the human species.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

3

To understand human origins it is important to know a few basic principles of the theory of evolution, first proposed by Charles Darwin in 1859 in his book *The Origin of Species*. At the heart of the theory of evolution is the proposition that species change through the process of **natural selection**. In natural selection, the young of any species are born with variations on a wide range of characteristics. Some may be relatively large and others relatively small, some relatively fast and others relatively slow, and so on. Among the young, those who will be most likely to survive until they can reproduce will be the ones whose variations are best adapted to their environment.

To use a famous example from evolutionary research, in a town in England the wings of a local butterfly were patterned in black and white. Over the years, as air pollution worsened in the town and a coat of black soot often covered everything, the butterflies became blacker because the ones with relatively more black on their wings were most likely to blend in with the sooty background, least likely to be seen by predators, and consequently more likely to survive to reproductive age. After the town implemented antipollution measures the air quality improved, and over the butterfly generations their wings gradually became less black and more white again, as the blacker butterflies stood out more and became increasingly vulnerable to predators. So, the process of natural selection took place as first the blacker butterflies, and then the whiter butterflies, were better adapted to the environment and therefore better able to survive until they could reproduce.

Through natural selection, species change little by little with each generation, and over a long period of time they can develop into new species. It is sometimes hard for us to grasp how the evolution of new species can take place, in part because the amounts of time involved are often vast, far longer than we are familiar with from our own experience. It probably seems like a "long time ago" since you were 10 years old, and on the scale of a human lifetime, it is. But on the scale of evolutionary time, especially for mammals like us, changes often take place over thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, even millions of years. Nevertheless, since Darwin first proposed the theory of evolution an enormous amount of evidence has accumulated that has verified the theory and supported the principle of natural selection as the main mechanism of evolutionary change (Dennett, 1996).

When did human evolution begin? According to evolutionary biologists, humans, chimpanzees, and gorillas had a common primate ancestor until 6 to 8 million years ago (Shreeve, 2010). At about that time, this common ancestor split into three paths, leading to the development of humans as well as to chimpanzees and gorillas. The evolutionary line that eventually led to humans is known as the **hominid** line. The primate ancestor we share with chimpanzees and gorillas lived in Africa, and so did the early hominids, as chimpanzees and gorillas do today.

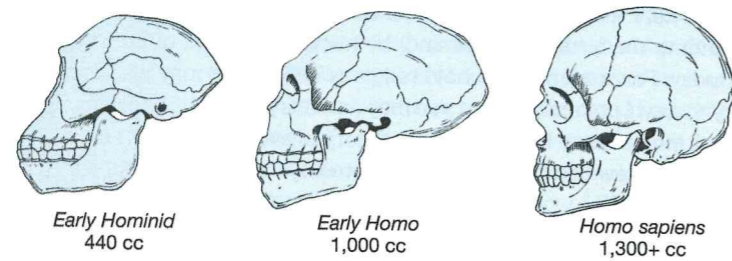
The most important difference between early hominids and other primates was the development of **bipedal locomotion**, or walking on two legs. Evolutionary biologists have suggested that bipedal locomotion may have been a useful adaptation because it freed the hands for other things, such as carrying food, using a tool, or wielding a weapon against predators or prey (or other hominids) (Ember et al., 2011). The length of the early hominid's arms indicates that it was adept at climbing and moving in trees.

natural selection evolutionary process in which the offspring best adapted to their environment survive to produce offspring of their own

hominid evolutionary line that led to modern humans

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

Figure 2 • Changes in Brain Size in Early Humans



About three and half million years ago the hominid line split into two, with one line eventually dying out and the other a line of *Homo* species leading to modern humans (Shreeve, 2010). The most striking and important change during this period was the size of early *Homo*'s brain, which became over twice as large as the brain of early hominids (see **Figure 2**; brain sizes are shown in cubic centimeters [cc]). Simultaneously, the female *Homo*'s pelvis became wider to allow the birth of bigger-brained babies. Evolutionary biologists believe that the larger brains of early *Homo* babies meant that babies were born less mature than they were for earlier hominids, resulting in a longer period of infant dependency. This long period of infant dependency may have made it difficult for early *Homo* mothers to travel for long distances to accompany the males on hunting or scavenging expeditions (Wrangham, 2009). So, a **hunter-gatherer** way of life developed, in which females remained in a relatively stable home base, caring for children and perhaps gathering edible plants in the local area, while males went out to hunt or scavenge.

As the *Homo* species continued to evolve, it developed the ability to make tools and control fire. The earliest tools were apparently made by striking one stone against another to create a sharp edge. The tools may have been used for purposes such as slicing up animal meat and whittling wood into sharp sticks. There is evidence that early *Homo*'s diet included animals such as antelopes, wild pigs, giraffes, and even elephants. Controlling fire enabled our early ancestors to cook food, and because cooked food is used much more efficiently by the body than raw food, this led to another burst in brain size (Wrangham, 2009). Another evolutionary change during this period was that the size of the teeth and jaws diminished, because cooked food was easier to eat than raw food.

By 200,000 years ago the early hominid species had evolved into our species, *Homo sapiens* (Shreeve, 2011). *Homo sapiens* was different from earlier *Homo* species, with thinner and lighter bones—perhaps evolved for better running and hunting—smaller teeth and jaws, and most importantly, a brain about 30% larger than the brain of the *Homo* species that had just preceded us (refer again to Figure 2).

The Origin of Cultures and Civilizations

Summarize the evidence that human cultures first developed during the Upper Paleolithic period, and identify the features of the Neolithic period and early civilizations.

Physically, *Homo sapiens* has changed little from 200,000 years ago to the present. However, a dramatic change in the development of the human species took place during the **Upper Paleolithic period** from 40,000 to about 10,000 years ago (Ember et al., 2011; Johnson, 2005). For the first time, art appeared: musical instruments; paintings on cave walls (see the **Historical Focus: The Sorcerer of Trois Frères** feature later in this chapter); small ivory beads attached to clothes; decorative objects made from bone, antler, or shell; and human and animal figures carved from ivory or sculpted from clay.

Several other important changes mark the Upper Paleolithic, in addition to the sudden burst of artistic production (see **Figure 3**):

- Humans began to bury their dead, sometimes including art objects in the graves.
- For the first time cultural differences developed between human groups, as reflected in their art and tools.
- Trade took place between human groups.
- There was a rapid acceleration in the development of tools, including the bow and arrow, a spear thrower that could launch a spear at an animal (or perhaps at human enemies), and the harpoon.
- The first boats were invented, allowing humans to reach and populate Australia and New Guinea.

Why this sudden burst of changes during the Upper Paleolithic, when there is no evidence for changes in the brain or body? Some researchers believe that this is when language first appeared (Diamond, 1992; Leakey, 1994). However, anatomical evidence of a capacity for spoken language is evident at least 300,000 years ago (Wrangham, 2009). So, for now the origin of the revolutionary changes of the Upper Paleolithic remains a mystery.

The next period of dramatic change, from 10,000 years ago to about 5,000 years ago, is known as the **Neolithic period** (Johnson, 2005). During this time, humans broadened their food sources by cultivating plants and domesticating animals. The key contributor to this advance was climate change. The Upper Paleolithic was the time of the last Ice Age, when average global temperatures were about 10 degrees Celsius (50 degrees Fahrenheit) below today's temperatures. Glaciers covered Europe as far south as present-day Berlin, and in North America, as far south as what is now Chicago. By the Neolithic period the climate was much warmer, resembling our climate today.

As the climate became warmer and wetter, new plants evolved that were good human food sources, and humans began to try to produce more of the ones they liked best. The huge animals that had been hunted during the Upper Paleolithic became extinct, perhaps from overhunting, perhaps because the animals failed to adapt to the climate changes (Diamond, 1992). Domestication of animals may have developed as a food source to replace the extinct animals. Along with agriculture and animal care came new tools: mortars and pestles for processing plants into food, and the spindle and loom for weaving cotton and wool into clothing. Larger, sturdier dwellings were built (and furniture such as beds and tables) because people stayed in settled communities longer to tend their plants and animals.

The final major historical change that provides the basis for how we live today began around 5,000 years ago with the development of **civilization** (Ridley, 2010). The characteristics that mark civilization include cities, writing, specialization into different kinds of work, differences among people in wealth and status, and a centralized political system known as a **state**. The first civilizations developed around the same time in Egypt and Sumer (part of what is now Iraq). Because people in these civilizations kept written records and produced many goods, we have a good idea of how they lived. We know they had laws and sewer systems, and that their social classes included priests, soldiers, craftsmen, government workers, and slaves. We know they built monuments to their leaders, such as the pyramids that still stand today in Egypt. They produced a vast range of goods including jewelry, sculpture, sailboats, wheeled wagons, and swords. Later civilizations developed in India (around 4,500 years ago), China (around 3,700 years ago), southern Africa (around

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

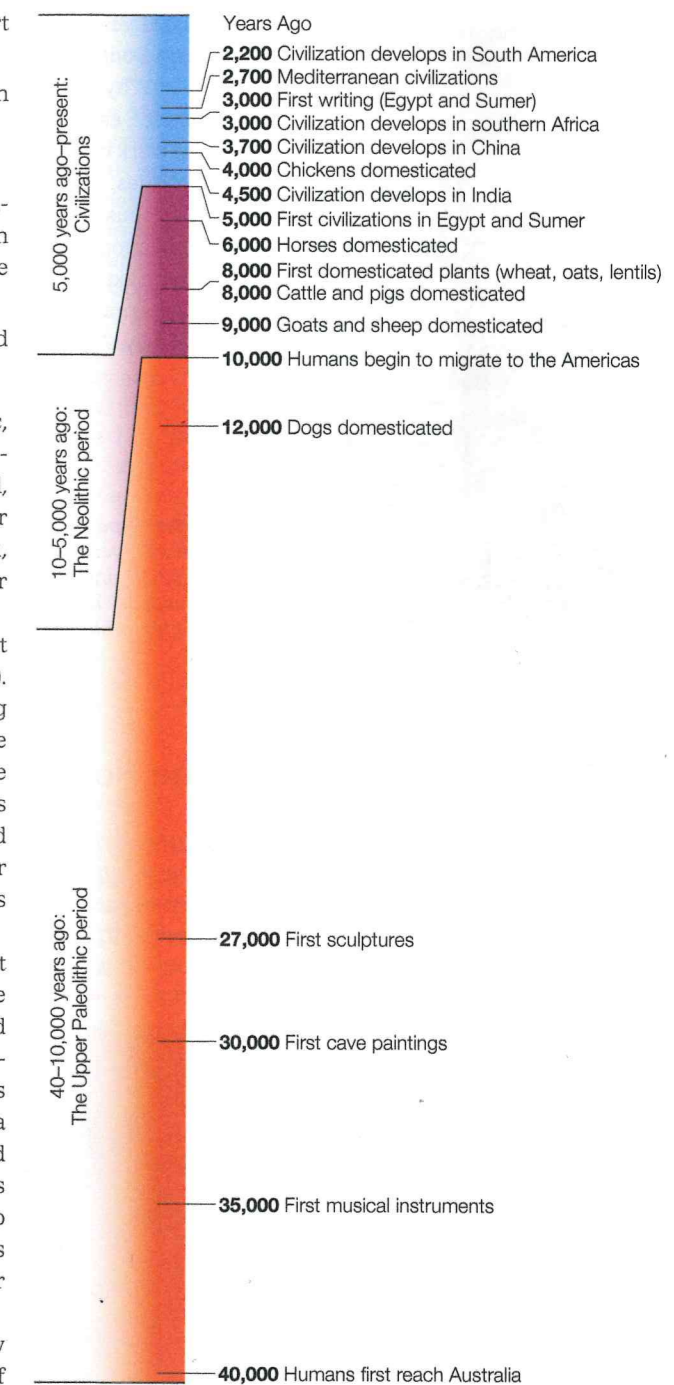


Figure 3 • Time Line of Human History From Upper Paleolithic Period to the Present.

THINKING CULTURALLY

What are some similarities and differences between life in the earliest civilizations and life today?

state centralized political system that is an essential feature of a civilization

The mastery of fire by the early *Homo* species resulted in a sharp increase in brain size.

hunter-gatherer social and economic system in which economic life is based on hunting (mostly by males) and gathering edible plants (mostly by females)

Homo sapiens species of modern humans

4

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Upper Paleolithic period period of human history from 40,000 to 10,000 years ago, when distinct human cultures first developed

Neolithic period era of human history from 10,000 to 5,000 years ago, when animals and plants were first domesticated

civilization form of human social life, beginning about 5,000 years ago, that includes cities, writing, occupational specialization, and states

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

AP Photo/Daniel Maurer



3,000 years ago), the Mediterranean area (Greece and Rome, around 2,700 years ago), and South America (around 2,200 years ago).

Why did civilizations and states arise? As agricultural production became more efficient, especially after the development of irrigation, not everyone in a cultural group had to work on food production. This allowed some members of the group to be concentrated in cities, away from food-production areas, where they could specialize as merchants, artists, musicians, bureaucrats, and religious and political leaders. Furthermore, as the use of irrigation expanded there was a need for a state to build and oversee the system, and as trade expanded there was a need for a state to build infrastructure such as roadways. Trade also connected people in larger cultural groups that could be united into a common state (Ridley, 2010).

The Upper Paleolithic period beginning 40,000 years ago marked the birth of culture, including music. Here, a flute made by humans at the beginning of the Upper Paleolithic.

HISTORICAL FOCUS The Sorcerer of Trois Frères

The Upper Paleolithic period, from 40,000 to 10,000 years ago, was a crucial era in human phylogenetic (species) development and a time of extraordinary changes in how people lived. Perhaps most importantly, it is the period when cultural differences between human groups first began. These cultural differences are evident in art, which appeared for the first time during the Upper Paleolithic. Some of the most extraordinary art of the period is found in caves in southern Europe, and is believed to have been created about 20,000 years ago. Of these caves one of the most extraordinary of all is the cave of Trois Frères (Three Brothers) in Ariège, France (Campbell, 1987).

The cave is at the heart of a labyrinth over a mile long and descending more than a half mile beneath the ground. Imagine the experience of descending into this labyrinth, where all light and sound is soon extinguished except for the light you bring to illuminate your way. Up and down the labyrinth goes, then down again, damp and slimy, sometimes expanding into large halls, other times so narrow and low you have to lie down and wriggle forward on your stomach.

At last, creeping through yet another narrow passageway, you suddenly emerge into a gigantic cave. You hold up your light to reveal an amazing sight: One wall and the entire ceiling are covered from top to bottom with engravings, carved with tools of stone. Nearly all the drawings are of animals that lived tens of thousands

of years ago in the region—mammoths, rhinoceroses, bison, wild horses, bears, reindeer, wolverines, and musk oxen; and smaller animals such as owls, rabbits, and fish. They are drawn with great skill and look vivid. Spears and arrows fly all around them, and many of the animals have been pierced; some have blood spouting from their mouths.



The sorcerer of Trois Frères.

might think. It resembles costumed men that anthropologists have observed in recent times among hunter-gatherer cultures. These shamans, religious leaders believed to have special powers and special knowledge of the spirit world, are common in traditional cultures today (Campbell, 1987). The shaman of the caves, known now as "The Sorcerer of Trois Frères," may have been the shaman

Nearly all of these creatures we can recognize as real animals. However, there is one figure about 15 feet above the floor that is different from all the others. It is part man and part beast, or rather part beasts—ears and antlers like a reindeer; round owl-like eyes; a long beard like a man's; arms ending in bearlike claws; a horselike chest; a bushy tail like a wolf's or horse's; a penis that might be human or perhaps of a horse or lion; and finally strong, muscular—but definitely human—legs. The figure is about 2½ feet high and 15 inches across, larger than any of the animals in the cave. It is the only figure in the cave that is painted (with black paint) as well as engraved.

Who or what is this extraordinary figure? This question is actually not as mysterious or difficult to answer as you

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

himself, or may have been the kind of human/animal image that shamans today sometimes report envisioning in the midst of a hallucinogenic trance (Leakey, 1994).

Why is the shaman depicted among the hunted animals? This question is more controversial. According to one theory, the cave was a place where, for thousands of years, hunting magic was practiced. The people of the Upper Paleolithic depended on hunting for their survival. Over the months and years, sometimes the animals were abundant and the hunting would be successful; sometimes the animals were scarce and the hunting would fail, leaving the people in a state of deprivation and even starvation. The cave art was an attempt, perhaps led by the shaman, to control the uncontrollable and ensure hunting success.

Opponents of this theory point out that many of the animals depicted in cave art, including Trois Frères, were not part of the diet of the people of the Upper Paleolithic (rhinos were probably never very tasty). An alternative theory proposes that the cave art served a religious function (Leakey, 1994). According to this view, the cave at Trois Frères may have been a place where

people gathered to worship the animals, perhaps led by the shaman. How and exactly what they worshiped we cannot say. Perhaps there were cultural differences, with cave art created for the purpose of hunting magic in some cultures and for worship purposes by people in other cultures, or for other purposes inaccessible to us now.

Nevertheless, at Trois Frères the images clearly depict hunting, and this in combination with the presence of the shaman seems to support the hunting-magic theory. This indicates that even in the Upper Paleolithic—long before humans began altering their physical environment through agriculture and later through civilization—there is evidence that some cultures attempted to control the environment through magical beliefs and rituals. The cave paintings at Trois Frères are art, certainly, but they are not simply art intended to beautify, like the decorations added to clothes during the same era. In addition to whatever aesthetic value they may have had, the paintings were intended to serve the practical purpose of enhancing hunting success.

Human Evolution and Human Development Today

Apply information about human evolution to how human development takes place today.

What does this history of our development as a species tell us about human development today? First, it is important to recognize that how we develop today is based partly on our evolutionary history. We still share many characteristics with our hominid relatives and ancestors, such as a large brain compared to our body size, a relatively long period of childhood dependence on adults before reaching maturity, and cooperative living in social groups. Researchers working in the field of **evolutionary psychology** claim that many other characteristics of human development are influenced by our evolutionary history, such as aggressiveness and mate selection (Crawford & Krebs, 2008). We will examine their claims in the course of the book.

A second important fact to note about our evolutionary history is that biologically we have changed little since the origin of *Homo sapiens* about 200,000 years ago, yet how we live has changed in astonishing ways (Ridley, 2010). Although we are a species that originated in the grasslands and forests of Africa, now we live in every environment on earth, from mountains to deserts, from tropical jungles to the Arctic. Although we are a species that evolved to live in small groups of a few dozen persons, now most of us live in cities with millions of other people. Although human females are capable of giving birth to at least eight children in the course of their reproductive lives, and probably did so through most of history, now most women have one, two or three children—or perhaps none at all.

It is remarkable that an animal like us, which evolved in Africa adapted through natural selection to a hunting-and-gathering way of life, could have developed just 200,000 years later an astonishing array of cultures, most of which bear little resemblance to our hunter-gatherer origins. Once we developed the large brain that is the most distinctive characteristic of our species, we became capable of altering our environments; so that it was no longer natural selection alone that would determine how we would live, but the cultures we created. As far as we can tell from the fossil record, all early hominids lived in the same way (Shreeve, 2010). Even different groups of early *Homo sapiens* seem to have lived more or less alike before the Upper Paleolithic period, as hunters and gatherers in small groups.

Today there are hundreds of different cultures around the world, all part of the human community but each with its distinctive way of life. There are wide cultural variations

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 5

APPLYING YOUR KNOWLEDGE ... as a Researcher

You are conducting a research study on the evolutionary bases of human development. One of your friends asks you, "Why is the topic of evolution important in developmental psychology? Isn't that biological theory?"

Watch the Video Evolution and Sex: Michael Bailey at MyDevelopmentLab

shaman religious leader believed to have special powers and special knowledge of the spirit world


evolutionary psychology branch of psychology that examines how patterns of human functioning and behavior have resulted from adaptations to evolutionary conditions


A Cultural Approach to Human Development

THINKING CULTURALLY

Is human evolution still occurring?
How do cultural practices alter the
process of natural selection?

in how we live, such as how we care for infants, what we expect from children, how we respond to the changes of puberty, and how we regard the elderly. As members of the species *Homo sapiens* we all share a similar biology, but cultures shape the raw material of biology into widely different paths through the life span.

It is also culture that makes us unique as a species. Other animals have evolved in ways that are adaptive for a particular set of environmental conditions. They can learn in the course of their lifetimes, certainly, but the scope of their learning is limited. When their environment changes, if their species is to survive it will do so not by learning new skills required by a new environment but through a process of natural selection that will enable those best-suited *genetically* to the new environmental conditions to survive long enough to reproduce, while the others do not. 

In contrast, once humans developed the large brain we have now, it enabled us to survive in any environment by inventing and learning new skills and methods of survival, and then passing them along to others as part of a cultural way of life. We can survive and thrive even in conditions that are vastly different from our environment of evolutionary adaptation, because our capacity for cultural learning is so large and, compared to other animals, there is relatively little about us that is fixed by instinct. 

 Read the Document Do Chimps Have Cultures? at MyDevelopmentLab

 Watch the Video Culture Wars: Evolution at MyDevelopmentLab

 Study and Review at MyDevelopmentLab

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What are some of the major differences between early hominids and the Homo species?
2. When was the Upper Paleolithic period and what were its main features?
3. How did climate change contribute to the advances of the Neolithic period?
4. What are the distinctive features of civilization? Which were the earliest civilizations and when did they begin?
5. How does the birth of culture make the human species different from other animals?

Section 1 VIDEO GUIDE Mechanisms of Evolution (Length: 3:30)

This video gives examples and descriptions of the evolutionary concepts of natural selection, genetic drift, and gene flow.



1. Describe an example of a chance event that could impact either the Green or Brown Beetle population.

2. Define gene flow and list an example of it either using the beetle population from the video or another type of insect or animal.

3. If a drought was causing the Brown Beetle population to grow due to natural selection, what should then occur if the weather balanced out again causing a more lush and less dry environment? Describe your answer in detail.

 Watch the Video Mechanisms of Evolution at MyDevelopmentLab

SECTION 2 THEORIES OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 6 Describe three ancient conceptions of development through the life span.
- 7 Compare and contrast the three traditional conceptions of life.
- 8 Summarize Freud's psychosexual theory of human development and describe its main limitations.
- 9 Describe the eight stages of Erikson's psychosocial theory of human development.
- 10 Define the five systems of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory and explain how it differs from stage theories.
- 11 Outline the stage model that will be the structure of this book and describe the new life stage of emerging adulthood.

Ancient Conceptions of Development

Although human development is young as an area of the social sciences, people have been thinking for a long time about how we change with age throughout life. In this section we examine three ancient ways of conceptualizing human development. As you read these conceptions, observe that all three were written by and for men only. The absence of women from these conceptions of human development reflects the fact that in most cultures throughout history, men have held most of the power and have often kept women excluded from areas such as religious leadership and philosophy that inspired life-stage conceptions.

Conceptions of Human Development in Three Traditions

Describe three ancient conceptions of development through the life span.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

6

Probably the oldest known conception of the life course is in the *Dharmashastras*, the sacred law books of the Hindu religion, first written about 3,000 years ago (Kakar, 1998; Rose, 2004). In this conception there are four stages of a man's life, each lasting about 25 years in an ideal life span of 100 years.

Apprentice, ages 0–25
Householder, ages 26–50
Forest dweller, ages 51–75
Renunciant, ages 75–100

The apprentice stage comprises childhood and adolescence. This is the stage in which a boy is dependent on his parents, as he grows up and learns the skills necessary for adult life. In the householder stage, the young man has married and is in charge of his own household. This is a time of many responsibilities, ranging from providing for a wife and family to taking care of elderly parents to engaging in productive work.

The third stage, forest dweller, begins when a man's first grandson is born. The religious ideal in this stage is for a man to withdraw from the world and literally live in the forest, devoting himself to prayer and religious study, and cultivating patience and

From Chapter 1 of *Human Development: A Cultural Approach*, First Edition. Jeffrey Jensen Arnett. Copyright © 2012 by Pearson Education, Inc. All rights reserved.

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

compassion. Few Hindus ever actually withdraw to the forest, but even those who remain within society are supposed to begin to withdraw from worldly attachments. This means an end to sexual life, a decline in work responsibilities, and the beginning of a transfer of household responsibilities to the sons of the family.

The final stage of life is that of renunciant. The renunciant goes even further than the forest dweller in rejecting worldly attachments. The purpose of life in this stage is simply to prepare for the end of this life and entry into the next (Hindus believe in reincarnation). Keep in mind, of course, that this stage *begins* at age 75, an age that few people reached thousands of years ago when the *Dharmashastras* were written and that even now marks the beginning of a rather short stage of life for most people who reach it.

Another conception of life stages was proposed by Solon, a philosopher in ancient Greece about 2,500 years ago (Levinson, 1978). For Solon, the life span fell into 10 seven-year segments lasting from birth to age 70.

Ages 0–7: A stage of being “unripe.”

Ages 7–14: Signs of approaching manhood “show in the bud.”

Ages 14–21: His limbs are growing, his chin is “touched with fleecy down,” and the bloom of his cheek is gone.

Ages 21–28: Now the young man “ripens to greatest completeness” physically, and “his worth becomes plain to see.”

Ages 28–35: The ages of marriage and parenthood, when “he bethinks him that this is the season for courting, bethinks him that sons will preserve and continue his line.”

Ages 35–42: A stage of maturity of mind and morals, when “his mind, ever open to virtue, broadens, and never inspires him to profitless deeds.”

Ages 42–56: Two 7-year segments combine in this stage, when “the tongue and mind for fourteen years are at their best.”

Ages 56–63: The first signs of decline, when “he is able, but never so nimble in speech and wit as he was in the days of his prime.”

Ages 63–70: The end of life. At this point the man “has come to the time to depart on the ebb tide of death.” (Levinson, 1976, p. 326)

A third ancient conception of the life course comes from the Jewish holy book the Talmud, written about 1,500 years ago (Levinson, 1978). Like the Hindu *Dharmashastras*, the life course described in the Talmud goes up to age 100, but in smaller segments.

Age 5 is the age for beginning to read Scripture.

Age 10 is for beginning to learn the religious laws of the Jewish people.

Age 13 is the age of moral responsibility, when a boy has his Bar Mitzvah signifying that he is responsible for keeping the religious commandments, rather than his parents being responsible for him.

Age 15 is for first being able to discuss the Talmud.

Age 18 is for the wedding canopy.

Age 20 is for seeking an occupation.

Age 30 is for attaining full strength.

Age 40 is for understanding.

Age 50 is for giving counsel.

Age 60 is for becoming an elder and attaining wisdom.

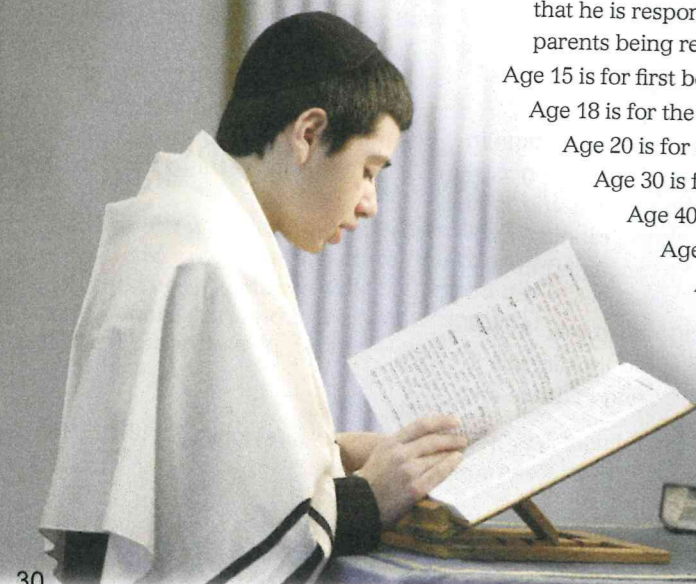
Age 70 is for white hair.

Age 80 is for reaching a new, special strength of old age.

Age 90 is for being bent under the weight of the years.

Age 100 is for being as if already dead and passed away from the world.

In the life course according to the Jewish holy book the Talmud, 13 is the age of moral responsibility.



A Cultural Approach to Human Development

Understanding Traditional Conceptions of Life

Compare and contrast the three traditional conceptions of life.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

7

Although the three conceptions of human development just presented were written in widely different places and times, they share certain similarities. All are ideal conceptions, a view of how we develop if all goes well: Preparation for life is made in youth, skills and expertise are gained in adulthood, and wisdom and peace are the fruits of old age. Furthermore, all view youth as a time of immaturity, adulthood as a time of great responsibilities and peak productivity, and the final stages of life as a preparation for death. These conceptions are also ideals in the sense that they assume that a person will live to old age, which is not something that most people could realistically expect until very recently.

One important difference among the three ancient conceptions of human development is that they have very different ways of dividing up the life span, from just 4 stages in the *Dharmashastras* to 14 in the Talmud. This is a useful reminder that for humans the life span is not really divided into clear and definite biologically based stages, the way an insect has stages of larva, juvenile, and adult. Instead, conceptions of human development are only partly biological—infants everywhere cannot walk or talk, adolescents everywhere experience puberty—and are also culturally and socially based.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. Why were women excluded from these three ancient conceptions of human development?
2. How do the three ancient conceptions view late adulthood?
3. In what ways are the three ancient conceptions ideals?

Study and Review at MyDevelopmentLab

Scientific Conceptions of Human Development

The scientific study of human development has been around for a relatively short time, only about 120 years. During that time there have been three major ways of conceptualizing human development: the psychosexual approach, the psychosocial approach, and the ecological approach.

Freud's Psychosexual Theory

Summarize Freud's psychosexual theory of human development and describe its main limitations.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

8

The earliest scientific theory of human development was devised by Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), who was a physician in Vienna, Austria, in the late 19th century (Breger, 2000). Working with persons suffering from various mental health problems, Freud concluded that a consistent theme across patients was that they seemed to have experienced some kind of traumatic event in childhood. The trauma then became buried in their unconscious minds, or *repressed*, and continued thereafter to shape their personality and their mental functioning even though they could no longer remember it.

In an effort to address their problems, Freud developed the first method of psychotherapy, which he called *psychoanalysis*. The purpose of psychoanalysis was to bring patients'

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

repressed memories from the unconscious into consciousness, through having them discuss their dreams and their childhood experiences while guided by the psychoanalyst. According to Freud, just making the repressed memories conscious would be enough to heal the patient.

Freud's experiences as a psychoanalyst were the basis of his **psychosexual theory**. He believed that sexual desire was the driving force behind human development. Sexual desire arises from a part of the mind Freud called the *id*, and operates on the basis of the *pleasure principle*, meaning that it constantly seeks immediate and unrestrained satisfaction. However, from early in childhood, adults in the environment teach the child to develop a conscience, or *superego*, that restricts the satisfaction of desires and makes the child feel guilty for disobeying. At the same time as the superego develops, an *ego* also develops that serves as a mediator between *id* and superego. The ego operates on the *reality principle*, allowing the child to seek satisfaction within the constraints imposed by the superego. *

Although sexual desire is the driving force behind human development throughout life in Freud's theory, the locus of the sexual drive shifts around the body during the course of early development (see **Table 1**). Infancy is the *oral stage*, when sexual sensations are concentrated in the mouth. Infants derive pleasure from sucking, chewing, and biting. The next stage, beginning at about a year and a half, is the *anal stage*, when sexual sensations are concentrated in the anus. Toddlers derive their greatest pleasure from the act of elimination and are fascinated by feces. The *phallic stage*, from about age 3 to 6, is the most important stage of all in Freud's theory. In this stage sexual sensations become located in the genitals, but the child's sexual desires are focused particularly on the other-sex parent. Freud proposed that all children experience an *Oedipus complex* in which they desire to displace their same-sex parent and enjoy sexual access to the other-sex parent, as Oedipus did in the famous Greek myth.

According to Freud, the Oedipus complex is resolved when the child, fearing that the same-sex parent will punish his or her incestuous desires, gives up those desires and instead identifies with the same-sex parent, seeking to become more similar to that parent. In Freud's theory this leads to the fourth stage of psychosexual development, the *latency stage*, lasting from about age 6 until puberty. During this period the child represses sexual desires and focuses the energy from those desires on learning social and intellectual skills.

The fifth and last stage in Freud's theory is the *genital stage*, from puberty onward. The sexual drive reemerges, but this time in a way approved by the superego, directed toward persons outside the family. *

For Freud, everything important in development happens before adulthood. In fact, Freud viewed the personality as completed by age 6, in the first three stages of development. In each of those stages, either too much or too little gratification of desire could result in a *fixation* that would shape future development. For example, a child who had been overly frustrated in the oral stage, such as being weaned too early, would develop an adult

TABLE 1 Freud's Psychosexual Stages

Age period	Psychosexual stage	Main features
Infancy	Oral	Sexual sensations centered on the mouth; pleasure derived from sucking, chewing, biting
Toddlerhood	Anal	Sexual sensations centered on the anus; high interest in feces; pleasure derived from elimination
Early childhood	Phallic	Sexual sensations move to genitals; sexual desire for other-sex parent and fear of same-sex parent
Middle childhood	Latency	Sexual desires repressed; focus on developing social and cognitive skills
Adolescence	Genital	Reemergence of sexual desire, now directed outside the family

✱ **Explore the Concept** The Id, Ego, and Superego at MyDevelopmentLab

✱ **Explore the Concept** Freud's Five Psychosexual Stages of Personality Development at MyDevelopmentLab

psychosexual theory Freud's theory proposing that sexual desire is the driving force behind human development

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

personality that might include smoking cigarettes, nibbling fingernails, and a tendency to make "biting" remarks. A child who had been toilet trained too early or too severely might have an adult personality obsessed with cleanliness, detail, and order. A child who had, in the phallic stage, received attention from the other-sex parent that was sexually stimulating might have difficulty in adulthood forming a normal sexual relationship. The only way to remove these fixations, according to Freud, was through psychoanalysis.

From our perspective today, it is easy to see plenty of gaping holes in psychosexual theory (Breger, 2000). Sexuality is certainly an important part of human development, but human behavior is complex and cannot be reduced to a single motive. (Freud himself later added aggression as a drive alongside sexuality.) Also, although his theory emphasizes the crucial importance of the first 6 years of life, Freud never studied children. His view of childhood was based on the retrospective accounts of patients who came to him for psychoanalysis, mainly upper-class women in Vienna. (Yet, ironically, his psychosexual theory emphasized boys' development and virtually ignored girls.) Nevertheless, Freud's psychosexual theory was the dominant view of human development throughout the first half of the 20th century (Robins et al., 1999). Today, few people who study human development adhere to Freud's psychosexual theory, even among psychoanalysts (Grunbaum, 2006).

Erikson's Psychosocial Theory

Describe the eight stages of Erikson's psychosocial theory of human development.

Even though Freud's theory was dominant in psychology for over a half century, from the beginning many people objected to what they regarded as an excessive emphasis on the sexual drive as the basis for all development. Among the skeptics was Erik Erikson (1902–1994). Although he was trained as a psychoanalyst in Freud's circle in Vienna, he doubted the validity of Freud's psychosexual theory. Instead, Erikson proposed a theory of development with two crucial differences from Freud's theory. First, it was a **psychosocial theory**, in which the driving force behind development was not sexuality but the need to become integrated into the social and cultural environment. Second, Erikson viewed development as continuing throughout the life span, not as determined solely by the early years as in Freud's theory.

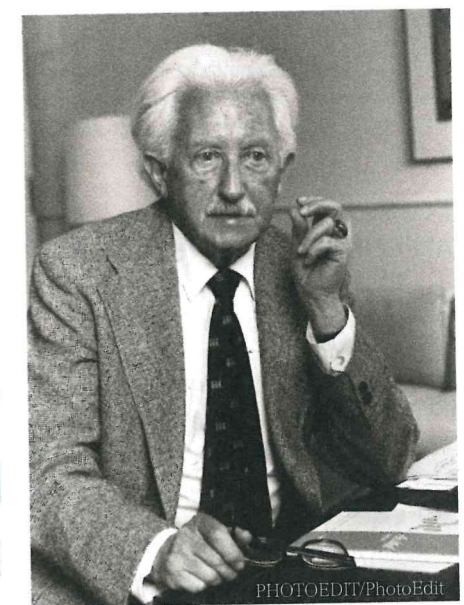
Erikson (1950) proposed a sequence of eight stages of development (see **Table 2**). Each stage is characterized by a distinctive developmental challenge or "crisis" that the person must resolve. A successful resolution of the crisis prepares the person well for the next stage of development. However, a person who has difficulty with the crisis in one

TABLE 2 Erikson's Eight Stages of Psychosocial Development

Age period	Psychosocial stage	Main developmental challenge
Infancy	Trust vs. mistrust	Establish bond with trusted caregiver
Toddlerhood	Autonomy vs. shame and doubt	Develop a healthy sense of self as distinct from others
Early childhood	Initiative vs. guilt	Initiate activities in a purposeful way
Middle childhood	Industry vs. inferiority	Begin to learn knowledge and skills of culture
Adolescence	Identity vs. identity confusion	Develop a secure and coherent identity
Early adulthood	Intimacy vs. isolation	Establish a committed, long-term love relationship
Middle adulthood	Generativity vs. stagnation	Care for others and contribute to well-being of the young
Late adulthood	Ego integrity vs. despair	Evaluate lifetime, accept it as it is

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

9



Erik Erikson was the first to propose a life span theory of human development.

psychosocial theory Erikson's theory that human development is driven by the need to become integrated into the social and cultural environment

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

Simulate the Experiment Closer Look Simulation: Development at MyDevelopmentLab

APPLYING YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Based on your own experiences, which theory of human development do you consider more valid, Erikson's or Freud's?

Explore the Concept Erikson's First Four Stages of Psychosocial Development at MyDevelopmentLab

stage enters the next stage at high risk for being unsuccessful at that crisis as well. The stages build on each other, for better and for worse.

In the first stage of life, during infancy, the developmental challenge is *trust versus mistrust*. If the infant is loved and cared for, a sense of basic trust develops that the world is a good place and need not be feared. If not well-loved in infancy, the child learns to mistrust others and to doubt that life will be rewarding.

In the second stage, during toddlerhood, the developmental challenge is *autonomy versus shame and doubt*. During this stage the child develops a sense of self distinct from others. If the child is allowed some scope for making choices, a healthy sense of autonomy develops, but if there is excessive restraint or punishment, the child experiences shame and doubt.

In the third stage, during early childhood, the developmental challenge is *initiative versus guilt*. In this stage the child becomes capable of planning activities in a purposeful way. With encouragement of this new ability a sense of initiative develops, but if the child is discouraged and treated harshly then guilt is experienced.

The fourth stage, during middle to late childhood, is *industry versus inferiority*. In this stage children move out more into the world and begin to learn the knowledge and skills required by their culture. If a child is encouraged and taught well, a sense of industry develops that includes enthusiasm for learning and confidence in mastering the skills required. However, a child who is unsuccessful at learning what is demanded is likely to experience inferiority.

The fifth stage is adolescence, with the challenge of *identity versus identity confusion*. Adolescents must develop an awareness of who they are, what their capacities are, and what their place is within their culture. For those who are unable to achieve this, identity confusion results.

The sixth stage, *intimacy versus isolation*, takes place in early adulthood. In this stage, the challenge for young adults is to risk their newly formed identity by entering a committed intimate relationship, usually marriage. Those who are unable or unwilling to make themselves vulnerable end up isolated, without an intimate relationship.

The seventh stage, in middle adulthood, involves the challenge of *generativity versus stagnation*. The generative person in middle adulthood is focused on how to contribute to the well-being of the next generation, through providing for and caring for others. Persons who focus instead on their own needs at midlife end up in a state of stagnation.

Finally, in the eighth stage, late adulthood, the challenge is *ego integrity versus despair*. This is a stage of looking back and reflecting on how one's life has been experienced. The person who accepts what life has provided, good and bad parts alike, and concludes that it was a life well spent can be considered to have ego integrity. In contrast, the person who is filled with regrets and resentments at this stage of life experiences despair.

Erikson's psychosocial theory has endured better than Freud's psychosexual theory. Today, nearly all researchers who study human development would agree that development is lifelong, with important changes taking place at every phase of the life span (Baltes, 2006; Lerner, 2006). Similarly, nearly all researchers on human development today would agree with Erikson's emphasis on the social and cultural basis of development. However, not all of Erikson's proposed life stages have been accepted as valid or valuable. It is mainly his ideas about identity in adolescence and generativity in midlife that have inspired substantial interest and attention among researchers (Clark, 2010).

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory

Define the five systems of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory and explain how it differs from stage theories.

An important recent theory of human development is Urie Bronfenbrenner's **ecological theory** (Bronfenbrenner, 1980; 1998; 2000; 2005). Unlike the theories proposed by Freud and Erikson, Bronfenbrenner's is not a stage theory of human development. Instead, his

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

theory focuses on the multiple influences that shape human development in the social environment.

Bronfenbrenner presented his theory as a reaction to what he viewed as an overemphasis in developmental psychology on the immediate environment, especially the mother-child relationship. The immediate environment is important, Bronfenbrenner acknowledged, but much more than this is involved in children's development. Bronfenbrenner's theory was intended to draw attention to the broader cultural environment that people experience as they develop, and to the ways the different levels of a person's environment interact. In later writings (Bronfenbrenner, 2000, 2005; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998), Bronfenbrenner added a biological dimension to his framework and it is now sometimes called a *bioecological theory*, but the distinctive contribution of the theory remains its portrayal of the cultural environment.

According to Bronfenbrenner, there are five key levels or systems that play a part in human development (see Figure 4):

1. The *microsystem* is Bronfenbrenner's term for the immediate environment, the settings where people experience their daily lives. Microsystems in most cultures include relationships with each parent, with siblings, and perhaps with extended family; with peers and friends; with teachers; and with other adults (such as coaches, religious leaders, and employers). Bronfenbrenner emphasizes that the child is an *active agent* in the microsystems. For example, children are affected by their parents but children's behavior affects their parents as well; children are affected by their friends but they also make choices about whom to have as friends. The microsystem is where most research in developmental psychology has focused. Today, however, most developmental psychologists use the term *context* rather than *microsystem* to refer to immediate environmental settings and relationships.
2. The *mesosystem* is the network of interconnections between the various microsystems. For example, a child who is experiencing abusive treatment from parents may become difficult to handle in relationships with teachers; or, if a parent's employer demands longer hours in the workplace the parent's relationship with the child may be affected.
3. The *exosystem* refers to the societal institutions that have indirect but potentially important influences on development. In Bronfenbrenner's theory, these institutions include schools, religious institutions, and media. For example, in Asian countries such as South Korea, competition to get into college is intense and depends chiefly on adolescents' performance on a national exam at the end of high school; consequently, the high school years are a period of extreme academic stress.
4. The *macrosystem* is the broad system of cultural beliefs and values, and the economic and governmental systems that are built on those beliefs and values. For example, in countries such as Iran and Saudi Arabia, cultural beliefs and values are based in the religion of Islam, and the economic and governmental systems of those countries are also based on the teachings of Islam. In contrast, in most developed countries, beliefs in the value of individual freedom are reflected in a capitalist economic system and in governmental systems of representative democracy.
5. Finally, the *chronosystem* refers to changes that occur in developmental circumstances over time, both with respect to individual development and to historical changes. For example,

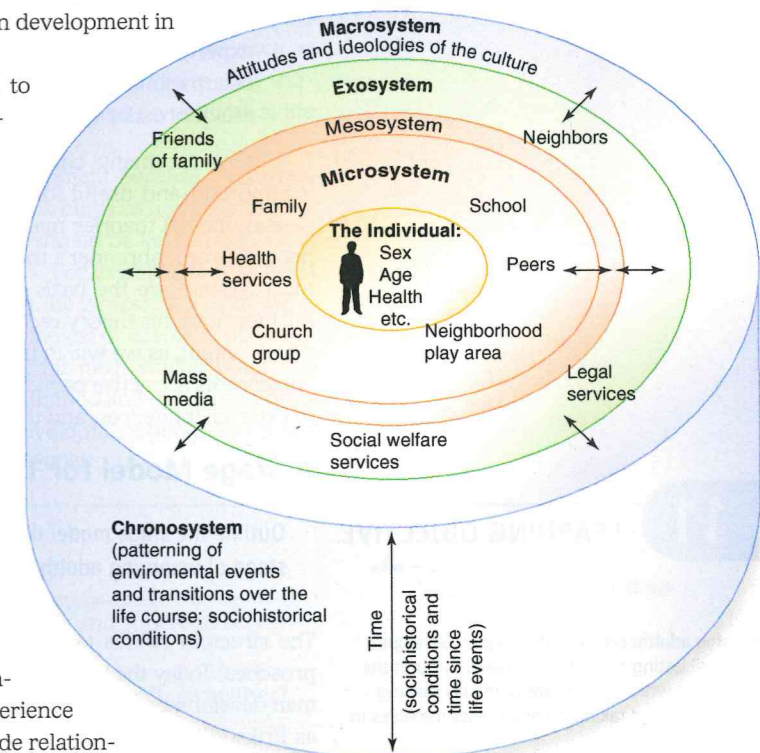


Figure 4 • The Systems in Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory How does this theory of human development differ from Freud's and Erikson's?

In countries such as Iran, the macrosystem is based on Islam, which influences all aspects of life.

Vladimir Melnik/Shutterstock

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

with respect to individual development, losing your job is a much different experience at 15 than it would be at 45; with respect to historical changes, the occupational opportunities open to young women in many countries today are much broader than they were for young women half a century ago.

There are many characteristics of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory that make it important and useful for the cultural approach that will be taken in this book. Many developmental theories make no mention of culture, but culture is an important component of Bronfenbrenner's theory. He recognizes that the cultural beliefs and values of the macrosystem are the basis for many of the other conditions of children's development. Furthermore, his theory recognizes the importance of historical contexts as influences on development, as we will in this book. Also, Bronfenbrenner emphasized that children and adolescents are active participants in their development, not merely the passive recipients of external influences, and that will be stressed throughout this book as well.

A Stage Model for This Book

11

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Outline the stage model that will be the structure of this book and describe the new life stage of emerging adulthood.

emerging adulthood new life stage in developed countries, lasting from the late teens through the twenties, in which people are gradually making their way toward taking on adult responsibilities in love and work

The structure of this textbook combines elements of Erikson's and Bronfenbrenner's approaches. Today there is a widespread consensus among researchers and theorists that human development is lifelong and that important changes take place throughout the life span, as Erikson proposed (Baltes, 2006). There is also a consensus in favor of Bronfenbrenner's view that it is not just the immediate family environment that is important in human development but multiple contexts interacting in multiple ways (Lerner, 2006).

In this book, the stages of human development will be divided as follows:

- Prenatal development, from conception until birth
- Infancy, birth to age 12 months
- Toddlerhood, the 2nd and 3rd years of life, ages 12–36 months
- Early childhood, ages 3–6
- Middle childhood, ages 6–9
- Adolescence
- Emerging adulthood
- Young adulthood
- Middle adulthood
- Late adulthood

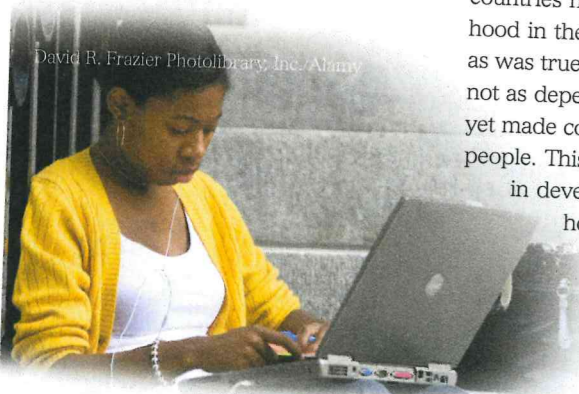
You are probably familiar with all these stage terms, with the possible exception of *emerging adulthood*. **Emerging adulthood** is a new stage of life between adolescence and young adulthood that has appeared in recent decades, primarily in developed countries (Arnett, 2000, 2004, 2011). The rise of this new life stage reflects the fact that most people in developed countries now continue their education into their twenties and enter marriage and parenthood in their late twenties or early thirties, rather than in their late teens or early twenties as was true half a century ago. Emerging adulthood is a life stage in which most people are not as dependent on their parents as they were in childhood and adolescence but have not yet made commitments to the stable roles in love and work that structure adult life for most people. This new life stage exists mainly in developed countries, because for most people in developing countries, education still ends in adolescence and marriage and parenthood begin in the late teens or early twenties (Arnett, 2011). However, emerging adulthood is becoming steadily more common in developing countries (Jensen, Arnett, & McKenzie, 2011).

Age ranges can be specified for the early stages, but the age ranges of later stages are more ambiguous and variable. Adolescence begins with the first evidence of puberty, but puberty may begin as early as age 9 or

APPLYING YOUR KNOWLEDGE ... as a Policy Maker

Your state has a proposal to extend health-care coverage for children of government workers from age 18 up to age 25, if the child is still in school. What have you learned in this chapter that would support such a proposal?

People in developed countries often continue their education into their twenties.



David R. Frazier Photolibrary, Inc./Alamy

A Cultural Approach to Human Development

10 or as late as age 15 or 16, depending on cultural conditions. Emerging adulthood exists in some cultures and not others, and consequently, young-adult responsibilities such as marriage and stable work may be taken on as early as the teens or as late as the early thirties. Middle adulthood and late adulthood are also variable and depend on the typical life expectancy in a particular culture.

Stages are a useful way of conceptualizing human development because they draw our attention to the distinctive features of each age period, which helps us understand how people change over time (Arnett & Tanner, 2009). However, it should be kept in mind that for the most part, there are no sharp breaks between the stages. For example, toddlerhood is different from early childhood in many important ways, but the typical 34-month-old is not sharply different than the typical 37-month-old; nothing magical or dramatic occurs at 36 months to mark the end of one stage and the beginning of the next. Similarly, nothing definite happens at a specific age to mark the end of young adulthood and the beginning of middle adulthood. To put it another way, scholars of human development generally regard development as *continuous* rather than *discontinuous* (Baltes, 2006).

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. According to Freud's theory, what functions do the id, ego, and superego serve?
2. How is Erikson's theory similar to and different from Freud's?
3. Is Bronfenbrenner's theory more compatible with Freud's, Erikson's, or neither?
4. What role does culture play in Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory?
5. What are the strengths and limitations of stage theories?

Study and Review
at MyDevelopmentLab

Section 2 VIDEO GUIDE Erik Erikson (Length: 1:56)

In this video the psychologist Erik Erikson is interviewed on his psychosocial theory of human development, including the stage of intimacy vs. isolation.



1. Describe the types of relationships that Erikson connects to the stage of intimacy vs. isolation.
2. Discuss Erikson's views on how the stage of intimacy vs. isolation relates to marriage.
3. Erikson discusses his thoughts on why some marriages among younger or less mature individuals might not be successful. Do you agree or disagree with these thoughts? Why?



Watch the Video Erik Erikson at MyDevelopmentLab