1 Introduction

CHAPTER

In the dim dawn light of a simple reed house in Tehuantepec, Mexico, 16-year-old Conchita leans over an open, barrel-shaped oven. Although it is just dawn, she has already been working for 2 hours making tortillas. It is difficult work, kneeling beside the hot oven, and hazardous, too; she has several scars on her arm from the times she has inadvertently touched the hot steel. She thinks with some resentment of her younger brother, who is still sleeping and who will soon be rising and going off to school. Like most girls in her village, Conchita can neither read nor write because it is only the boys who go to school.

But she finds consolation in looking ahead to the afternoon, when she will be allowed to go to the center of town to sell the tortillas she has made beyond those that her family will need that day. There she will see her girlfriends, who will be selling tortillas and other things for their families. And there she hopes to see the boy who spoke to her, just a few words, in the town square two Sunday evenings ago. The following Sunday evening she saw him waiting in the street across from her home, a sure sign that he is courting her. But her parents would not allow her out, so she hopes to get a glimpse of him in town (based on Chinas 1991).

In a suburban home in Highland Park, Illinois, USA, 14-year-old Jodie is standing before the mirror in her bedroom with a dismayed look, trying to decide whether to change her clothes again before she goes to school. She has already changed once, from the blue sweater and white skirt to the yellow-and-white blouse and blue jeans, but now she is having second thoughts. "I look awful," she thinks to herself. "I'm getting so fat!" For the past 3 years her body has been changing rapidly, and now she is alarmed to find it becoming rounder and larger seemingly with each day. Vaguely she hears her mother calling her from downstairs, probably urging her to hurry up and leave for school, but the stereo in her room is playing a Pink CD so loud it drowns out what her mother is saying. "I'm not here for your entertainment," Pink sings. "You don't really wanna mess with me tonight."

In Amakiri, Nigeria, 18-year-old Omiebi is walking to school. He is walking quickly, because the time for school to begin is near, and he does not want to be one of the students who arrive after morning assembly has started and are grouped together and made to kneel throughout the assembly. Up ahead he sees several of his fellow students, easily identifiable by the gray uniforms they are all required to wear, and he breaks into a trot to join them. They greet him, and together they continue walking. They joke nervously about the exam coming up for the West African School Certificate. Performance on that exam will determine who is allowed to go on to university.

Omiebi is feeling a great deal of pressure to do well on the exam. He is the oldest child of his family, and his parents have high expectations that he will go to university and become a lawyer, then help his three younger brothers go to university or find good jobs in Lagos, the nearest big city. Omiebi is not really sure he wants to be a lawyer, and he would find it difficult to leave the girl he has recently begun seeing. However, he likes the idea of moving away from tiny Amakiri to the university in Lagos, where, he has heard, all the homes have electricity and all the latest American movies are showing in the theaters. He and his friends break into a run over the last stretch, barely making it to school and joining their classes before the assembly starts (based on Hallos & Leis, 1989).

1

THREE ADOLESCENTS, IN THREE DIFFERENT CULTURES, with three very different lives. Yet all are adolescents: All have left childhood but have not yet reached adulthood; all are developing into physical and sexual maturity and learning the skills that will enable them to take part in the adult world.

Although all of them are adolescents, what makes these three adolescents so different is that they are growing up in three distinct cultures. Throughout this book we will take a cultural approach to understanding development in adolescence by examining the ways that cultures differ in what they allow adolescents to do and what they require them to do, the different things that cultures teach adolescents to believe, and the different patterns that cultures provide for adolescents' daily lives. Adolescence is a cultural construction, not simply a biological phenomenon. Puberty—the set of biological changes involved in reaching physical and sexual maturity—is universal, and the same biological changes take place in puberty for young people everywhere, although with differences in timing and in cultural meanings. But adolescence is more than the events and processes of puberty. **Adolescence** is a period of the life course between the time puberty begins and the time adult status is approached, when young people are preparing to take on the roles and responsibilities of adulthood in their culture. To say that adolescence is culturally constructed means that cultures vary in how they define adult status and in the content of the adult roles and responsibilities adolescents are learning to fulfill. Almost all cultures have some kind of adolescence, but the length and content and daily experiences of adolescence vary greatly among cultures (Larson, Wilson, & Rickman, 2010; Schlegel & Barry, 1991).

In this chapter, we will lay a foundation for understanding the cultural basis of adolescence by beginning with a look at how adolescence has changed throughout the history of Western cultures. Historical change is also cultural change; for example, the United States of the early 21st century is different culturally from the United States of 1900 or 1800. Seeing how adolescence changes as a culture changes will emphasize the cultural basis of adolescence.

Another way this chapter will lay the foundation for the rest of the book is by introducing the concept of emerging adulthood. This textbook covers not only adolescence

(roughly ages 10 to 18) but emerging adulthood (roughly ages 18 to 25). Emerging adulthood is a new idea, a new way of thinking about this age period. In this chapter I describe what it means. Each chapter that follows will contain information about emerging adulthood as well as adolescence.

This chapter also sets the stage for what follows by discussing the scientific study of adolescence and emerging adulthood. I will present some of the basic features of the scientific method as it is applied in research on these age periods. It is important to understand adolescence and emerging adulthood not just as periods of the life course but as areas of scientific inquiry, with certain standard methods and certain conventions for determining what is valid and what is not.

Finally, this chapter will provide the foundation for the chapters to come by previewing the major themes and the framework of the book. This will introduce you to themes that will be repeated often in subsequent chapters, and will let you know where we are headed through the course of the book. Special attention will be given to the cultural approach that is central to this book, by presenting an overview of adolescence in various regions of the world.

Adolescence in Western Cultures: A Brief History

Seeing how people in other times have viewed adolescence provides a useful perspective for understanding how adolescence is viewed in our own time. In this brief historical survey, we begin with ancient times 2,500 years ago and proceed through the early 20th century.

Adolescence in Ancient Times

Ideas about adolescence as a stage of the life course go back a long way in the history of Western cultures. In ancient Greece (4th and 5th centuries B.C.), the source of so many ideas that influenced Western history, both Plato and Aristotle viewed adolescence as the third distinct stage of life, after infancy (birth to age 7) and childhood (ages 7 to 14). In their framework, adolescence extended from age 14 to 21. Both of them viewed adolescence as the stage of life in which the capacity for reason first developed. Writing (in 4 B.C.) in *The Republic*, Plato argued that serious education should begin only at adolescence. Before age 7, according to Plato, there is no point in beginning education because the infant's mind is too undeveloped to learn much, and during childhood (ages 7 to 14) education should focus on sports and music, which children can grasp. Education in science and math should be delayed until adolescence, when the mind is finally ready to apply reason in learning these subjects.

adolescence A period of the life course between the time puberty begins and the time adult status is approached, when young people are in the process of preparing to take on the roles and responsibilities of adulthood in their culture.

life-cycle service A period in their late teens and 20s in which young people from the 16th to the 19th century engaged in domestic service, farm service, or apprenticeships in various trades and crafts.

During the Children's Crusade, European adolescents attempted to travel to Jerusalem, with disastrous results.

The Children crossing the Alps

Aristotle, who was a student of Plato's during his own adolescence, had a view of adolescence that was in some ways similar to Plato's. Aristotle viewed children as similar to animals, in that both are ruled by the impulsive pursuit of pleasure. It is only in adolescence that we become capable of exercising reason and making rational choices. However, Aristotle argued that it takes the entire course of adolescence for reason to become fully established. At the beginning of adolescence, in his view, the impulses remain in charge and even become more problematic now that sexual desires have developed. It is only toward the end of adolescence—about age 21, according to Aristotle—that reason establishes firm control over the impulses.

THINKING CRITICALLY ●●●

Plato and Aristotle argued that young people are not capable of reason until at least age 14. Give an example of how the question of when young people are capable of reason is still an issue in our time.

Adolescence From Early Christian Times Through the Middle Ages

A similar focus on the struggle between reason and passion in adolescence can be found in early Christianity. One of the most famous and influential books of early Christianity was Saint Augustine's autobiographical *Confessions*, which he wrote in about A.D. 400. In his *Confessions*, Augustine described his life from early childhood until his conversion to Christianity at age 33. A considerable portion of the autobiography focused on his teens and early 20s, when he was a reckless young man living an impulsive, pleasure-seeking life. He drank large quantities of alcohol, spent money extravagantly, had sex with many young women, and fathered a child outside of marriage. In the autobiography, he repents his reckless youth and argues that conversion to Christianity is the key not

only to eternal salvation but to the establishment of the rule of reason over passion here on earth, within the individual.

Over the following millennium, from Augustine's time through the Middle Ages, the historical record on adolescence is sparse, as it is on most topics. However, one well-documented event that sheds some light on the history of adolescence is the "Children's Crusade," which took place in 1212. Despite its name, it was composed mostly of young people in their teens, including many university students (Sommerville, 1982). In those days, university students were younger than today, usually entering between ages 13 and 15.

The young crusaders set out from Germany for the Mediterranean coast, believing that when they arrived there the waters would part for them as the Red Sea had for Moses. They would then walk over to the Holy Land (Jerusalem and the areas where Jesus had lived), where they would appeal to the Muslims to allow Christian pilgrims to visit the holy sites. Adults, attempting to take the Holy Land by military force, had already conducted several Crusades. The Children's Crusade was an attempt to appeal to the Muslims in peace, inspired by the belief that Jesus had decreed that the Holy Land could be gained only through the innocence of youth.

Unfortunately, the "innocence" of the young people—their lack of knowledge and experience—made them a ripe target for the unscrupulous. Many of them were robbed, raped, or kidnapped along the way. When the remainder arrived at the Mediterranean Sea, the sea did not open after all, and the shipowners who promised to take them across instead sold them to the Muslims as slaves. The Children's Crusade was a total disaster, but the fact that it was undertaken at all suggests that many people of that era viewed adolescence as a time of innocence and saw that innocence as possessing a special value and power.

Adolescence From 1500 to 1890

Beginning in about 1500, young people in some European societies typically took part in what historians term **life-cycle service**, a period in their late teens and 20s in which young people would engage in domestic service, farm service, or apprenticeships in various trades and crafts (Ben-Amos, 1994). Life-cycle service involved moving out of the family

household and into the household of a "master" to whom the young person was in service for a period lasting (typically) 7 years. Young women were somewhat less likely than young men to engage in life-cycle service, but even among women a majority left home during adolescence, most often to take part in life-cycle service as a servant in a family. Life-cycle service also was common in the United States in the early colonial period in New England (beginning in the 17th century), but in colonial New England such service usually took place in the home of a relative or family friend (Rotundo, 1993).

In the young United States, the nature of adolescence soon began to change. Life-cycle service faded during the 18th and 19th centuries. As the American population grew and the national economy became less based in farming and more industrialized, young people increasingly left their small towns in their late teens for the growing cities. In the cities, without ties to a family or community, young people soon became regarded as a social problem in many respects. Rates of crime, premarital sex, and alcohol use among young people all increased in the late 18th and early 19th centuries (Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985). In response, new institutions of social control developed—religious associations, literary

During the 19th century, adolescents often worked under difficult and unhealthy conditions, such as in this coal mine/factory. Why did laws in early 20th century begin to exclude them from adult work?

Life-cycle service was common in Western countries from about 1500 to about 1800. This woodcut shows a printer's apprentice.

youth Prior to the late 19th century, the term used to refer to persons in their teens and early twenties.

societies, YMCAs, and YWCAs—where young people were monitored by adults (Kett, 1977). This approach worked remarkably well: In the second half of the 19th century, rates of crime, premarital pregnancies, alcohol use, and other problems among young people all dropped sharply (Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985).

The Age of Adolescence, 1890–1920

Although I have been using the term *adolescence* in this brief history for the sake of clarity and consistency, it was only toward the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century that *adolescence* became a widely used term (Kett, 1977). Before this time, young people in their teens and early 20s were more often referred to as **youth** or simply as young men and young women (Modell & Goodman, 1990). However, toward the end of the 19th century important changes took place in this age period in Western countries that made a change of terms appropriate.

In the United States and other Western countries, the years 1890–1920 were crucial in establishing the characteristics of modern adolescence. Key changes during these years included the enactment of laws restricting child labor, new requirements for children to attend secondary school, and the development of the field of adolescence as an area of scholarly study. For these reasons, historians call the years 1890–1920 the "Age of Adolescence" (Tyack, 1990).

Toward the end of the 19th century, the industrial revolution was proceeding at full throttle in the United States and other Western countries. There was a tremendous demand for labor to staff the mines, shops, and factories. Adolescents and even preadolescent children were especially in demand, because they could be hired cheaply. The 1900 U.S. census reported that three quarters of a million children aged 10 to 13 were employed in factories, mines, and other industrial work settings. Few states had laws restricting the ages of children in the workplace, even for work such as coal mining

(Tyack, 1990). Nor did many states restrict the number of hours children or adults could work, so children often worked 12-hour days for as little as 35¢ a day.

As more and more young people entered the workplace, however, concern for them also increased among urban reformers, youth workers, and educators. In the view of these adults the young people were being exploited and harmed (physically and morally) by their involvement in adult work. These activists successfully fought for legislation that prohibited companies from hiring preteen children and severely limited the number of hours that could be worked by young people in their early teens (Kett, 1977).
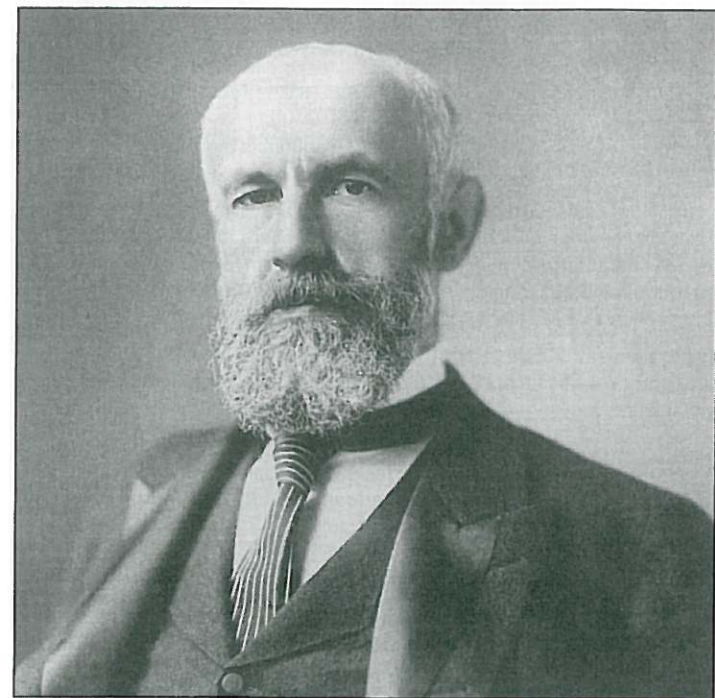
Along with laws restricting child labor came laws requiring a longer period of schooling. Up until the late 19th century, many states did not have any laws requiring children to attend school, and those that did required attendance only through primary school (Tyack, 1990). However, between 1890 and 1920 states began to pass laws requiring attendance

not only in primary school but in secondary school as well. As a consequence, the proportion of adolescents in school increased dramatically; in 1890, only 5% of young people age 14 to 17 were in school, but by 1920 this figure had risen to 30% (Arnett & Taber, 1994). This change contributed to making this time the Age of Adolescence, because it marked a more distinct separation between adolescence as a period of continued schooling and adulthood as a period that begins after schooling is finished.

The third major contributor to making the years 1890–1920 the Age of Adolescence was the work of G. Stanley Hall

TABLE 1.1   Key Terms to Know

Here are some terms used throughout the book that you should be sure to know.

Term	Definition
Culture.	*Culture* is the total pattern of a group's customs, beliefs, art, and technology. Thus, a culture is a group's common way of life, passed on from one generation to the next.
The West.	The United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand make up the West. They are all industrialized countries, they are all representative democracies with similar kinds of governments, and they share to some extent a common cultural history. In the present, they are all characterized by secularism, consumerism, and capitalism, to one degree or another. *The West* usually refers to the majority culture in each of the countries, but each country also has cultural groups that do not share the characteristics of the majority culture and may even be in opposition to it.
Industrialized countries.	The term *industrialized countries* includes the countries of the West along with Eastern countries such as Japan and South Korea. All of them have highly developed economies that have passed through a period of industrialization and are now based mainly on services (such as law, banking, sales, and accounting) and information (such as computer-related companies).
Majority culture.	The majority culture in any given society is the culture that sets most of the norms and standards and holds most of the positions of political, economic, intellectual, and media power. The term *American majority culture* will be used often in this book to refer to the mostly White middle-class majority in American society.
Society.	A *society* is a group of people who interact in the course of sharing a common geographical area. A single society may include a variety of cultures with different customs, religions, family traditions, and economic practices. Thus, a society is different from a culture: Members of a culture share a common way of life, whereas members of a society may not. For example, American society includes a variety of different cultures, such as the American majority culture, African American culture, Latino culture, and Asian American culture. They share certain characteristics by virtue of being Americans—for example, they are all subject to the same laws, and they go to similar schools—but there are differences among them that make them culturally distinct.
Traditional cultures.	The term *traditional culture* refers to a culture that has maintained a way of life based on stable traditions passed from one generation to the next. These cultures do not generally value change but rather place a higher value on remaining true to cultural traditions. Often traditional cultures are "preindustrial," which means that the technology and economic practices typical in industrialized countries are not widely used. However, this is not always true; Japan, for example, is still in many ways traditional, even though it is also one of the most highly industrialized countries in the world. When we use the term *traditional cultures*, naturally this does not imply that all such cultures are alike. They differ in a variety of ways, but they have in common that they are firmly grounded in a relatively stable cultural tradition, and for that reason they provide a distinct contrast to the cultures of the West.
Developing countries.	Most previously traditional, preindustrial cultures are becoming industrialized today as a consequence of globalization. The term *developing countries* is used to refer to countries where this process is taking place. Examples include most of the countries of Africa and South America, as well as Asian countries such as Thailand and Vietnam.
Socioeconomic status.	The term *socioeconomic status (SES)* is often used to refer to social class, which includes educational level, income level, and occupational status. For adolescents and emerging adults, 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.
Young people.	In this book the term *young people* is used as shorthand to refer to adolescents and emerging adults together.

G. Stanley Hall, the founder of the scholarly study of adolescence.

2006). To a large extent, he based his ideas on the now-discredited theory of **recapitulation**, which held that the development of each individual recapitulates or reenacts the evolutionary development of the human species as a whole. He believed the stage of adolescence reflected a stage in the human evolutionary past when there was a great deal of upheaval and disorder, with the result that adolescents experience a great deal of **storm and stress** as a standard part of their development. (For more on the "storm and stress" debate, see the Historical Focus box on pages 10–11.) No reputable scholar today adheres to the theory of recapitulation. Nevertheless, Hall did a great deal to focus attention and concern on adolescents, not only among scholars but among the public at large. Thus, he was perhaps the most important figure in making the years 1890–1920 the Age of Adolescence.

This brief history of adolescence provides only a taste of what adolescence has been like in various eras of history. However, because the history of adolescence is one of the themes of this book, historical information will appear in every chapter.

and the beginning of the study of adolescence as a distinct field of scholarship (Modell & Goodman, 1990). Hall was a remarkable person whose achievements included obtaining the first Ph.D. in psychology in the United States, becoming the founder of the American Psychological Association, and serving as the first president of Clark University. In addition, Hall was one of the initiators of the **child study movement** in the United States, which advocated scientific research on child and adolescent development and the improvement of conditions for children and adolescents in the family, school, and workplace.

Among his accomplishments, Hall wrote the first textbook on adolescence, published in 1904 as a two-volume set ambitiously titled *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion, and Education*. Hall's textbook covered a wide range of topics, such as physical health and development, adolescence cross-culturally and historically, and adolescent love. A surprising number of Hall's observations have been verified by recent research, such as his description of biological development during puberty, his assertion that depressed mood tends to peak in the mid-teens, and his claim that adolescence is a time of heightened responsiveness to peers (Arnett, 2006a). However, much of what he wrote is dated and obsolete (Youniss,

Laws requiring children to attend school were passed in the early 20th century.

One of the best known and most enduring studies of adolescents in the United States is the Monitoring the Future (MTF) study conducted by the University of Michigan. Beginning in 1975, every year the MTF study has surveyed thousands of American adolescents on a wide range of topics, including substance use, political and social attitudes, and gender roles. The survey involves about 50,000 adolescents annually in the 8th, 10th, and 12th grades in 420 schools. (For detailed information on the study, see www.monitoringthefuture.org).

This kind of study is called a **national survey**. A **survey** is a study that involves asking people questions about their opinions, beliefs, or behavior (Salkind, 2003; Thio, 1997). Usually, closed questions are used, meaning that participants are asked to select from a predetermined set of responses, so that their responses can be easily added and compared.

If it is a national survey, that does not mean, of course, that every person in the country is asked the survey questions! Instead, as this chapter describes, researchers seek a sample—that is, a relatively small number of people whose responses are taken to represent the larger population from which they are drawn. Usually, national surveys such as the one described here use a procedure called **stratified sampling**, in which they select participants so that various categories of people are represented in proportions equal to their presence in the population (Goodwin, 1995). For example, if we know that 52% of the

13- to 17-year-olds in the United States are female, we want the sample to be 52% female; if we know that 13% of 13- to 17-year-olds are African American, the sample should be 13% African American; and so on. The categories used to select a stratified sample often include age, gender, ethnic group, education, and socioeconomic status (SES).

The other characteristic of a national survey is usually that the stratified sample is also a **random sample**, meaning that the people selected for participation in the study are chosen randomly—no one in the population has a better or worse chance of being selected than anyone else (Salkind, 2003; Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1985). You could do this by putting all possible participants' names in a hat and pulling out as many participants as you needed or by paging through a phone book and putting your finger down in random places, but these days the selection of a random sample for national surveys is usually done by a computer program. Selecting a random sample enhances the likelihood that the sample will be genuinely representative of the larger population. The MTF study selects a random sample of 350 students within each school. In addition, a random sample of MTF participants is followed biennially beyond high school, extending (so far) into the early 30s.

Although the MTF study includes many topics, it is best known for its findings regarding substance use. We will examine these findings in detail in Chapter 13.

Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood

"When our mothers were our age, they were engaged. . . . They at least had some idea what they were going to do with their lives. . . . I, on the other hand, will have a dual degree in majors that are ambiguous at best and impractical at worst (English and political science), no ring on my finger and no idea who I am, much less what I want to do. . . . Under duress, I will admit that this is a pretty exciting time. Sometimes, when I look out across the wide expanse that is my future, I can see beyond the void. I realize that having nothing ahead to count on means I now have to count on myself; that having no direction means forging one of my own."

—Kristen, age 22 (Page, 1999, pp. 18, 20)

In the various eras of history described in the previous section, when people referred to adolescents (or youth or whatever term a particular era or society used), they usually indicated that they meant not just the early teen years but the late teens and into the 20s as well. When G. Stanley Hall (1904) initiated the scientific study of adolescence early in the 20th century, he defined the age range of adolescence as beginning at 14 and ending at 24 (Hall, 1904, vol. 1, p. xix). In contrast, today's scholars generally consider adolescence to begin at about age 10 and end by about age 18. Studies published in the major journals on adolescence rarely include samples with ages higher than 18 (Arnett, 2000a). What happened between Hall's time and our own to move scholars' conceptions of adolescence forward chronologically in the life course?

Two changes stand out as explanations. One is the decline that took place during the 20th century in the typical

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child study movement Late 19th century group, led by G. Stanley Hall, that advocated research on child and adolescent development and the improvement of conditions for children and adolescents in the family, school, and workplace.

recapitulation Now-discredited theory that held that the development of each individual recapitulates the evolutionary development of the human species as a whole.

storm and stress Theory promoted by G. Stanley Hall asserting that adolescence is inevitably a time of mood disruptions, conflict with parents, and antisocial behavior.

national survey Questionnaire study that involves asking a sample of persons in a country to respond to questions about their opinions, beliefs, or behavior.

survey A questionnaire study that involves asking a large number of people questions about their opinions, beliefs, or behavior.

stratified sampling Sampling technique in which researchers select participants so that various categories of people are represented in proportions equal to their presence in the population.

random sample Sampling technique in which the people selected for participation in a study are chosen randomly, meaning that no one in the population has a better or worse chance of being selected than anyone else.

age of the initiation of puberty. At the beginning of the 20th century, the median age of **menarche** (a girl's first menstruation) in Western countries was about 15 (Eveleth & Tanner, 1976). Because menarche takes place relatively late in the typical sequence of pubertal changes, this means that the initial changes of puberty would have begun at ages 13 to 15 for most boys and girls (usually earlier for girls than for boys), which is just where Hall designated the beginning of adolescence. However, the median age of menarche (and, by implication, other pubertal changes) declined steadily between 1900 and 1970 before leveling out, so that by now the typical age of menarche in the United States is 12.5 (Vigil, Geary, & Byrd-Craven, 2005). The initial changes of puberty begin about 2 years earlier, thus the designation of adolescence as beginning at about age 10.

As for when adolescence ends, the change in this age may have been inspired not by a biological change but by a social change: the growth of secondary school attendance to a normative experience for adolescents in the United States and other Western countries. As noted earlier, in 1890 only 5% of Americans aged 14 to 17 were enrolled in high school. However, this proportion rose steeply and steadily throughout the 20th century, reaching 95% by 1985 (Arnett & Taber, 1994). Because attending high school is now nearly universal among American adolescents and because high school graduation usually takes place at age 18, it makes sense for scholars studying American adolescents to place the end of adolescence at age 18. Hall did not choose 18 as the end of adolescence because for most adolescents of his time no significant transition took place at that age. Education ended earlier, work began earlier, and leaving home took place later. Marriage and parenthood did not take place for most people until their early to mid-20s (Arnett & Taber, 1994), which may have been why Hall designated age 24 as the end of adolescence.

Hall viewed the late teens and early 20s as an especially interesting time of life. I agree, and I think it would be a mistake to cut off our study of adolescence in this book at age 18. A great deal happens in the late teens and early 20s that is related to development earlier in adolescence and that has important implications for the path that development takes in adulthood. I have termed this period **emerging adulthood**, and I consider it to include roughly the ages 18 to 25 (Arnett, 1998a, 2000a, 2004a, 2006b; 2007a; 2010; Arnett & Taber, 1994).

Five characteristics distinguish emerging adulthood from other age periods (Arnett, 2004a, 2006a; Reifman et al., 2006). Emerging adulthood is:

1. the age of identity explorations;
2. the age of instability;
3. the self-focused age;
4. the age of feeling in-between; and
5. the age of possibilities.

Perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of emerging adulthood is that it is the *age of identity explorations*. That is, it is an age when people explore various possibilities in love and work as they move toward making enduring choices. Through trying out these different possibilities they develop a more definite identity, including an understanding of who they are, what their capabilities and limitations are, what their beliefs and values are, and how they fit into the society around them. Erik Erikson (1950), who was the first to develop the idea of identity, asserted that it is mainly an issue in adolescence; but that was over 50 years ago, and today it is mainly in emerging adulthood that identity explorations take place (Arnett, 2000a, 2004a, 2005b; Côté, 2005; Schwartz et al., 2005).

The explorations of emerging adulthood also make it the *age of instability*. As emerging adults explore different possibilities in love and work, their lives are often unstable. A good illustration of this instability is their frequent moves from one residence to another. As Figure 1.1 shows, rates of residential change in American society are much higher at ages 18–29 than at any other period of life. This reflects the explorations going on in emerging adults' lives. Some move out of their parents' household for the first time in their late teens to attend a residential college, whereas others move out simply to be independent (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999). They may move again when they drop out of college or when they graduate. They may move to cohabit with a ro-
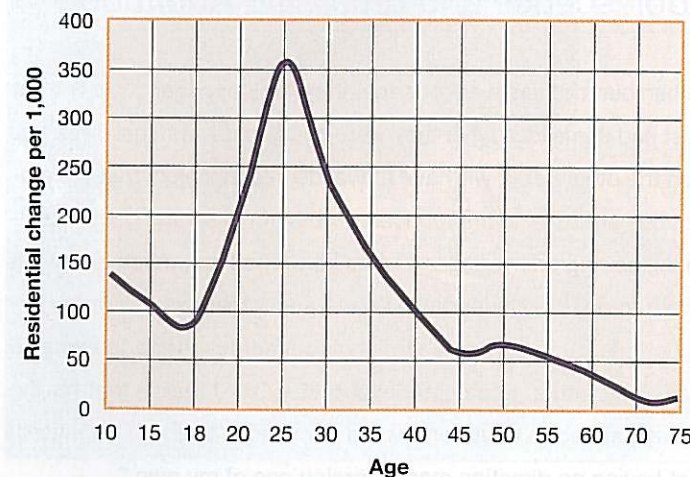

FIGURE 1.1 Rate of residential change by age. Why does the rate peak in emerging adulthood?
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2003).

menarche A girl's first menstrual period.

emerging adulthood Period from roughly ages 18 to 25 in industrialized countries during which young people become more independent from parents and explore various life possibilities before making enduring commitments.

mantic partner and then move out when the relationship ends. Some move to another part of the country or the world to study or work. For nearly half of American emerging adults, residential change includes moving back in with their parents at least once (Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999). In some countries, such as in southern Europe, emerging adults remain home rather than moving out; nevertheless, they may still experience instability in education, work, and love relationships (Douglass, 2005, 2007).

Emerging adulthood is also a *self-focused age*. Most American emerging adults move out of their parents' home at age 18 or 19 and do not marry and have their first child until at least their late 20s (Arnett, 2000a). Even in countries where emerging adults remain home through their early 20s, such as in southern Europe and Asian countries, including Japan, they establish a more independent lifestyle than they had as adolescents (Douglass, 2005). Emerging adulthood is a time in between adolescents' reliance on parents and adults' long-term commitments in love and work, and during these years emerging adults focus on themselves as they develop the knowledge, skills, and self-understanding they will need for adult life. In the course of emerging adulthood, they learn to make independent decisions about everything from what to have for dinner to whether or not to go to graduate school.

To say that emerging adulthood is a self-focused time is not meant pejoratively. There is nothing wrong with being self-focused during emerging adulthood. It is normal, healthy, and temporary. The goal of their self-focusing is learning to stand alone as self-sufficient persons, but emerging adults do not see self-sufficiency as a permanent state. Rather, they view it as a necessary step before committing themselves to lasting relationships with others, in love and work.

Another distinctive feature of emerging adulthood is that it is an *age of feeling in-between*, not adolescent but not fully adult either. When asked, "Do you feel that you have reached adulthood?" the majority of emerging adults respond neither yes nor no but with the ambiguous "in some ways yes, in some ways no" (Arnett, 1994a, 1997, 1998a, 2000a, 2001a, 2003a, 2004a). As Figure 1.2 shows, it is only when people reach their late 20s and early 30s that a clear majority feel they have reached adulthood. Most emerging adults have the subjective feeling of being in a transitional period of life, on the way to adulthood but not there yet. This "in-between" feeling in emerging adulthood has been found in a wide range of countries, including Argentina (Facio & Micocci, 2003), Israel (Mayseless & Scharf, 2003), the Czech Republic (Macek et al., 2007), China (Nelson et al., 2004), and Denmark (Arnett et al., 2009).

Finally, emerging adulthood is the age of possibilities, when many different futures remain possible, when little about a person's direction in life has been decided for certain. It tends to be an age of high hopes and great expectations, in part because few of their dreams have been tested in the fires of real life. In one national survey of 18- to 24-year-olds in the United States, nearly all—96%—agreed with the statement "I am very sure that someday I will get to where I want to be in life" (Hornblower, 1997). The dreary, dead-end jobs, the bitter divorces, the disappointing and disrespectful children that some of them
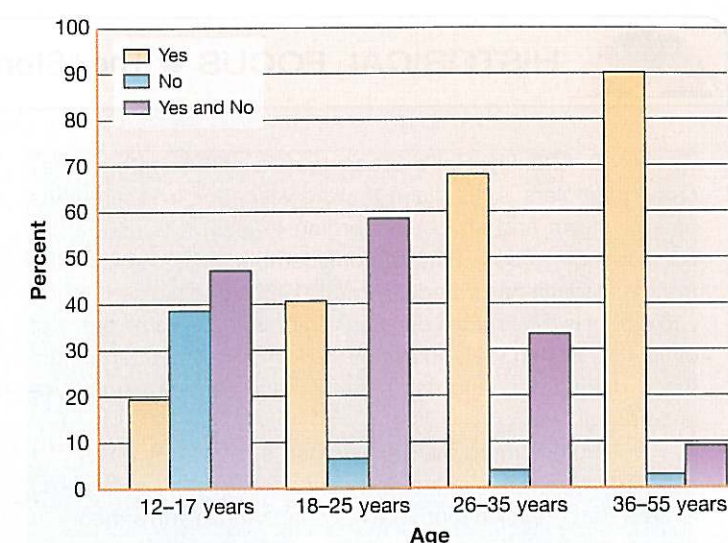

FIGURE 1.2 Age differences in response to the question "Do you feel that you have reached adulthood?"
Source: Arnett (2000a).

will find themselves experiencing in the years to come—few of them imagine in emerging adulthood that this is what the future holds. This optimism in emerging adulthood has been found in other countries as well (Arnett et al., 2009; Nelson & Chen, 2007).

One feature of emerging adulthood that makes it the age of possibilities is that emerging adults typically have left their family of origin but are not yet committed to a new network of relationships and obligations. For those who have come from a troubled family, this is their chance to try to straighten the parts of themselves that have become twisted. No longer dependent on their parents, and no longer subject to their parents' problems on a daily basis, they may be able to make independent decisions—perhaps to move to a different area or go to college—that turn their lives in a dramatically different direction (Arnett, 2004a; Masten et al., 2006). Even for those who have come from families that are relatively happy and healthy, emerging adulthood is an opportunity to transform themselves so that they are not merely made in their parents' images but have made independent decisions about what kind of person they wish to be and how they wish to live. For this limited window of time—7, perhaps 10 years—the fulfillment of all their hopes seems possible, because for most people the range of their choices for how to live is greater than it has ever been before and greater than it will ever be again.

Emerging adulthood does not exist in all cultures. Cultures vary widely in the ages that young people are expected to enter full adulthood and take on adult responsibilities

"But when, by what test, by what indication does manhood commence? Physically, by one criterion, legally by another. Morally by a third, intellectually by a fourth—and all indefinite."
—Thomas De Quincey, *Autobiography*, 1821

One of G. Stanley Hall's ideas that is still debated today among scholars is his claim that adolescence is inherently a time of storm and stress. According to Hall, it is normal for adolescence to be a time of considerable upheaval and disruption. As Hall described it (Arnett, 1999a), adolescent storm and stress is reflected in especially high rates of three types of difficulties during the adolescent period: conflict with parents, mood disruptions, and risk behavior (such as substance use and crime).

Hall (1904) favored the **Lamarckian** evolutionary ideas that many prominent thinkers in the early 20th century considered to be a better explanation of evolution than Darwin's theory of natural selection. In Lamarck's now-discredited theory, evolution takes place as a result of accumulated experience. Organisms pass on their characteristics from one generation to the next not in the form of genes (which were unknown at the time Lamarck and Darwin devised their theories) but in the form of memories and acquired characteristics. These memories and acquired characteristics would then be reenacted or *recapitulated* in the development of each individual in future generations. Thus Hall, considering development during adolescence, judged it to be "suggestive of some ancient period of storm and stress" (1904, vol. 1, p. xiii). In his view, there must have been a period of human evolution that was extremely difficult and tumultuous; ever since, the memory of that period had been passed from one generation to the next and was recapitulated in the development of each individual as the storm and stress of adolescent development.

In the century since Hall's work established adolescence as an area of scientific study, the debate over adolescent storm and stress has simmered steadily and boiled to the surface periodically. Anthropologists, led by Margaret Mead (1928), countered Hall's claim that a tendency toward storm and stress in adolescence is universal and biological by describing non-Western cultures in which adolescence was neither stormy nor stressful. In contrast, psychoanalytic theorists, particularly Anna Freud (1946, 1958, 1968, 1969), have been the most outspoken proponents of the storm and stress view.

Anna Freud viewed adolescents who did not experience storm and stress with great suspicion, claiming that their outward calm concealed the inward reality that they must have "built up excessive defenses against their drive activities and are now crippled by the results" (1968, p. 15). She viewed storm and stress as universal and inevitable, to the extent that its absence signified a serious psychological problem: "To be normal during the adolescent period is by itself abnormal" (1958, p. 267).

What does more recent scholarship indicate about the validity of the storm and stress view? A clear consensus exists among current scholars that the storm and stress view proposed by Hall and made more extreme by Anna Freud and other psychoanalysts is not valid for most adolescents (Arnett, 1999a; Steinberg, 2001; Susman et al., 2003). The claim that storm and stress is characteristic of all adolescents, and that the source of it is purely biological, is clearly false. Scholars today tend to emphasize that most adolescents like and respect their parents, that for most adolescents their mood disruptions are not so extreme that they need psychological treatment, and that most of them do not engage in risk behavior on a regular basis.

On the other hand, studies in recent decades have also indicated some support for what might be called a "modified" storm and stress view (Arnett, 1999a). Research evidence supports the existence of some degree of storm and stress with respect to conflict with parents, mood disruptions, and risk behavior. Not all adolescents experience storm and stress in these areas, but adolescence is the period when storm and stress is more likely to occur than at other ages. Conflict with parents tends to be higher in adolescence than before or after adolescence (Paikoff & Brooks-Gunn, 1991; Smetana, 2005). Adolescents report greater extremes of mood and more frequent changes of mood, compared with preadolescents or adults (Larson & Richards, 1994), and depressed mood is more common in adolescence than it is in childhood or adulthood (Bond et al., 2005; Petersen et al., 1993). Rates of most types of risk behavior rise sharply during adolescence and peak during late adolescence or emerging adulthood. The different aspects of storm and stress have different peak ages: conflict with parents in early to midadolescence, mood disruptions in midadolescence, and risk behavior in late adolescence and emerging adulthood (Arnett, 1999a).

We will explore each aspect of storm and stress in more detail in later chapters. For now, however, it should be emphasized that even though evidence supports a modified storm and stress view, this does not mean that storm and stress is typical of all adolescents in all places and times. Cultures vary
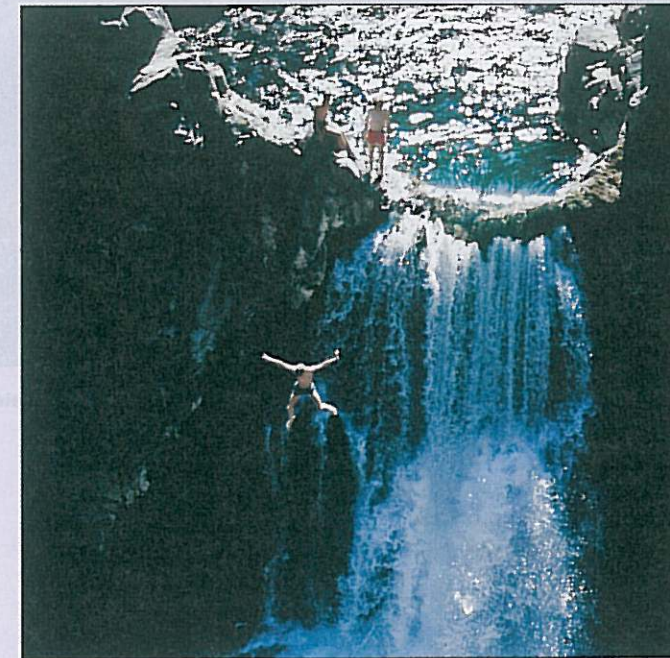
Risk behavior peaks in late adolescence and emerging adulthood.

in the degree of storm and stress experienced by their adolescents, with storm and stress relatively low in traditional cultures and relatively high in Western cultures (Arnett, 1999a). Also, within every culture individuals vary in the amount of adolescent storm and stress they experience.

(Arnett & Galambos, 2003; Schlegel & Barry, 1991). Emerging adulthood exists only in cultures in which young people are allowed to postpone entering adult roles such as marriage and parenthood until at least their mid-20s (Arnett, 2000a; Arnett, 2010). Thus, emerging adulthood exists mainly in industrialized societies such as the United States, Canada, most of Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan (Arnett, 2000a; Bynner, 2005; Douglass, 2005, 2007). However, in many areas of the world, emerging adulthood is becoming more prevalent as cultures become more industrialized and more integrated into a global economy (Galambos & Martinez, 2007; Macek et al., 2007; Nelson & Chen, 2007). This topic will be addressed often in the chapters to come.

Emerging adulthood is a recent phenomenon historically. In the United States, the median age of marriage is at a record high—about 26 for women and 28 for men—and has risen steeply over the past 40 years (Arnett, 2006b). Also, a higher proportion of young Americans than ever before attend at least some college—currently, over 60% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). Similar changes have taken place in recent decades in other industrialized countries (Arnett, 2007a; Bynner, 2005; Douglass, 2005, 2007; see Table 1.2). This postponement of adult responsibilities into the mid- to late 20s makes possible the explorations of emerging adulthood. With growing industrialization and economic integration worldwide, emerging adulthood is likely to become increasingly common around the world in the 21st century (Arnett, 2000a, 2002a).

In this book, then, we will cover three periods: **early adolescence**, from age 10 to 14; **late adolescence**, from age 15 to 18; and emerging adulthood, from age 18 to about 25. Including all three of these periods will provide a broad age range for our examination of the various aspects of young people's development—the biological, psychological, and social changes they experience over time. Because studies on early and late adolescence are more abundant than studies on emerging adulthood, most of the information in the book will refer to adolescence, but each chapter will contain some information on emerging adulthood.

THINKING CRITICALLY •••

Is 25 a good upper age boundary for the end of emerging adulthood? Where would you put the upper age boundary, and why?
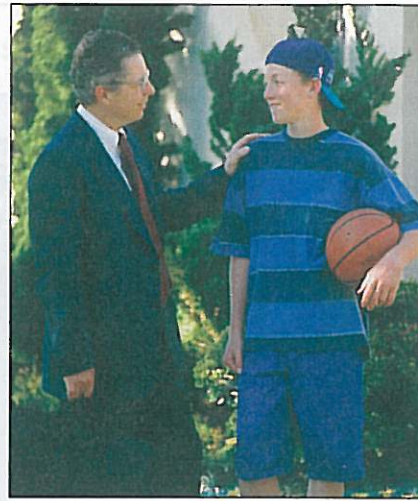
The Transition to Adulthood

Adolescence is generally viewed as beginning with the first noticeable changes of puberty (Feldman & Elliott, 1990). The end of adolescence, as we have defined it here, is also quite clear: age 18, when most people in industrialized societies have reached the end of their secondary school education. Age 18 also marks the beginning of emerging adulthood, as that is when most young people begin the exploratory activities that characterize emerging adulthood. But what marks the end of emerging adulthood? If emerging adulthood is in many ways a period of transition from adolescence to full adulthood, how does a person know when the

Lamarckian Reference to Lamarck's ideas, popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, that evolution takes place as a result of accumulated experience such that organisms pass on their characteristics from one generation to the next in the form of memories and acquired characteristics.

early adolescence Period of human development lasting from about age 10 to about age 14.

late adolescence Period of human development lasting from about age 15 to about age 18.

TABLE 1.2	Median Marriage Age (Females) in Selected Countries		
Industrialized Countries	**Age**	**Developing Countries**	**Age**
United States	26	Egypt	19
Canada	28	Morocco	20
Germany	30	Ghana	19
France	29	Nigeria	17
Italy	29	India	20
Japan	29	Indonesia	19
Australia	28	Brazil	21

Sources: Douglass, 2007; Population Reference Bureau (2000); United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (2005).

A young person in three periods: early adolescence (ages 10–14), late adolescence (ages 15–18), and emerging adulthood (ages 18–25).

transition to adulthood is complete? The answer to this question is complex and varies notably among cultures. First, we examine cultural similarities in views of adulthood, then cultural variations.

The Transition to Adulthood: Cross-Cultural Themes

"Sometimes I feel like I've reached adulthood, and then I'll sit down and eat ice cream directly from the box, and I keep thinking, 'I'll know I'm an adult when I don't eat ice cream right out of the box anymore.' . . . But I guess in some ways I feel like I'm an adult. I'm a pretty responsible person. I mean, if I say I'm going to do something, I do it. Financially, I'm fairly responsible with my money. But there are still times where I think, 'I can't believe I'm 25.' A lot of times I don't really feel like an adult."

—Lisa, age 25 (Arnett, 2004a, p. 14)

In industrialized societies, there are a variety of possible ways one could define the transition to adulthood. Legally, the transition to adulthood takes place in most respects at age 18. This is the age at which a person becomes an adult for various legal purposes, such as signing legally binding documents and being eligible to vote. One could also define the transition to adulthood as entering the roles that are typically considered to be part of adulthood: full-time work, marriage, and parenthood (Hogan & Astone, 1986).

But what about young people themselves? How do young people today conceptualize the transition to adulthood? In the past decade, many studies have examined what young people in industrialized societies view as the key markers of the transition to adulthood. The results of the studies have been remarkably similar, in countries including the United States (Arnett, 1998a, 2003b; Nelson, 2003), Argentina (Facio & Micocci, 2003), the Czech Republic (Macek, 2007), Romania (Nelson et al., 2008), the United Kingdom (Horowitz and Bromnick, 2008), Israel (Mayseless & Scharf, 2003), South Korea (Arnett, 2001b), and China (Nelson, Badger, & Wu, 2004). In these studies young people from their early teens to their late 20s agreed that the most important markers of the transition from adolescence to adulthood are *accepting responsibility for oneself, making independent decisions*, and *becoming financially independent*, in that order. These three criteria rank highest not just across cultures and nations but across ethnic groups and social classes.

Note the similarity among the top criteria: All three are characterized by **individualism**; that is, all three emphasize the importance of learning to stand alone as a self-sufficient person without relying on anyone else. The values of individualism, such as independence and self-expression, are often contrasted with the values of **collectivism**, such as duties and obligations to others. The criteria for adulthood favored by emerging adults in industrialized societies reflect the individualistic values of those societies (Bellah et al., 1985; Douglass et al., 2005; Harkness, Super, & van Tijen, 2000; Triandis, 1995).

The Transition to Adulthood: Cultural Variations

In addition to the top three criteria for adulthood that have been found across cultures—accepting responsibility for oneself, making independent decisions, and becoming financially independent—studies have found distinctive cultural criteria as well. Young Israelis viewed completing military service as important for becoming an adult, reflecting Israel's requirement of mandatory military service (Mayseless & Scharf, 2003). Young Argentines especially valued being able to support a family financially, perhaps reflecting the economic upheavals Argentina has experienced for many years (Facio & Micocci, 2003). Emerging adults in Korea and China viewed *being able to support their parents financially* as necessary for adulthood, reflecting the collectivistic value of obligation to parents found in Asian societies (Naito & Gielen, 2003; Nelson et al., 2004).

What about traditional cultures? Do they have different ideas about what marks the beginning of adulthood, compared to industrialized societies? The answer appears to be yes. Anthropologists have found that in virtually all traditional, non-Western cultures, the transition to adulthood is clearly and explicitly marked by *marriage* (Schlegel & Barry, 1991). It is only after marriage that a person is considered to have attained adult status and is given adult privileges and responsibilities. In contrast, very few of the young people in the studies mentioned above indicated that they considered marriage to be an important marker of the transition to adulthood. In fact, in industrialized societies marriage ranks near the bottom in surveys of possible criteria for adult status.

What should we make of that contrast? One possible interpretation would be that traditional cultures elevate marriage as the key transition to adulthood because they prize the collectivistic value of **interdependence** more highly than the individualistic value of independence, and marriage signifies that a person is taking on new interdependent relationships outside the family of origin (Arnett, 1995a, 1998a; Markus & Kitiyama, 1991; Shweder et al., 2006). Marriage is a social event rather than an individual, psychological process, and it represents the establishment of a new network of relationships with all the kin of one's marriage partner. This is especially true in traditional cultures, where family members are more likely than in the West to be close-knit and to have extensive daily contact with one another. Thus, cultures that value interdependence view marriage as the most important marker of entering adulthood because of the ways marriage confirms and strengthens interdependence.

Still, these conclusions about traditional cultures are based mainly on the observations of the anthropologists who have studied them. If you asked young people in these cultures directly about their own conceptions of what marks the beginning of adulthood, perhaps you would get a variety of answers other than marriage. For example, Susan Davis and Douglas Davis (1989) asked young Moroccans (aged 9 to 20), "How do you know you're grown up?" They found that the two most common types of responses were (1) those that em-

Marriage is of great significance as a marker of adulthood in traditional cultures. Here, a Burmese bride and groom (center) and their attendants.

phasized chronological age or physical development, such as the beginning of facial hair among boys; and (2) those that emphasized character qualities, such as developing self-control (see the Cultural Focus box on page 15). Few of the young people mentioned marriage, even though Davis and Davis (1989) stated that in Moroccan culture generally, "after marriage, one is considered an adult" (p. 59). This suggests that further investigation of young people's conceptions of the transition to adulthood in traditional cultures may prove enlightening and that their views may not match the conceptions of adulthood held by adults.

The Scientific Study of Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood

Insights into development during adolescence and emerging adulthood can be gained in many ways. There are some excellent autobiographies of these periods such as *This Boy's Life* by Tobias Wolff (1987) and the autobiography of Anne Frank (1942/1997). Journalists have written accounts of various aspects of these periods, often focusing on a particular young person or a small group (for one example, see Bamberger [2004]). Some terrific novels have been written that focus on adolescence and emerging adulthood, such as J. D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* (1951/1964), Anchee Min's *Katherine* (1995), and Russell Banks's *The Rule of the Bone* (1995).

I will draw on sources in all these areas for illustrations and examples. However, the main focus in this book will be on the scientific study of adolescence and emerging adulthood. You will be learning about development during adolescence and emerging adulthood as an area of the social

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individualism Cultural belief system that emphasizes the desirability of independence, self-sufficiency, and self-expression.

collectivism A set of beliefs asserting that it is important for persons to mute their individual desires in order to contribute to the well-being and success of the group.

interdependence The web of commitments, attachments, and obligations that exist in some human groups.

sciences. You will read about the most important and influential studies that have contributed to this field. In every chapter of the book you will find a Research Focus box that explores a specific study in depth and discusses in detail the methods used in the study.

What does it mean for scholars to engage in the scientific study of adolescence and emerging adulthood? It means to apply the standards of the **scientific method** to the questions we investigate (Cozby, Worden, & Kee, 1989; Goodwin, 1995; Salkind, 2003; Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1985). The scientific method includes standards of **hypotheses**, **sampling**, **procedure**, **method**, analysis, and interpretation.

Every scientific study begins with an idea: A scholar wants to find an answer to a question, and on the basis of a theory or previous research, the scholar proposes one or more hypotheses. A hypothesis is the scholar's idea about one possible answer to the question of interest. For example, a scholar may be interested in the question "Why are girls more likely than boys to become depressed in adolescence?" and propose the hypothesis "Girls are more likely to become depressed because they tend to blame themselves when they experience conflict with others." The scholar would then design a study to test that hypothesis. The hypotheses of a study are crucial, because they influence the sampling, measures, analysis, and interpretation that follow.

With respect to sampling, scholars who study adolescents and emerging adults seek to obtain a **sample** that represents the **population** they are interested in. Suppose, for example, a scholar wants to study adolescents' attitudes toward contraception. The waiting room of a clinic offering contraceptive services would probably not be a good place to look for a sample, because the adolescents coming to such a clinic are quite likely to have more favorable attitudes toward contraception than adolescents in general; otherwise, why would they be coming to a place that offers contraceptive services? Instead, if the population of interest is adolescents in general, it would be better to sample them through schools or through a telephone survey that selected households randomly from the community.

On the other hand, if a scholar is particularly interested in attitudes toward contraception among the population of adolescents who are already using or planning to use contraception, then a clinic offering contraceptive services would be a good place to find a sample. It all depends on the population the scholar wishes to study and on the questions the scholar wishes to address. The goal is to seek out a sample that will be **representative** of the population of interest (Goodwin, 1995; Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1985). If the

sample is representative of the population, then the findings from the sample will be **generalizable** to the population. In other words, the findings from the sample will make it possible to draw conclusions about not just the sample itself but also the larger population of adolescents that the sample is intended to represent.

The third consideration of the scientific method, *procedure*, refers to the way the study is conducted and the data are collected. One standard aspect of the procedure in scientific studies of human beings is **informed consent** (Goodwin, 1995). Human subjects in any scientific study are supposed to be presented with a **consent form** before they participate (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1985). Consent forms typically include information about who is conducting the study, what the purposes of the study are, what participation in the study involves (e.g., filling out a questionnaire on contraceptive use), what risks (if any) are involved in participating, and what the person can expect to receive in return for participation. Consent forms also usually include a statement indicating that participation in the study is voluntary and that persons may withdraw from participation in the study at any time.

The use of consent forms is not always possible (for example, in telephone surveys), but whenever possible they are included in the procedure for scholars studying adolescents and emerging adults. For adolescents under age 18, the consent of one of their parents is also usually required as part of a study's procedures.

Another aspect of the procedure is the circumstances of the data collection. Scholars try to collect data in a way that will not be biased. For example, scholars must be careful not to phrase questions in an interview or a questionnaire in a way that seems to lead people toward a desired response. They must also assure participants that their responses will be confidential, especially if the study concerns a sensitive topic such as sexual behavior or drug use.

The scientific method also includes a variety of specific methods for data collection. A method is a strategy for collecting data. In the next section, we will consider a variety of methods used in research on adolescence and emerging adulthood. This will also be a way of introducing some of the major studies on adolescence and emerging adulthood that I will be referring to often in the course of the book.

THINKING CRITICALLY •••

You have probably read about topics concerning adolescence and emerging adulthood in newspapers and magazines. Find a recent article and analyze whether or not it meets the criteria for scientific research.

The anthropologists Susan Davis and Douglas Davis (1989, 1995, 2007) have been studying adolescents in Morocco for nearly three decades, originally as part of the Harvard Adolescence Project described in this chapter. One of the questions that has interested them in their research concerns the qualities Moroccans associate with adolescence.

The most important concept in Moroccan views of adolescence is '*aql*, an Arabic word that has connotations of reasonableness, understanding, and rationality. Self-control and self-restraint are also part of 'aql: To possess 'aql means to have control over your needs and passions and to be able and willing to restrain them out of respect for those around you. Moroccans see 'aql as a quality expected of adults and often lacking in adolescents.

'Aql is expected to develop in both males and females during adolescence, but males are believed to take a decade longer to develop it fully! This appears to be due to sharp differences in gender roles and expectations. Unlike males, females are given a variety of responsibilities from an early age, such as household work and taking care of younger siblings, so it is more important for them to develop 'aql earlier to meet the demands of these responsibilities. It is quite common, not just in Morocco but worldwide in traditional cultures, that much more work is required of females in adolescence than of males (Schlegel & Barry, 1991; Whiting & Edwards, 1988).

Another term Moroccans use in reference to adolescence is *taysh*, which means reckless, rash, and frivolous. This quality is especially associated with awakening sexuality and the possible violations of social norms this awakening may inspire (female virginity before marriage is very important to Moroccans). Taysh is a quality associated with adolescence in the views of many Moroccans, as illustrated in this exchange between Susan Davis and Naima, a mother of two adolescents:

SUSAN: What does this word *taysh* mean?
NAIMA: It starts at the age of 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 until 20. [It lasts] until she develops her 'aql. She is frivolous [taysha] for about 4 years.
SUSAN: How do you know they have reached that age? How would you know when Najet [her daughter, age 13] gets there?
NAIMA: You can recognize it. The girl becomes frivolous. She starts caring about her appearance, dressing well, wearing fancy clothes and showy things, you

Moroccan adolescents.

understand. . . . She also messes up her school schedule. She either leaves too early or comes too late [i.e., she may be changing her schedule to meet boys]. You have to be watchful with her at that juncture. If you see she is on the right path, you leave her alone. If you notice that she is too late or far off the timing, then you have to set the record straight with her until the age of adolescence is over. When she is 20 years of age, she recovers her ability to reason and be rational.

SUSAN: When your son Saleh [age 14] reaches the age of adolescence, how would you know it?
NAIMA: I will notice that he doesn't come home on time, he will start skipping school . . . He will start following girls. . . . Girls will start complaining, 'Your son is following me.' This is the first consequence.
SUSAN: So it's similar to the girl—the girl will dress in a fancy way, while the boy will start getting interested in her.
NAIMA: That's it.

Moroccans explicitly state that marriage marks the end of adolescence and the entry into adulthood. However, from their use of the terms '*aql* and *taysh*, we can see that the transition to adulthood also involves intangible qualities similar to the ones important in other cultures. Can you see the similarities between 'aql and taysh and the qualities important in conceptions of the transition to adulthood discussed in this chapter?

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scientific method A systematic way of finding the answers to questions or problems that includes standards of sampling, procedure, and measures.

hypotheses Ideas, based on theory or previous research, that a scholar wishes to test in a scientific study.

sampling Collecting data on a subset of the members of a group.

procedure Standards for the way a study is conducted. Includes informed consent and certain rules for avoiding biases in the data collection.

method A scientific strategy for collecting data.

sample The people included in a given study, who are intended to represent the population of interest.

population The entire group of people of interest in a study.

representative Characteristic of a sample that refers to the degree to which it accurately represents the population of interest.

generalizable Characteristic of a sample that refers to the degree to which findings based on the sample can be used to make accurate statements about the population of interest.

informed consent Standard procedure in social scientific studies that entails informing potential participants of what their participation would involve, including any possible risks.

consent form Written statement provided by a researcher to potential participants in a study, informing them of who is conducting the study, the purposes of the study, and what their participation would involve, including potential risks.

THINKING CRITICALLY ●●●

How is the Moroccan conception of adolescence similar to and different from the view of Plato and Aristotle described earlier in this chapter?

Methods Used in Research

Scholars conduct research on adolescence and emerging adulthood in a variety of academic disciplines, including psychology, sociology, anthropology, education, and medicine. They use a variety of different methods in their investigations.

Two key issues with many methods are **reliability** and **validity**. There are a variety of types of reliability, but in general, a method has high reliability if it obtains similar results on different occasions (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1985). For example, if a questionnaire asked girls in their senior year of high school to recall when their first menstrual period occurred, the questionnaire would be considered reliable if most of the girls answered the same on one occasion as they did when asked the question again 6 months later. Or, if adolescents were interviewed about the quality of their relationships with their parents, the measure would be reliable if the adolescents' answers were the same for two different interviewers (Goodwin, 1995).

Validity refers to the truthfulness of a method (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1985). A method is valid if it measures what it claims to measure. For example, IQ tests are purported to measure intellectual abilities, but as we shall see in Chapter 3, this claim is controversial. Critics claim that IQ tests are not valid (i.e., that they do not measure what they are supposed to measure). Notice that a measure is not necessarily valid even if it is reliable. It is widely agreed that IQ tests are reliable—people generally score about the same on one occasion as they do on another—but the validity of the tests is disputed. In general, it is more difficult to establish validity than reliability.

We will examine questions of reliability and validity throughout the book. For now, we turn to the methods.

Questionnaires The most commonly used method in social science research is the questionnaire (Salkind, 2003; Sudman & Bradburn, 1989). Usually, questionnaires have a **closed question** format, which means that participants are provided with specific responses to choose from (Sudman & Bradburn, 1989). Sometimes the questions have an **open-ended question** format, which means that participants are allowed to state their response following the question. One advantage of closed questions is that they make it possible to collect and analyze responses from a large number of people in a relatively short time (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1985). Everyone responds to the same questions with the same response options.

For this reason, closed questions have often been used in large-scale surveys conducted on adolescents and emerging adults. One of the most valuable of these surveys is the Monitoring the Future survey conducted annually by the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan (see the Research Focus box in this chapter for more information about this survey).

Interviews Although questionnaires are the dominant type of method used in the study of adolescence and emerging adulthood, the use of questionnaires has certain limitations (Arnett, 2005c; Sudman & Bradburn, 1989). When a closed question format questionnaire is used, the range of possible responses is already specified, and the participant must choose from the responses provided. The researcher tries to cover the responses that seem most plausible and most likely, but it is impossible in a few brief response options to do justice to the depth and diversity of human experience. For example, if a questionnaire contains an item such as "How close are you to your mother? A. very close; B. somewhat close; C. not very close; D. not at all close," it is probably true that an adolescent who chooses "very close" really is closer to his or her mother than the adolescent who chooses "not at all close." But this alone does not begin to capture the complexity of the relationship between an adolescent and a parent.

Interviews are intended to provide the kind of individuality and complexity that questionnaires usually lack (Arnett, 2005c; Briggs, 1989). An interview allows a scholar to hear adolescents and emerging adults describe their lives in their own words, with all the uniqueness and richness that such descriptions make possible. An interview also allows a scholar to know the whole person and see how the various parts of the person's life are intertwined. For example, an interview on an adolescent's family relationships might reveal how the adolescent's relationship with her mother is affected by her relationship with her father, and how the whole family has been affected by certain events—perhaps a family member's loss of a job, psychological problems, medical problems, or substance abuse.

Interviews provide **qualitative** data, as contrasted with the **quantitative** data of questionnaires, and qualitative data can be interesting and informative. However, like questionnaires, interviews have limitations (Salkind, 2003; Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1985; Sudman & Bradburn, 1989). Because interviews do not typically provide preclassified responses the way questionnaires do, interview responses have

Margaret Mead and a Samoan adolescent.

to be coded according to some plan of classification. For example, if you asked the interview question "What occupation do you plan to have by age 30?" you might get a fascinating range of responses from a sample of adolescents or emerging adults. Those responses would help to inform you about the entire range of occupations young people imagine themselves having as adults. However, to make sense of the data and present them in a scientific format, at some point you would have to code the responses into categories—business, arts, professional/technical, trades, and so on. Only in this way would you be able to say something about the pattern of responses among your sample.

Coding interview data takes time, effort, and money. This is one of the reasons far more studies are conducted using questionnaires than using interviews. However, some excellent studies have been conducted using interview data. For example, William Julius Wilson, a sociologist, has conducted studies of hundreds of African American emerging adults in poor neighborhoods in Chicago (Tienda & Wilson, 2002; Wilson, 1987, 1996). His research focuses on the difficulties many young urban African Americans face in pursuing educational and occupational opportunities. He analyzes the connections between high unemployment among young urban African Americans and the schools they attend, the neighborhoods they live in, their beliefs about work and education, their family circumstances, and employers' views of them as potential employees. In his books, he combines quantitative and qualitative data to portray the lives of young African Americans in a way that is extremely lively, insightful, and enlightening. Wilson's quantitative data provide the reader with a clear understanding of the overall pattern of young people's lives in urban areas, but at the same time his qualitative examples bring to life the individual perspectives and circumstances of the people he studies. We will learn more about Wilson's studies, especially in Chapter 11 on work.

Ethnographic Research Another way scholars have learned about adolescence and emerging adulthood is through **ethnographic research** (Jessor, Colby, & Shweder, 1996). In ethnographic research, scholars spend a considerable amount of time among the people they wish to study, often by actually living among them. Information gained in ethnographic research typically comes from scholars' observations, experiences, and conversations with the people they are studying. Ethnographic research is commonly used by anthropologists, usually in studying non-Western cultures. Anthropologists usually report the results of their research in an **ethnography**, a book that presents an anthropologist's observations of what life is like in a particular culture.

The first ethnography on adolescence was written by Margaret Mead (1928). Mead studied the people of Samoa, a group of islands in the South Pacific. One of the inspirations of her study was to see whether the "storm and stress" said by G. Stanley Hall to be typical of American adolescents would also be present in a non-Western culture where life was much different than in American society. She reported that, contrary to Hall's claim that adolescent storm and stress is biologically based and therefore universal, most adolescents in Samoa passed through adolescence smoothly, with little sign of turmoil or upheaval.

After Mead's ethnography of Samoan adolescence, several decades passed before anthropologists gave much attention to adolescence. However, in the 1980s, two eminent anthropologists at Harvard University, Beatrice and John Whiting, set out to remedy this neglect. They initiated the **Harvard Adolescence Project**, in which they sent young

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reliability Characteristic of a measure that refers to the extent to which results of the measure on one occasion are similar to results of the measure on a separate occasion.

validity The truthfulness of a measure, that is, the extent to which it measures what it claims to measure.

closed question Questionnaire format that entails choosing from specific responses provided for each question.

open-ended question Questionnaire format that involves writing in responses to each question.

interview Research method that involves asking people questions in a conversational format, such that people's answers are in their own words.

qualitative Data that is collected in verbal rather than numerical form, usually in interviews.

quantitative Data that is collected in numerical form, usually on questionnaires.

ethnographic research Research in which scholars spend a considerable amount of time among the people they wish to study, usually living among them.

ethnography A book that presents an anthropologist's observations of what life is like in a particular culture.

Harvard Adolescence Project Project initiated by Beatrice and John Whiting of Harvard University in the 1980s, in which they sent young scholars to do ethnographic research in seven different cultures in various parts of the world.

scholars to do ethnographic research in seven different cultures in various parts of the world: the Inuit (Eskimos) of the Canadian Arctic; Aborigines in northern Australia; Muslims in Thailand; the Kikuyu of Kenya; the Ijo of Nigeria; rural Romania; and Morocco.

The project produced a series of extremely interesting and enlightening ethnographies (Burbank, 1988; Condon, 1987; Davis & Davis, 1989; Hollos & Leis, 1989). These ethnographies show the enormous variation that exists in the nature of adolescence in cultures around the world. I will be drawing from these ethnographies often in the course of the book.

Biological Measurement The biological changes of puberty are a central part of adolescent development, so research on adolescence includes measurement of biological functioning. One area of this research has focused on the timing and pace of different aspects of physical development during puberty, such as genital changes and the growth of pubic hair. Several decades ago a British physician, J. M. Tanner, conducted a series of studies that carefully monitored adolescents' physical changes and established valid information about the timing and sequence of these changes (Eveleth & Tanner, 1976; Tanner, 1962). More recently, scholars have conducted research measuring hormonal levels at various points during adolescence and looking at the ways hormonal levels are related to adolescents' moods and behavior (e.g., McBurnett et al., 2005; Susman, 1997; Susman, Dorn, & Schiefelbein, 2003). There has also been a recent surge of interest in research on adolescent brain functioning (Paus, 2008). We will examine biological research on adolescence in various chapters of the book, especially Chapter 2 (Biological Foundations).

Experimental Research An approach used in many kinds of scientific research is the **experimental research method** (Salkind, 2003). In the simplest form of this design, two groups of participants are randomly selected from a population, with one group (the **experimental group**) receiving a treatment of some kind and the other group (the **control group**) receiving no treatment. Because participants were randomly assigned to either the experimental group or the control group, it can be reasonably assumed that the two groups did not differ prior to the experiment. Following the treatment of the experimental group, the two groups are given a posttest, and any differences between the two groups are attributed to the treatment.

The experimental research method is frequently used in media research. For example, in one study African American adolescents aged 11–16 were randomly assigned to an exper-

imental group that viewed rap videos or a control group that did not (Johnson, Adams, Ashburn, & Reed, 1995). Following the experimental group's treatment—their exposure to the rap videos—both groups responded to a story about teen dating violence. It was found that in the posttest, girls (but not boys) in the experimental group showed greater acceptance of dating violence than girls in the control group.

Another area of adolescent research for which the experimental research method is commonly used is **interventions**. Interventions are programs intended to change the attitudes or behavior of the participants. For example, a variety of programs have been developed to prevent adolescents from starting to smoke cigarettes, by promoting critical thinking about cigarette advertising or by attempting to change attitudes associating smoking with peer acceptance (e.g., Horn, Dino, Kalsekar, & Mody, 2005). The adolescents participating in such a study are randomly assigned to either the experimental group receiving the intervention or the control group that does not receive the intervention. After the intervention, the two groups are assessed for their attitudes and behavior regarding smoking. If the intervention worked, the attitudes or behavior of the experimental group should be less favorable toward smoking than those of the control group.

Natural Experiments Experiments are in many ways the scientific ideal, because they allow scientists to identify cause and effect with some precision. In the experiment just described, by assigning adolescents randomly to the experimental group or the control group and then exposing only the experimental group to the antismoking intervention, the results provide definite evidence of whether or not the intervention caused changes to occur in attitudes and behavior related to smoking. However, many of the most important questions scholars seek to answer regarding adolescence and emerging adulthood cannot be answered through these kinds of experiments. For example, although many scholars are interested in how school quality influences adolescents' learning, they cannot assign adolescents randomly to high-quality or low-quality schools, for obvious ethical reasons.

Because scholars usually cannot control the environments adolescents and emerging adults experience, they sometimes take advantage of **natural experiments**. A natural experiment is a situation that exists naturally—in other words, the researcher does not control the situation—but that provides interesting scientific information to the perceptive observer. For example, although scholars cannot assign adolescents randomly to schools of high or low quality, they can assess adolescents' learning before and after they experience schools that are of high or low quality, thus taking advantage of a natural experiment to learn more about

Monozygotic (MZ) twins can be used in research as participants in a natural experiment, because they have exactly the same genotype.

the influence of school quality (e.g., Brand et al., 2003; Rutter, 1983).

One important natural experiment used in the study of adolescents and emerging adults is adoption. The question of how genes and environment interact in development is of great interest to scholars who study adolescent and emerging adults, and adoption provides important insights into this question. Unlike in most families, children in adoptive families are raised by adults with whom they have no biological relationship. Because one set of parents provides the child's genes and a different set of parents provides the environment, it is possible to examine the relative contributions of genes and environment to the child's development. Similarities between adoptive parents and adopted children are likely to be due to the environment provided by the parents, because the parents and children are biologically unrelated. Similarities between adopted children and their biological parents are likely to be due to genetics, because the environment the children grew up in was not provided by the biological parents. One surprising result of adoption studies on intelligence is that adoptees are actually *less* similar to their adoptive parents in adolescence than they were in childhood, even though they have lived with them longer (McGue, 2008). Chapter 3, on cognitive development, presents more on this intriguing research.

Twin studies are another type of natural experiment. Identical or **monozygotic (MZ) twins** have exactly the same genotype, whereas fraternal or **dizygotic (DZ) twins** have about half their genotype in common, the same as other siblings. By comparing the degree of similarity in MZ compared to DZ twins, we gain information about the extent to which a

characteristic is genetically based. If MZ twins are more similar on a characteristic than DZ twins are, this may be due to genetics, since MZ twins are more genetically similar.

Throughout the book, I will present studies using a wide variety of methods. For now, the methods just described provide you with an introduction to the approaches used most often.

Analysis and Interpretation

Once the data for a study have been collected using methods of one kind or another, statistical analyses are usually conducted to examine relationships between different parts of the data. Often, the analyses are determined by the hypotheses that generated the study. For example, a researcher studying adolescents' relationships with parents may hypothesize, based on a theory or on past research, that adolescents are closer to their mothers than to their fathers, then test that hypothesis with a statistical analysis comparing the quality of adolescents' relationships with mothers and with fathers.

Once the data are analyzed, they must be interpreted. When scientists write up the results of their study for publication in a scientific journal, they interpret the results of the study in light of relevant theories and previous research. One of the key issues in interpreting research is the issue of **correlation versus causation**. A correlation is a predictable relationship between two variables: Knowing one of the variables allows you to predict the other with some degree of accuracy. But just because two variables are correlated does not mean that one causes the other.

Consider an example. In studies of adolescent work, a negative correlation is typically found between hours worked and commitment to school (Barling & Kelloway, 1999). That is, the more adolescents work, the less committed to school they tend to be. But whether this correlation also means causation requires interpretation. One possible interpretation is that working many hours causes adolescents to be less committed to school. Another possible interpretation is that being less committed to school causes adolescents to work more hours. It is also possible that both high work hours and low commitment to school are caused by a third variable: a relatively low IQ, or a personality high in sensation seeking, or growing up in a low-income family. Although the issue of correlation versus causation can be unraveled to some extent by using a **longitudinal study** design that follows adolescents over time, and by considering the results of other studies that have asked similar questions in different ways, the conclusions drawn also depend on the judgment of the scholars who are interpreting the data. Misinterpreting correlation as causation is a mistake made frequently, even by scientists, as we will see in the course of this book.

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experimental research method A research method that entails assigning participants randomly to an experimental group that received a treatment and a control group that does not receive the treatment, then comparing the two groups in a posttest.

experimental group In experimental research, the group that receives the treatment.

control group In experimental research, the group that does not receive the treatment.

interventions Programs intended to change the attitudes and/or behavior of the participants.

natural experiment A situation that occurs naturally but that provides interesting scientific information to the perceptive observer.

monozygotic (MZ) twins Twins with exactly the same genotype. Also known as identical twins.

dizygotic (DZ) twins Twins with about half their genotype in common, the same as for other siblings. Also known as fraternal twins.

correlation versus causation A correlation is a predictable relationship between two variables, such that knowing one of the variables makes it possible to predict the other. However, just because two variables are correlated does not mean that one causes the other.

longitudinal study A study in which data is collected from the participants on more than one occasion.

Once a scholar writes a manuscript describing the methods used, the results of the statistical analyses, and the interpretation of the results, the scholar typically submits the manuscript to a professional journal. The editor of the journal then sends the manuscript out for review by other scholars. In other words, the manuscript is **peer-reviewed** for its scientific accuracy and credibility and for the importance of its contribution to the field. The editor relies on the reviews by the scholars' peers in deciding whether or not to accept the manuscript for publication. If the editor determines that the manuscript has passed the peer-review process successfully, the article is published in the journal. Some of the journals that publish peer-reviewed articles on adolescence and emerging adulthood are *Journal of Adolescent Research, Youth & Society, Journal of Adolescence, Journal of Youth Studies, Journal of Youth & Adolescence,* and *Journal of Research on Adolescence.* In addition to research articles, most journals publish occasional theoretical articles and review articles that integrate findings from numerous other studies. Scholars studying adolescence and emerging adulthood also publish the results of their research in books, and often these books go through the peer-review process.

Choose a topic on adolescence and emerging adulthood that you would be interested in studying. Which methodological approach would you use, and why?

Theories and Research

A crucial part of the scientific process in any field is the development of theories. A good theory presents a set of interconnected ideas in an original and insightful way and points the way to further research. Theories and research are intrinsically connected: A theory generates hypotheses that can be tested in research, and research leads to modifications of the theory, which generate further hypotheses and further research. A good example of this is G. Stanley Hall's storm and stress theory. His theory has generated a great deal of re-

search in the past century; in turn, this research has resulted in modifications of his theory because it showed that storm and stress was not as extreme and was not universal in adolescence as he had proposed. Research still continues on the questions his theory provoked, such as the extent to which conflict with parents is common in adolescence (Arnett, 1999a; Laursen, Coy, & Collins, 1998).

This book includes no separate chapter on theories, not because I do not think theories are important but because I think theories and research are intrinsically connected and should be presented together. Theories are presented in every chapter in relation to the research they have generated and the questions they have raised for future research. However, in the next section I present an outline of a cultural theory of development that applies to a wide range of topics.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory

One important cultural theory is Urie Bronfenbrenner's **ecological theory** of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1980, 1998, 2000, 2005). 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 argued, 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 recent writings (Bronfenbrenner, 2000, 2005; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998), Bronfenbrenner added a biological dimension to his framework and termed it a "bioecological theory," but the distinctive contribution of the theory remains in its portrayal of the cultural environment.

According to Bronfenbrenner, five key levels or *systems* play a part in human development (see Figure 1.3):

- The **microsystem** is Bronfenbrenner's term for the immediate environment, the settings where people experience their daily lives. This is where the person's direct interactions and relationships take place. Microsystems in most cultures include relationships with each parent, with siblings, and perhaps with extended family (if any live in close proximity and are seen on a regular basis); with peers/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.

- 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.

- 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.

- 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 the West, beliefs in the value of individual freedom are reflected in a free market economic system and in governmental systems of representative democracy.

- 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, 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 are much broader than they were half a century ago.
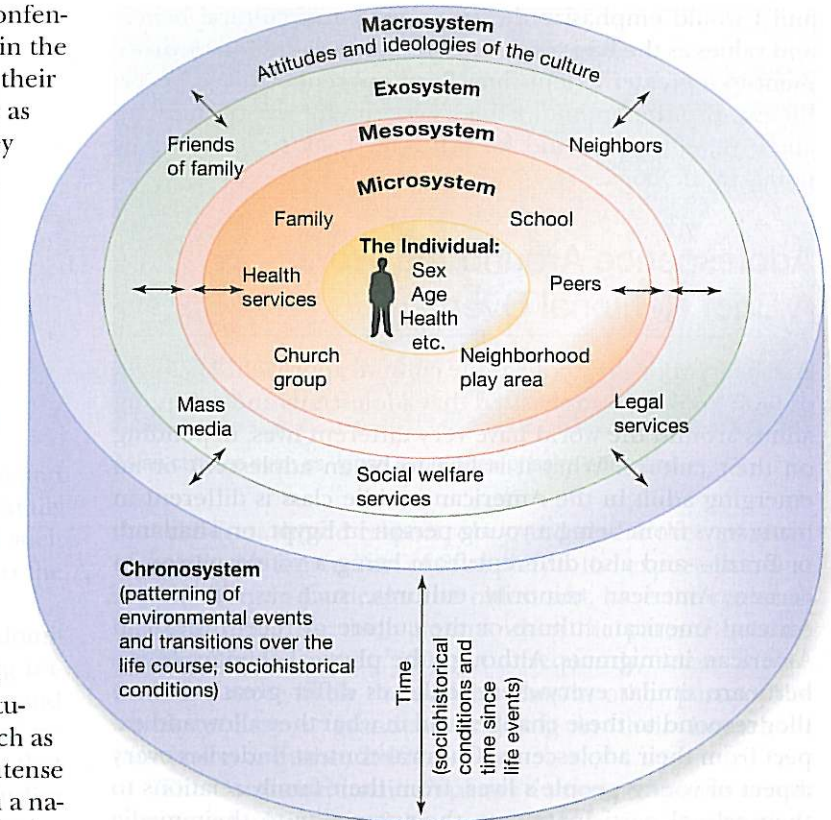

FIGURE 1.3 Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory.
Source: Feldman (2006).

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 cultural beliefs and values are the basis for many of the other conditions of children's development. Furthermore, his theory recognizes the importance of historical changes as influences on development, as we will here. Also, Bronfenbrenner emphasized that children and adolescents are active participants in their development, not merely the passive recipients of external influences, and that view will be stressed throughout this book as well.

Some parts of the theory will be addressed differently in this book. I think media play a more central and direct role in development than they do in Bronfenbrenner's theory,

peer-reviewed When a scholarly article or book is evaluated by a scholar's peers (i.e., other scholars) for scientific credibility and importance.

ecological theory Urie Bronfenbrenner's sociocultural theory of human development, with five interrelated systems: the microsystem (the immediate environment), the mesosystem (connections between microsystems), the exosystem (institutions such as schools and community organizations), the macrosystem (the overarching system of cultural beliefs and values), and the chronosystem (the changes in the individual and the cultural environment over time).

microsystem Bronfenbrenner's term for the settings where people experience their daily lives, including relationships with parents, siblings, peers/friends, teachers, and employers.

context The environmental settings in which development takes place.

mesosystem In Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, the network of interconnections between the microsystems.

exosystem In Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, societal institutions such as schools, religious institutions, systems of government, and media.

macrosystem In Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, the broad system of cultural beliefs and values, and the economic and governmental systems that are built on those beliefs and values.

chronosystem In Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, changes that occur in developmental circumstances over time, both with respect to individual development and to historical changes.

and I would emphasize the macrosystem of cultural beliefs and values as the basis of the rest of the socialization environment to a greater extent than Bronfenbrenner does. Nevertheless, Bronfenbrenner's theory is a useful way of thinking about development, and we will refer back to it at various points in the book.

Adolescence Around the World: A Brief Regional Overview

The heart of this textbook is the cultural approach. Throughout the book it is emphasized that adolescents and emerging adults around the world have very different lives, depending on their culture. What it is like to be an adolescent or an emerging adult in the American middle class is different in many ways from being a young person in Egypt, or Thailand, or Brazil—and also different from being a young person in certain American minority cultures, such as the urban African American culture or the culture of recent Mexican American immigrants. Although the physical changes of puberty are similar everywhere, cultures differ greatly in how they respond to these changes and in what they allow and expect from their adolescents. Cultural context underlies every aspect of young people's lives, from their family relations to their school participation to their sexuality to their media use. As background for understanding the cultural material presented in the chapters to come, here is a brief overview of the cultural context of adolescence in the major regions of the world.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Africa has been described as "a rich continent whose people are poor" (Nsamenang, 1998). The countries of Africa are extremely rich in natural resources such as oil, gold, and diamonds. Unfortunately, due to exploitation by the West in the 19th century followed by corruption, waste, and war in the 20th century, this natural wealth has not yet translated into economic prosperity for the people of Africa. On the contrary, sub-Saharan Africa has the worst performance of any region of the world on virtually every measure of living standards, including income per person, access to clean water, life expectancy, and prevalence of disease (United Nations Development Programme, 2009). Consequently, adolescents in Africa face challenges to their physical health and survival that are more formidable than in any other region of the world.

Although the problems facing young people in Africa are daunting, there are some bright spots, too. In the past decade, the civil wars that flared in many countries in the 1990s died down. Several African governments, most notably South Africa, moved toward more open, stable, and democratic gov-

African adolescents often care for younger siblings.

ernments. Recent economic growth in Africa has been among the strongest of any world region (Zakaria, 2008). There is hope that these positive changes will endure and provide Africa's adolescents with a more promising future.

African cultures also have strengths in their tradition of large families and strong, supportive family relationships (Nsamenang, 2010). In nearly all other regions of the world, birth rates have fallen steadily in recent decades and most women have only one or two children. However, in Africa the current birth rate is five children per woman (Population Reference Bureau, 2009). Consequently, African adolescents typically have many siblings, and they often have responsibilities for caring for their younger siblings. In adolescence and beyond, African siblings have close ties of mutual obligation and support (Nsamenang, 2007).

North Africa and the Middle East

In North Africa and the Middle East, the Muslim religion is the predominant influence on all aspects of cultural life. The strength of Islam varies from countries in which all government policies are based on Islamic principles and texts (e.g., Kuwait and Saudi Arabia) to countries in which the influence of Islam is strong but a semblance of democracy and diversity of opinion also exist (e.g., Jordan and Morocco).

Patriarchal authority—in which the father's authority in the family is to be obeyed unquestioningly—has a long tradi-

Adolescents in North Africa and the Middle East blend Islamic traditions with modern ways.

tion in the cultures of North Africa and the Middle East and is supported by Islam (Booth, 2002). Discussion of family rules in Muslim families is uncommon. Even to suggest such a thing would be considered an unacceptable affront to the authority of the parents, especially the father.

Part of the tradition of patriarchal authority is the dominance of men over women. Islamic societies have a long tradition of keeping tight control over women's appearance and behavior. In many Islamic societies girls and women are required to wear a **chador** or **burka**, which are garments that cover the hair and part or all of the face and body. Muslim girls and women are often expected to wear these garments in public as a way of being modest, beginning at puberty. In some Islamic societies, women are not allowed to go out of the house unless accompanied by a male (Booth, 2002). Virginity before marriage is highly prized, and violation of this taboo can result in the most severe punishments, even death (Constable, 2000). Although in many Muslim countries young women exceed young men in educational attainment (UNDP, 2009), in adulthood women are generally discouraged from working outside the home. Consequently, adolescent girls in many countries in North Africa and the Middle East face sharply limited opportunities in adulthood.

Although the cultures of North Africa and the Middle East are deeply rooted in Islamic traditions, they are changing in response to globalization. Many young people in this region today are highly attracted to the popular culture and information technologies of the West (e.g., Booth, 2002; Davis & Davis, 1989, 2007). Nevertheless, Islam currently remains strong, even among the young, and the strength of fundamentalist Islam is growing.

Asia

Asia comprises a vast and diverse area, ranging from countries that are highly industrialized (e.g., Japan) to countries that have recently industrialized (e.g., South Korea) to countries that are rapidly industrializing (e.g., China). Nevertheless, these countries share certain common characteristics and challenges.

The cultures of Asia have been profoundly influenced by Confucianism, a set of beliefs and precepts attributed to the philosopher Confucius, who lived around 550 to 480 B.C. One of the tenets of Confucianism is **filial piety**, which holds

Asian cultures such as Japan strongly emphasize education.

that children should respect, obey, and revere their parents, especially the father. Part of filial piety is the expectation that the children, in particular the oldest son, have the responsibility of caring for their parents when the parents become elderly (Nelson et al., 2004). Consequently, Asian adolescents are more likely than adolescents in other parts of the world to have a grandparent living in their household (Stevenson & Zusho, 2002).

The Confucian tradition places a strong emphasis on education, which is one of the reasons for the intense focus on education in the lives of young people in Asian cultures today. As we will see in Chapter 10, high school tends to present strong pressures for young people in Asian societies, because performance on college entrance exams largely determines their path through adult life. This system is facing increasing criticism within Asian societies by those who argue that young people should not be subjected to such pressure at a young age and should be allowed more time for fun (Lee & Larson, 2000; Nelson & Chen, 2007).

India

Geographically, India is part of Asia, but it is has such a large population (over a billion people) and a distinctive cultural tradition that it merits separate attention here. Unlike the rest of Asia, India's cultural tradition is based not in Confucianism but in the Hindu religion. However, India also has the second largest Muslim population in the world (after Indonesia), nearly 300 million.

India is one of the few countries in the world that does not have compulsory education for children or adolescents (Chaudhary & Sharma, 2007; Verma & Saraswathi, 2002). Consequently, many young people are illiterate, especially girls in rural areas. Many parents do not believe girls should be educated beyond a minimal ability to write letters and keep household accounts. Rural areas in India have relatively few schools, and those that exist tend to be poorly funded and staffed by teachers who are poorly trained. Access to education is much higher in urban areas, for girls as well as boys. In its urban areas India also has a large number of highly educated emerging adults, especially in fields such as medicine and information technologies, and they have made

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patriarchal authority Cultural belief in the absolute authority of the father over his wife and children.

chador or **burka** A garment that covers the hair and most of the face, worn by many girls and women in Muslim societies.

filial piety Confucian belief, common in many Asian societies, that children are obligated to respect, obey, and revere their parents, especially the father.

Many Indian adolescents work in manufacturing jobs such as carpet weaving.

India a world economic leader in these areas (Chaudhary & Sharma, 2007).

Also contributing to high illiteracy in India is widespread child and adolescent labor, with jobs ranging from carpet weaving to mines, cigarette manufacturing, and gem polishing, often in extremely unsafe and unhealthy conditions (Burra, 1997; ILO, 2002). Parents often prefer to have their children and adolescents working, and thus contributing to the family income, rather than attending school. Consequently, the government has taken few steps to restrict child and adolescent labor.

A distinctive feature of Indian culture is the **caste system**. According to this tradition, people are believed to be born into a particular caste based on their moral and spiritual conduct in their previous life (reincarnation is central to the Hindu beliefs held by most Indians). A person's caste then determines his or her status in Indian society. Only persons of elite castes are considered to be eligible for positions of wealth and power. Persons of lower castes are considered worthy only of the lowest paying, dirtiest, lowest status jobs. Also, marrying outside one's caste is strongly discouraged. Adolescents from lower castes are less likely to attend school than adolescents from higher castes, which restricts the jobs available to them as adults (Verma & Saraswathi, 2000).

Family relations are notably strong and warm in Indian families. Adolescents in India spend most of their leisure time with their families rather than with their friends, and

caste system Hindu belief that people are born into a particular caste based on their moral and spiritual conduct in their previous life. A person's caste then determines their status in Indian society.
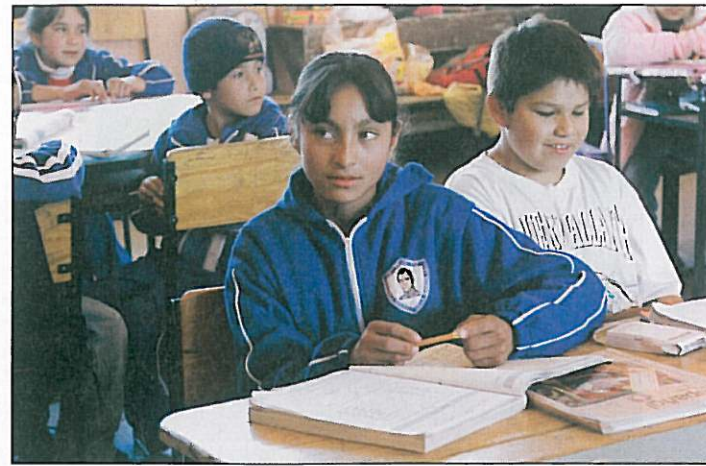
they are happiest when with their families (Larson et al., 2000). Even highly educated emerging adults in India often prefer to have their parents arrange their marriage, which shows how deeply they trust and rely on their parents (Reddy & Gibbons, 2002). Indian families are discussed in further detail in Chapter 5.

Latin America

Latin America comprises a vast land area of diverse cultures but they share a common history of colonization by southern European powers, particularly Spain, and a common allegiance to the Roman Catholic religion. For young people in Latin America, two of the key issues for the 21st century are political stability and economic growth (Galambos & Martinez, 2007). For many decades, the countries of Latin America have experienced repeated episodes of political and economic instability, but today prospects look somewhat brighter. Although political instability continues in some countries, for the most part Latin American countries have now established stable democracies. Economically, too, the situation has improved in recent years in most of Latin America. However unemployment among adults is high throughout Latin America, and unemployment among young people is even higher, often exceeding 25% (Galambos & Martinez, 2007; Welti, 2002).

If the recent trend of political stability can be sustained, economic growth in Latin America is likely to improve. Young people in Latin America are obtaining increased education, which should help prepare them for the increasingly information-based global economy. Also, the birth rate in this region has declined sharply in the past two decades, and consequently the children who are now growing up should face less competition in the job market as they enter adolescence and emerging adulthood (Galambos & Martinez, 2007).

The West

"The West" is less a regional grouping than a cultural grouping that refers to the countries of Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Western countries are notably stable, democratic, and affluent. Young people in the

Educational attainment is increasing among adolescents in Latin America.

West generally have access to opportunities for secondary and higher education, and they can choose from a wide range of occupations (Arnett, 2002b). Most young people in the West have a wide range of leisure opportunities. In contrast to adolescents in other regions of the world, adolescents in the West spend most of their time (outside school) in leisure with their friends, rather than studying or working for their families. A substantial proportion of their leisure is media-based, including television, computer games, text messaging, listening to portable music, and using social networking websites such as MySpace and Facebook.

Although young people in Western countries are obtaining increased education, with many of them remaining in school through their early 20s, educational opportunities are not evenly distributed in most Western countries (Arnett, 2002b). Emerging adults in minority groups often obtain higher education at rates considerably lower than emerging adults in the majority cultures (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2009). Unemployment is also high among emerging adults in Western countries, especially among minorities (Sneeding & Phillips, 2002). Throughout Western countries, young minorities are disadvantaged in the workplace in part because of lower levels of education and training and in part because of prejudice and discrimination from the majority (Kracke et al., 1998; Liebkind & Kosonen, 1998).

Implications of Cultural Context

The overview I have just presented gives a brief look at the cultural contexts of adolescence and emerging adulthood, and you will be learning a lot more about young people's lives in different parts of the world in the course of the book. However, even this general overview shows you how different it is to be an adolescent or emerging adult depending on where in the world you live. Adolescents in some cultures are likely to be in school for most of a typical day through their teens and even into emerging adulthood; adolescents in other cultures begin working early in life and have little chance of obtaining education beyond grade school. Adolescents in some cultures grow up as part of a large extended family; adolescents in other cultures grow up in a small nuclear family and may not even have

In the West, adolescents' leisure is often media-based.

a sibling. Emerging adults in some cultures have a wide range of occupational possibilities; for emerging adults in other cultures the range is narrow or nonexistent, as lack of education leaves them unprepared for any but the most unskilled labor, or, for young women, as cultural beliefs about women's roles exclude them from the workplace.

This is why cultural context is essential to a full understanding of the adolescent and emerging adult experience. Throughout the book, I will present examples from many different cultures for each topic we address. In each chapter I also present a box called Cultural Focus, which looks in more detail at one particular culture with respect to the topic of the chapter. In addition, I often critique research from a cultural perspective. By the time you finish this book I would like you to be able to *think culturally*, so that you can analyze and critique research for whether it does or does not take culture into account.

Other Themes of the Book

In additon to the cultural approach, a number of other themes will be part of every chapter: historical contrasts, the interdisciplinary approach, gender issues, and globalization.

Historical Contrasts

In the same way that we can learn a lot about adolescence and emerging adulthood from comparing different cultures, we can also learn a great deal by comparing the lives of adolescents and emerging adults today to the lives of their counterparts in other times. Throughout the book, I provide historical information on each of the topics we discuss. Also, each chapter has a box entitled Historical Focus that provides more detailed information on a specific issue in a specific historical period.

Interdisciplinary Approach

Most scholars studying adolescence and emerging adulthood are psychologists. They have been trained in psychology, and they work as professors in the psychology departments of colleges and universities. However, many scholars in other disciplines also study adolescence and emerging adulthood. Anthropology's recent studies we have already discussed. Sociology has a long tradition of scholarship on adolescence and emerging adulthood, including some of the most important studies in such areas as peer relations, delinquency, and the transition to adulthood. Physicians, especially psychiatrists and pediatricians,

have also made important contributions, most notably concerning the biology of adolescence and emerging adulthood and the treatment of psychological disorders that may occur during these age periods, such as depression. Scholars in education have contributed insightful work on adolescents' and emerging adults' development in relation to school, as well as other topics. In recent decades historians have published a number of excellent studies on adolescence and emerging adulthood.

The boundaries we set up between different disciplines are useful in some ways, but they are essentially artificial. If you want to understand development in adolescence and emerging adulthood, you should seek insights wherever you can find them. I want you to have as full an understanding of adolescence and emerging adulthood as possible by the time you finish this book, and toward that goal I will use material from psychology, anthropology, sociology, education, history, and other disciplines.

Gender Issues

In every culture, gender is a key issue in development throughout the life span (Carroll & Wolpe, 2005; Hatfield & Rapson, 2006). The expectations cultures have for males and females are different from the time they are born. Children become aware of their own gender by the time they are about 2 years old, and with this awareness they grow sensitive to the differences in what is considered appropriate behavior for each gender. Differences in cultural expectations related to gender typically become more pronounced at puberty. Adolescence and emerging adulthood are, among other things, periods of preparation for taking on adult roles in the family and in work. In most cultures, these roles differ considerably depending on whether you are male or female, so the expectations for male and female adolescents and emerging adults differ accordingly. Expected behaviors in the courtship and sexual behavior that are typically part of adolescence and emerging adulthood also differ considerably between males and females in most cultures.

Although all cultures have different expectations for males and females, the degree of the differences varies greatly among cultures. In the majority cultures of the West these days, the differences are relatively blurred: Men and women hold many of the same jobs, wear many of the same clothes (e.g., blue jeans, T-shirts), and enjoy many of the same entertainments. If you have grown up in the West, you may be surprised to learn how deep gender differences go in many other cultures. For example, in Morocco, boys are more or less expected to become sexually experienced before marriage (Davis & Davis, 1989, 2007). Girls, on the other hand, are expected to be virgins on their wedding night. Thus, the boys' first sexual experience is typically with a prostitute. The morning after a wedding, bride and groom are obliged to hang the sheet from their bed out the window, complete with a bloody stain on it to prove that the girl's hymen was broken on the wedding night, confirming that she had been a virgin until that time.

Although nothing comparable to this exists in the West, there are gender-specific expectations in the West, too. Even now, there are few male nurses or secretaries or full-time fathers, and there are few female truck drivers or engineers or U.S. senators. The differences in expectations for males and females may be more subtle in the West than in some other cultures, but they remain powerful, and they are a key part of adolescence and emerging adulthood. Throughout the book, I bring up gender differences for each of the topics we address, and Chapter 5 is devoted specifically to gender issues. By the end of the book, I want you to have a broader sense of how males and females are treated differently in cultures around the world, and of how your own culture has shaped your development in gender-specific ways you may not have realized before now.

Globalization

Researchers on adolescence have recently begun giving more attention to cultural influences on development in adolescence and emerging adulthood. However, this attention to culture comes at a time in world history when the boundaries that give cultures their distinctiveness are becoming steadily fainter (Arnett, 2002a; Fukuyama, 1993; Zakaria, 2008), and the world is becoming increasingly integrated into a global culture—a "global village," as the social philosopher Marshall McLuhan put it some years ago. No traditional culture has remained exempt from these changes. You can go to the remotest rain forest culture in Venezuela, the northernmost Arctic village in Canada, or the smallest mountain village of New Guinea, and you will find that every one of them is being drawn inexorably into a common world culture. Our exploration of development in adolescence and emerging adulthood would not be complete without an account of these changes, which reflect the **globalization** of adolescence and emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2002a; Larson et al., 2010).

Globalization means that increasing worldwide technological and economic integration is making the world "smaller," more homogeneous. As a consequence of the globalization of adolescence and emerging adulthood, young people around the world experience increasingly similar environments. Adolescents and emerging adults in many parts of the world are growing up listening to much of the same music, watching many of the same movies, going to school for an increasing number of years, learning how to use personal computers, drinking the same soft drinks, and wearing the same brands of blue jeans. The appeal of being connected to a global culture appears to be especially high among adolescents and emerging adults (Arnett, 2002a; Schlegel,

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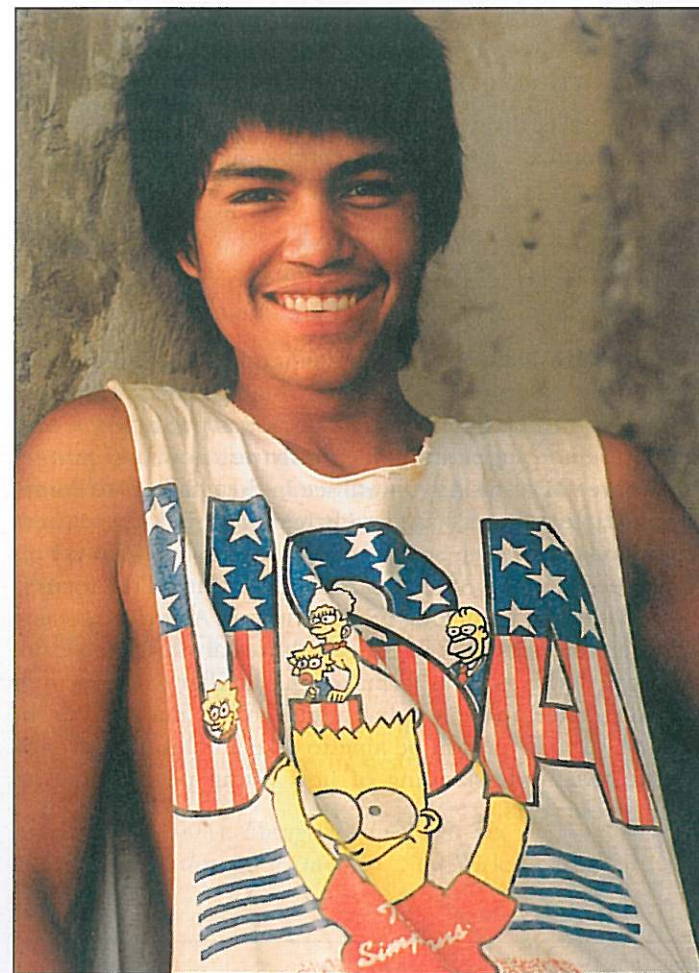
The globalization of adolescence: A Venezuelan adolescent's T-shirt depicts characters from the American TV show *The Simpsons*.

1998, 2000). Perhaps this is because they are more capable than children of seeking out information beyond the borders of their own culture—through travel and the Internet, for example—and are less committed to established roles and a set way of life than adults are.

THINKING CRITICALLY ●●●

Have you traveled to another country in recent years? If so, can you think of examples you have witnessed that reflect the globalization of adolescence? If not, can you think of examples you have read about or heard about? What positive and negative consequences do you anticipate from the globalization of adolescence?

Globalization does not mean that young people everywhere are growing up in exactly the same way or becoming exactly alike in their cultural identity. The more typical pattern worldwide is that young people are becoming increasingly **bicultural** in their identities, with one identity for participation in their local culture and one identity for participation in the global culture (Arnett, 2002a), for example through e-mail or in interactions with foreign visitors. It

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should also be noted that although many young people participate eagerly in the global culture, other adolescents and emerging adults are at the forefront of growing resistance to globalization, for example in protests against the actions of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Arnett, 2002a; Welti, 2002).

Throughout the book, I present examples of how globalization is affecting the lives of adolescents and emerging adults. We will consider how this trend is likely to affect their futures in both positive and negative ways.

Framework of the Book

Following this introductory chapter, the book is divided into three sections. The first section, Foundations, includes chapters on five different areas of development: Biological Foundations, Cognitive Foundations, Cultural Beliefs, Gender, and The Self. These chapters describe the areas that form the foundation for young people's development across a variety of aspects of their lives. Together, these chapters form the basis for understanding development as it takes place in various contexts.

Thus, the first section sets the stage for the second section, called Contexts. Context is the term scholars use to refer to the environmental settings in which development takes place. This section has chapters on six different contexts: Family Relationships; Friends and Peers; Love and Sexuality; School; Work; and Media.

The third section is entitled Problems and Resilience. The sole chapter in this section addresses problems ranging from risky automobile driving to drug use to depression. It also examines **resilience**, which is the ability of children and adolescents who are at-risk for problems to avoid falling prey to those risks.

SUMMING UP

This chapter has introduced you to the central ideas and concepts that we will be considering throughout the rest of the book. The following summarizes the key points we have discussed:

- The cultural approach taken in this book means that adolescence and emerging adulthood will be portrayed as being culturally constructed; cultures determine what the experience of these age periods is like. It will be emphasized that what it is like to be an adolescent or an emerging adult varies widely among cultures.

- Adolescence has a long history in Western societies as a specific period of life between childhood and adulthood. However, it was only during the years 1890–1920 that adolescence developed into its modern form, as a period of life when young people are largely excluded from adult work and spend their time mostly among their peers.
- *Emerging adulthood* is the term for the period from ages 18 to 25. The distinctive characteristics of this age period are that it is the age of identity explorations, the age of instability, the self-focused age, the age of feeling in-between, and the age of possibilities.
- The scientific method includes standards of hypotheses, sampling, procedure, method, analysis, and interpretation. A variety of specific methods for data collection are used in the study of adolescence and emerging adulthood, ranging from questionnaires and interviews to ethnographic research to experimental research.
- Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory emphasizes the cultural environment that people experience as they develop and the ways the different levels of a person's environment interact. There are five levels or *systems* in the theory: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem.
- The cultural context of adolescence and emerging adulthood varies widely by world regions. These cultural

differences influence a variety of aspects of development in adolescence and emerging adulthood, from physical health to education and work to family relationships.
- The book is divided into three major sections: Foundations, Contexts, and Problems and Resilience.

In each chapter, this Summing Up section briefly restates the main points of the chapter and then offers some reflections on what we know at this point and what we have yet to learn.

The study of adolescence and emerging adulthood is relatively new. Adolescence has been established as a distinct field only since G. Stanley Hall's work was published a century ago; emerging adulthood is only just now becoming a distinct area of study. As you will see in the chapters to come, a remarkable amount has already been learned about these age periods. However, so far most research has focused on young people in the American majority culture. That focus is now broadening to include other groups in American society as well as young people in other cultures around the world. One goal of this book is to make you familiar with research on adolescence and emerging adulthood in many different cultures, so that you will be able to take a cultural approach in your own understanding of how young people develop during these years.

KEY TERMS

FOR FURTHER READING

Arnett, J. J. (2007). *International encyclopedia of adolescence.* New York: Routledge. Two volumes with chapter-length entries on adolescence in nearly 100 countries in every part of the world.

Arnett, J. J. (2004). *Emerging adulthood: The winding road from the late teens through the twenties.* New York: Oxford University Press. An overview of my theory and research on emerging adulthood, with chapters on topics ranging from love and sex to work to beliefs and values.

Arnett, J. J., & Tanner, J. L. (Eds.) (2006). *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century.* A recent edited book containing a summary of the existing scholarship on emerging adulthood in the United States. Contains chapters on a wide variety of topics, such as identity development, family relationships, mental health, sexuality, and media use.

Hall, G. S. (1904). *Adolescence: Its psychology and its relation to physiology, anthropology, sociology, sex, crime, religion, and education* (Vols. I & II). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. These are two thick volumes, each over 500 pages, but you may find it enjoyable to browse through them to get a sense of Hall's ideas. This will also give you a sense of how the scientific approach to the study of adolescence has changed since Hall's time.

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