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## OPERTINIA Adolescence: A Multidisciplinary View

Richard M. Lerner and  
Terryl T. Foch (Eds.)

Biological-Psychosocial Interactions  
in Early Adolescence  
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Review by  
Jacquelyne S. Eccles and  
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With regard to the effect of acquired hearing loss on personality structure, we can safely conclude that it does not cause increased levels of suspiciousness, does not predispose the individual to a paranoid psychosis, or does not bring about any measurable change in personality whatsoever. (p. 151)

However, the incidence of abnormal SAD scores was 18%, just as in the first survey, reaffirming that these hearing aid owners are suffering psychological disturbance that "involves markedly increased levels of stress" (p. 153). But if the hearing loss is really the basic cause of the stress, then why did the second study—involving, as it did, severe losses—fail to show a significantly higher incidence than the first study? Thomas can only appeal to obscure "systematic sample differences" (p. 123) to explain this anomaly; the possibility that the true control incidence is something other than 5% is not even mentioned. Actually, in view of all the problems in communication faced daily by these people, as revealed by the questionnaire covering experiences of social handicap, what is probably remarkable here is that 82% do not show these signs of stress. One cannot help speculating that should the time ever come for a second-ever "systematic investigation into the psychological and

American work. This testifies to the usefulness of an exchange of ideas, and of a cumulative approach to science. New ideas and theories in social psychology may emerge from a specific cultural, social, and historical condition, but they can prove their usefulness beyond that condition. Social psychology is not entirely parochial. Work being done in Anglo-American countries can usefully be combined theoretically and empirically with that from German speaking countries. This book shows that Germans know and use what their colleagues are doing but that they also contribute equally, though with sometimes different emphases. ■

## Adolescence: A Multidisciplinary View

Richard M. Lerner and  
Terryl T. Foch (Eds.)

Biological-Psychosocial Interactions  
in Early Adolescence  
Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1987. 394 pp.  
ISBN 0-89859-787-0. \$39.95

Reviewed by  
Jacquelynn S. Eccles and  
Christy Miller

Richard M. Lerner, professor of child and adolescent development at The Pennsylvania State University, is author of *Concepts and Theories of Human Development* (2nd ed.). ■ Terryl T. Foch is adjunct professor of psychology at The Pennsylvania State University. ■ Jacquelynn S. Eccles is professor of psychology and assistant vice-president for research at the University of Michigan. ■ Christy Miller is a doctoral candidate in developmental psychology at the University of Michigan.

According to the editors, this book explores "current theory and research about the nature and extent of biological-psychological interactions in early adolescence," using a multidisciplinary approach (p. 1). Lerner and Foch argue that the rich interplay of biological, psychosocial, and cultural influences on development during adolescence necessitates, as well as provides, a unique opportunity for "multidisciplinary, theoretical and empirical collaboration." They also stress the importance of a life-span perspective in analyzing the early adolescent period. Authors of the various chapters were se-

lected because they exemplify this multidisciplinary life-span approach in either their theoretical or empirical work. In general the book does a reasonably good job of meeting its goals. It is quite informative regarding conceptual models, methodology, and the relations among a wide variety of input and outcome variables. And much of the work is truly multidisciplinary.

The first half of the book contains five theoretical chapters. Three of these (Lerner and Foch, Lerner, and Petersen) provide general multidisciplinary models for understanding adolescence within a life-span, biopsychosocial framework. All three give an excellent introduction to the complexity of development during this period, the importance of contextual and bidirectional effects, and the value of a goodness-of-fit perspective to understanding social development during this period. The other two chapters introduce two new perspectives: behavioral genetics (Plomin and Fulker) and sociobiological (MacDonald). Both offer interesting introductions to their fields, but they are less developed in terms of their immediate applicability to general research on American adolescence due, primarily, to the current status of empirical work in these fields.

The second half of the book contains nine empirical chapters, each of which summarizes the authors' current work. Five chapters (Brooks-Gunn, Crockett and Petersen; Dornbusch, Gross, Duncan, and Ritter; Lerner, Kucher, East, Lerner, and Lerner; and Simmons, Carlton-Ford, and Blyth) report on either cross-sectional or longitudinal studies of early adolescent psychosocial development, primarily in the school and peer context. Two chapters report on hormonal effects on physical and psychosocial changes (Comite et al.; Nottelman et al.); one (Newcombe and Dubas) reviews evidence of the association between pubertal timing and cognitive ability; and one (Hill and Holmbeck) summarizes research on family adaptation to early adolescent development.

There are two main drawbacks to the book as a whole: (a) the book's themes are not drawn together particularly well across the chapters, and (b) the empirical biological perspective, when it is presented, is not as well integrated as one would hope into the bio-psychosocial perspective outlined so cogently in the chapters by Lerner and Foch; Lerner, Petersen, and Brooks-Gunn.

The first drawback represents a problem common to many edited volumes. It is best illustrated by comparing the first

and second halves of the book to each other. The first half of the book outlines a number of interesting theoretical frameworks that could be used in the study of bio-psychosocial interactions during adolescence. Some of these models are accompanied by useful methodological suggestions and implications that can be used both to formulate one's own research and to evaluate the research of others. The second half of the book is comprised of nine empirical reports. By and large, these chapters are quite interesting and informative. Unfortunately, the data presented are rarely tied explicitly to the theoretical formulations outlined in the first half. Although a few of the authors do this several do not. Since most of these chapters have implicit relevance to the models presented in the first half of the book, it would have been helpful for the authors in each of the empirical chapters to discuss their findings in terms of the various theories outlined in Part 1.

The second problem reflects, I believe, the state of the art: There is still very little truly multidisciplinary work on early adolescence that involves both biologists and social scientists. Nevertheless, we were struck with the major strides in this direction represented particularly well by the work discussed in the chapters by Brooks-Gunn; Nottelman et al.; Petersen; and Lerner et al. We were also struck by the impressive multidisciplinary work in the other chapters involving both social and psychological factors. This type of work is particularly well represented in the chapters by Dornbusch, et al.; Hill and Holmbeck; and Simmons, which outline the importance of family dynamics, maturational timing, and school transitions for early adolescent psychological development. The impact of contextual effects on the meaning of biological maturation is also nicely illustrated in the chapter by Brooks-Gunn. Thus, although the inner-biological aspects of early adolescent development are not as well integrated into the empirical models, the chapters, by and large, do provide theoretically rich, multidimensional approaches that exemplify the life-span perspective outlined by Lerner and Foch; Lerner; and Petersen in their introductory chapters.

In reading the book, one is given a sense of the multitude of psychological variables that are potentially related to the biological process of puberty. For those who might have a narrow definition of biological and psychosocial development at adolescence, this book will be a mind-broadening experience. Biological

variables discussed include pubertal status (sometimes further broken down into development of the various secondary sexual characteristics), pubertal timing, athleticism, abnormal pubertal development, hormonal development, physical attractiveness, height, and weight. Psychosocial variables discussed include attitudes toward menstruation, eating disorders, self-image, body image, aspiration to adult roles, deviant and problem behavior, dating, depression, relationships with parents and peers (same and opposite sex), cognitive abilities, school achievement, educational aspirations, moods, bed-wetting, family decision-making practices, independence, and involvement with extracurricular activities.

The chapters provide a good overview of the kind of work being done in this field and the substantive relations being found. The complexity of relations being the need for a life-span, multidisciplinary perspective is also well documented. Consequently, the book is useful both as an introduction for novices and as a comprehensive update and review for researchers already active in this field. ■

## Hearing Loss and Mental Health

Alan J. Thomas

*Acquired Hearing Loss: Psychological and Psychosocial Implications*

Orlando, FL: Academic Press, 1984.

225 pp. \$40.00 (£30.00)

*Review by*

W. Dixon Ward

*Alan J. Thomas is senior lecturer in psychology at Darwin Institute of Psychology (Casuarina, Australia). ■ W. Dixon Ward is professor in the Departments of Communication Disorders, Otolaryngology, Environmental Health, and Psychology at the University of Minnesota. He is author of the chapter "Auditory After-Effects of Noise" in A. L. Saenz and R. W. B. Stephens, (Eds.) Noise Pollution.*

Can deafness drive you crazy? Or, more prosaically, will progressive loss of hearing make you a bit peculiar? That is the question that is addressed in this book, which presents the results of two questionnaire surveys, results already disseminated in some eight journal articles. Such duplication is justified by the author,

however, on the grounds that these surveys constitute "the first-ever systematic investigation into the psychological and psychosocial effects of acquired hearing loss in adults of working age" (p. vii). In a competent critique of earlier evidence that, for example, hard-of-hearing people tend to become suspicious to the point of frank paranoia, Thomas makes it clear that such generalizations rest only on the equating of coexistence with causality, anecdotal evidence, armchair analysis, or studies of biased populations (e.g., only members of a hard-of-hearing society). Obviously there is a need for a careful study of the behavior of a representative sample of postlingually hearing-impaired adults and that of an appropriate control group.

The sample actually targeted for study in the first survey consisted of all 16 to 64-year-old men and 16 to 59-year-old women who had possessed for at least a year a behind-the-ear or body-worn hearing aid given to them by one of three British National Health Service clinics in London between 1970 and 1977. How well this sample would represent "adults of working age" is obviously a matter of conjecture. Not included, for example, were the hearing impaired who bought their own hearing aids or who had never sought medical assistance. No control group was established.

Of these 440 free hearing aid owners, 211 were willing to be given, in addition to standard tests of auditory function, an oral questionnaire, consisting of 74 items aimed at determining the individual's experience of feeling handicapped in everyday living; a 14-item States of Anxiety and Depression (SAD) inventory that was given halfway through the aforementioned interview; and, at the end of the interview, three questions directed at determining "suspiciousness" or, better, "mistrustfulness" (e.g., they were asked to agree or disagree with questions such as, "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?").

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