

# Faculty Development Through The Life Course

## *Application of Recent Adult Development Theory and Research*

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**Abstract.** Recent work in adult development serves as a conceptual base for examining personal and professional developmental potentials, tasks, and conflicts for five faculty groups. The five groups are *Age 30 Transition faculty*, *Dual Career Couple faculty*, *Midlife faculty*, *Late Entry faculty*, and *Senior Retiring faculty*. These groups were selected because they represent different intersection points of chronological and organizational age and because they illustrate increasingly difficult personal and organizational dilemmas facing faculty and administrators. For each faculty group these dilemmas will be identified and appropriate personal, organizational or policy interventions proposed.

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### Introduction

This paper uses current adult development/social systems theory and research as a basis for conceptualizing and examining personal and professional developmental issues for five selected faculty groups. The five groups are designated *Age Thirty Transitional faculty*, *Dual Career Couple faculty*, *Midlife faculty*, *Late Entry*

*faculty*, and *Senior Retiring faculty*. Issues related to personal and professional developmental potentials, tasks, and conflicts are explored for each group. These are related to the organizational structure and dynamics of academia as they impinge on the functioning of individual faculty. For each grouping, various developmental tasks, potentialities, and processes or critical transitional periods along the life course are presented and discussed in terms of their impact on faculty growth, commitment, productivity, morale, and compatibility with the expectations of the university setting and their respective professional roles. Implications for personal as well as organizational support networks and change paradigms are presented and discussed where appropriate to these life phase developmental tasks.

Our conceptualization of faculty development builds upon a psychological and systems viewpoint presented elsewhere (Cytrynbaum et al., 1980). Major developmental tasks, potentialities, and difficulties emerge at different points along the life course, according to gender. Because these involve different precipitators and developmental tasks, faculty groups have been identified according to gender and general age criteria. Recent theory and research findings will be used as a way of examining commonalities and differences within the five faculty groups. This knowledge base will be supplemented by the results of in-depth formal and informal interviews as well as clinical work with faculty at various points in the life course.

The first part of this paper briefly conceptualizes gender related personality and interpersonal changes that occur during major life course transition periods. Although these changes manifest many idiosyncratic differences, commonalities among the faculty groups can be identified.

The contribution of selected social

systems and organizational parameters to the experience of life course transitions offers a unique perspective on life-span theory. This developmental-social systems point of view will set the stage for the second part of the paper. Here we will consider individual and organization examples and explore their potential to enhance or disrupt the quality of university life. Finally, we will explore selected intervention strategies which can be adapted by both individuals and the organization, resulting in a more adaptive response to developmental transitions.

### A Personality and Social Systems Perspective on Life Course Development

Let us begin by clarifying the use of certain terms. The life course has been described in terms of several important and inevitable phases and transitional periods, or epochs (Gould, 1981; Levinson et al., 1978; Lidz, 1976; Lowenthal, Thurnher, & Chiriboga, 1975; Pollock, 1981; Rapaport & Rapaport, 1980; Vaillant, 1977). The term "transition" implies a process of change moving an individual from one relatively stable stage or period of personality development to another. Although transitions often tend to be experienced as stressful, disruptive, or psychologically painful, they offer opportunity for growth and development. Adults who manage these transitions well are thus prepared for later life tasks. Those who do not may be vulnerable to distress and despair in old age.

Chart I summarizes the views of several recent life-span theorists on the timing of major life transitions. Although there is some disagreement on the exact chronological age for various transitions, most believe that they are

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CHART I  
AGE-SPECIFIC STAGES OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT

	AGES																																		
	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48	50	52	54	56	58	60	62	64	66	68	70	72	74	76	78	80	82	84
ATCHLEY	ADOLESCENCE			YOUNG ADULTHOOD								MIDDLE AGE										LATE MATURITY													
GOULD	Leaving our parent's world			I'm nobody's baby now			Opening up what's inside			MIDLIFE DECADE					BEYOND MIDLIFE																				
LEVINSON	Early Adult Transition			Entering the adult world			AGE 30 TRANSITION			SETTLING DOWN			MIDLIFE TRANSITION			Entering Middle Adulthood			AGE 50 TRANSITION			Culminate Middle Adulthood			Late Adult Transition			LATE ADULTHOOD							
LIDZ	YOUNG ADULTHOOD						MIDDLE YEARS						MIDLIFE CRISIS						LATE ADULTHOOD						OLD AGE										
NEUMANN	PATRIARCHATE						CONFRONTATION												INDIVIDUATION (second half of life)																
NEWMAN & NEWMAN	ADOLESCENCE			EARLY ADULTHOOD						MIDDLE ADULTHOOD									LATE ADULTHOOD																
RAPOPORT & RAPOPORT	ADOLESCENCE			YOUNG ADULTHOOD			ESTABLISHMENT PHASE (early to late)												PRE-RETIREMENT						RETIREMENT										
SHEEHY	Pulling up roots			TRYING TWENTIES			CAREER-PROOFING			Rooting and Extending			DEADLINE DECADE						RENEWAL OR RESIGNATION																
VAILLANT	ADOLESCENCE			INTIMACY						CAREER CONSOLIDATION						GENERATIVITY: a second adolescence																			
GORDON	ADOLESCENCE			YOUNG ADULTHOOD OR YOUTH						EARLY MATURITY						FULL MATURITY						RETIREMENT: at age of onset of serious illness													

"normal" in the sense that they occur inevitably over the course of the life due to the effect of "normally occurring individual and systems precipitators." Most theorists recognize that these normal transitions may result in developmental crises if there are insufficient adaptive resources. A developmental crisis is defined here as a perceived state of physical and psychological distress caused when internal resources and external social support systems are overwhelmed by the demands of developmental tasks.

The precipitators of developmental transitions and transitional crises are multiple and complex, composed of internal individual changes (i.e., biological, emotional, and psychological) as well as external systems changes that impinge on the individual (i.e., occupational setting, family, community, sentiment groups).

The need to jointly consider personality and social systems parameters serves to organize much of this presentation. Chart II below illustrates the application of this viewpoint to a previous analysis of midlife development. We suggest that similar analyses of the major transitions incorporate the following components: 1) precipitators or triggers; 2) tasks in each stage; 3) changes in personality; 4) phaselike developments; and 5) outcomes.

Certain system properties are particularly relevant to the analysis of major life transitions. Thus we assume that any major change in one member of a system has dramatic implications for the couple, family, organizational, or work system in which that individual is embedded. Thus, in addition to understanding the individual's experience of major life transitions, our analysis focuses on relations to partners or spouses, to children, and to job or organizational settings. Relevant systems can exacerbate individual stress, chaos, and conflict, or serve as important support structures. We further assume that because most systems attempt to maintain some form of dynamic stability or equilibrium, major changes, either intrapsychic or behavioral, on the part of individuals will often meet with resistance. Predictable and anticipated developmental transitions, as well as transitional crises, have specific implications and potentially disruptive reverberations for the academic community—repercussions which cannot be ignored. Using this perspective we will now explore each of the five faculty groups, placing special emphasis on the disruptive potential of their unique developmental transitions and struggles. We also suggest organizational interventions which may enhance individual and university adap-

tation.

### Faculty Development From a Life Course Perspective

Few research efforts employ a life span viewpoint in understanding faculty development. There are many studies of career mobility, career development, and career patterns, usually from a predominantly sociological perspective, but these often lack integration of other facets of the individual's development (e.g., Kanter, 1977; Kanter & Stein, 1979; Hall, 1976; Smelser & Erikson, 1980). Some studies have attempted to examine career development within the context of a more general life-span perspective, but these often ignore internal psychological dynamics which may crucially affect the career development (Atchley, 1972; Atchley & George, 1973; Cain, 1974; Clausen, 1972; Faulkner, 1974; Hall, 1976; Jelinek, 1979; Neugarten & Datan, 1973; Neugarten & Moore, 1968; Riley, Johnson, & Foner, 1972; Sarason, 1977). The following discussion strives to integrate research on life-span psychodynamics with observations about faculty career development in specific stages.

### The Age 30 Transition and Female Faculty Development

The Age 30 Transition is a particu-

A SCHEMATIC OVERVIEW OF MIDLIFE OUTCOME

Outcome potential is seen as a complex and multi-determined process composed of the following interrelated factors.

PRECIPITATORS

These include both usual and unusual events that arise from internal and external sources. Events are categorized according to the area of origin and impact, i.e., biological, psychological, interpersonal and sociological or groups. Events include individual changes (physical, career, or family losses and decline) or social context changes (change in roles at home, change in environment, neighborhood or economy)

Precipitators give rise to concomitant developmental tasks at midlife

MIDLIFE DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS

Personalization of death and acceptance of mortality.

Acceptance of biological limitation, decreasing strength and stamina, and increased health risks.

Integration of emergent components of personality, reassessment and restructuring of identity, self-concept and sexual identity.

Reorientation to work and career, creativity and leisure activities. Reassessment of need for power and achievement.

Reassessment of primary relationships, including spouse, parents, children, friends, lovers, and other special individuals.

INDIVIDUAL PREDISPOSITION

This includes personality characteristics (i.e., ego strength, coping mechanisms, level of narcissism, reality testing, ability to tolerate ambivalence, defenses) which predispose individuals to respond differentially to the precipitators. Individual defenses can serve an exclusive protective function for some and effectively block or deny affect related to precipitators.

AND

SOCIAL SYSTEMS PREDISPOSITION

This includes the extent to which primary groups and systems (i.e., family, couples, clubs, work and career groups, sentient, social, political and religious) can adapt and support individual member's engagement with midlife tasks as assessed by the system's flexibility communication, boundary management, leadership, role differentiation, culture and myths. Group response will occur as individual member's attitudes and/or behavior changes.

INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER AND GIVE RISE TO A

DYNAMIC DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS OF CHANGE AND GROWTH

Engagement in developmental change process requires specific abilities (i.e., ability to reality test, tolerate ambivalence, explore new options and components of self, and introspective behavior).

DEVELOPMENTAL CHANGE PROCESS RESULTS IN DIFFERENT LEVELS OF GROWTH, ADAPTATION AND INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL BEHAVIORAL CHANGE. FOUR OUTCOMES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED.

- 1) **REGRESSION:** Casualties of one's own developmental potential expressed in psychopathological symptom formation (depression, anxiety, eating and sleeping disorders, alcoholism, psychosomatic disorders, psychosis and others).
- 2) **ARREST:** Developmental outcome expressed predominantly by depression, boredom, inactivity, withdrawal and a severely narrow life style.
- 3) **DEVIATION:** Primary characteristic involves distortion and sublimation of previously cathected objects and relationships. Individuals prematurely shift investment to new life structure with only partial mourning and integration of losses.
- 4) **RESOLUTION:** Optimal developmental outcome at midlife; results in acceptance of losses and ambivalent feelings, integration of newly emerged personality components, adequate mourning for losses and reinvestment of narcissism in self and other objects and relationships. Well prepared to deal with developmental tasks of the second half of life.

larly interesting period of adult development which presents female faculty with unique dilemmas. It is the blend of developmental tasks with organizational dynamics that often leaves many women confused and frustrated during this time. Our psychological view of professional women considers their struggles and conflicts in the context of those factors contributed by the institutional setting.

Much has also been written concerning the normal psychological development of the young adult woman's sense

of self, personal and sexual identity, and its relationship to childbearing and work (Bardwick, 1970; Chodorow, 1978; Erikson, 1968; Mead, 1949; Stewart, 1977). Bardwick (1971) suggests that the twenties are a time when women achieve a "feminine identity" through their major commitment to marriage and childbearing, while the achievement of a more individualistic sense of identity may wait until the thirties or beyond. Stewart (1977), expanding on Levinson's (1978) idea of "The Dream" in the lives of men, proposed that there

were two distinct Dreams for women, a "relational" Dream, which is primarily formed and acted out via intimate interpersonal relationships, usually with husbands and children, and the "individualistic" Dream, usually formed around a career and acted out within a traditionally male context (i.e., the corporation, business, academia, etc.). Many women have reported a struggle between these two types of developmental life patterns which may reach crisis proportion at around age 30 (Hennig & Jardin, 1976; Stewart, 1977; Wilk, 1979). It is at this time in their lives that they engage in serious introspection, self-scrutiny, and attempt to resolve questions concerning the place in their lives of the relational and individualistic components of their Dreams.

Emerging from "putting down roots" in the twenties, these new professionals enter the academic rank of junior faculty. Surviving initiation rituals and the "high" of having accomplished a major career goal, the desire to see the Dream in all of its glory becomes concrete and intensifies significantly. That desire is a powerful precipitator for a major life appraisal. For married women or those in an intimate relationship, there is what ostensibly appears as a withdrawal of energy from the relationship while attempting to survey the fruits of young adulthood during the twenties. The self preoccupation and introspection is often mistaken for withdrawal of feeling.

This shift in investment sets the stage for the growing tension between the occupational dream and the relational dream. It is in some cases played out through a series of complex decisions involving career, lifestyle, relation to family of origin, husband, and children. The choices are tied to the reappraisal and critical review of one's life direction which is a hallmark of this transitional period for women. Career and relationships alike are scrutinized, pulling into focus the difficulties at home as well as on the job. For contemporary women there is a form of dual socialization that presents a new model for emulation, pointedly represented by the *attache case with Better Homes and Gardens* inside.

The prospects for successfully integrating both aspects in a single identity at times seems dismal. The result can be a sense of disillusionment and loss. One woman aptly described it as "I never knew it would be like this." The expectation of having-it-all can lead to pain-

ful disappointments. Another set of themes that emerge at this time also contribute to further dissonance between what was accepted as one's life-course with what glimmers in the distance.

At around age 30, women begin in earnest the task of psychological separation from their family of origin. Even in cases where women had been married for several years, they had often simply transferred dependency from parents to spouse. If the relationship to the spouse is characterized as very close or fused, attempts to individuate or become one's own person can seriously shake the foundation of the relationship. Differentiating oneself from the fused "us" to an autonomous "me" is often experienced as a very disruptive shift. While on one hand examining the nature of the relationship is a step in the new life course path, the transition can be further complicated by the pressure of

a seductive spokesperson with a hidden agenda for having members join her camp. The power of these external and internal socializing "voices" is enhanced by the hypersensitivity of the Age 30 Transition issues.

These developmental tasks and the contribution of organizational dynamics add further to the distress of this particular life passage for women. As junior faculty they are subjected to the myths and fantasies that often surround competent and ambitious women in the workplace. Many become preoccupied with how they are perceived by colleagues. The following are examples of experiences reported in interviews:

- Women are seen as uni-dimensional—either fragile and vulnerable or cold and bitchy; sexualized or neuter.
- Women are virtually invisible within the institution. They report a lack of deference to their position or title, exclusion from important deci-

2. Lack of role models within the organization.

3. Few sanctions to develop a support network within the organization.

4. Limited opportunities for advancement.

5. Personalization of interaction not usually characteristic of male-to-male interaction.

6. Personal collusion with the superwoman myth in response to effort to be viewed as such by other professional women and students.

7. Institutional rewards based on the male model.

8. Impact of quota systems in hiring practices.

9. Role performance inhibited by lack of resource power in the institution.

10. Regular encounters with stereotypic perceptions of women.

The university can demonstrate its cognizance of this developmental struggle and its commitment to assist in a number of ways. Factors 2, 3, 5, 6, and 10 above seem appropriate for faculty development interventions, while the others call for larger scale organizational change efforts.

To assist in resolving these problems, a faculty development program could assist women in:

- finding successful role models within the institution;
- developing a support network within the organization;
- adding the "characteristic male-to-male" interaction patterns to their existing repertoires;
- recognizing and avoiding the "superwoman" myth;
- developing appropriate responses to encounters with the stereotypic responses of women, and assist men in overcoming these stereotypic responses.

Perhaps the most significant organizational intervention that could be made would be a re-evaluation of its overt and covert policies concerning favoritism and nepotism. Changes in longstanding policies concerning the rules of promotion, tenure, and the distribution of lesser organizational rewards are not achieved easily, especially when they are designed to benefit the more powerful male majority, the same majority that usually controls their distribution. This is a necessary step if the university is serious about retaining and utilizing these and other capable junior faculty. The current state of higher education demands that academic administrators be responsive and

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**"Conflict may result when such women enter a competitive, aggressive work environment, seeking growth and fulfillment, but must deal with dependent character traits developed in childhood and reinforced by cultural stereotypes of femininity."**

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the "biological imperative." A host of biological, psychological, and social cues trigger the reverberating alarm that "time is running out." Preoccupation with childbearing and the desire for a stable home structure float between conscious and unconscious awareness.

The end product is a painful balancing act. For these women with children, the desire for new arenas of achievement has its counterpart in the successful career woman grappling with issues of how and when children complete the puzzle. Relational attachment and affiliation needs tip one end of the scale, while achievement and career weigh on the other side. While this internal battle ensues, the external world may be sending a series of conflicting messages. The cheering sections, carrying the banner for various cultural norms, align themselves as to how the dilemma should be resolved. Perhaps the most destructive version is the new woman myth that maintains the romanticized image of mother and homemaker with the superwoman capacity to also be the president of the university. Each point of view has

sion-making processes, and lack of recognition for professional accomplishments.

• Women experience little or no personal power, and only have that authority which is given by the position. Those in a position of legitimate authority were often not authorized by colleagues to exercise it. Women who did exercise their authority and power were often experienced as hostile, intimidating, and aggressive.

• Nurturing or traditional activities were highly valued.

• Advancement within the organization was based on the myth of having a special relationship with male superordinates or males in authority.

#### **Faculty/Organizational Development Implications**

The following were identified as critical factors leading to experiencing the organization as not being supportive of their efforts to perform successfully and competently:

1. Sabotage, devaluation, and ambivalence on the part of colleagues.

meritocratically fair in their dealings with all faculty. The disproportionate representation of female faculty, of all ages, reflects that this has not been the case in the past.

### Dual Career Couple Faculty Development

Within the last decade much has been written about the dual career couple and the dual career family. Recent analyses have taken a psychological approach in examining the dual career family as a deviant form of development, and the unique problems, dilemmas, and stress this places on individuals and the family as a whole (Bailyn, 1973, 1978; Bebbington, 1973; Burke & Weir, 1976; Holmstrom, 1972; Huser & Grant, 1978; Johnson & Johnson, 1977; Papanek, 1973; Rapaport & Rapaport, 1971, 1976; Rice, 1979; Roland & Harris, 1979; Wilk, 1979). Organizational studies (Hall & Hall,

tasks and, where conflicts with children exist, it is usually the woman's career which suffers the most. The day-to-day management of the dual career family system falls heavily on the woman's shoulders, a situation which can and does cause difficulties within the work setting, as well as being a potential source of conflict between the couple.

### Faculty/Organizational Development Implications

Organizational acknowledgement of the dilemmas and issues encountered by the dual career couple can provide important psychological support. Liberal sabbatical policies or the option to split a single position, especially when accompanied by counseling from individuals in positions of authority within the university, can help make conflict management easier. Although we acknowledge the difficult fiscal situation many universities currently face, it

the life course. This includes situations when one member of the couple is more valued by the university than the other, or if the productivity and promotion occur at unequal rates, or if one individual receives an offer for transfer. These are some of the real and difficult problems that can arise when dual career couples are at the same university. Academic settings could meet these contingencies more fairly and honestly and should re-evaluate overt and covert policies concerning nepotism, if they wish to retain a dual career couple as productive members of the faculty.

### Midlife Faculty Development

Midlife is seen as one of several important and inevitable transitions during the life course. Adults who manage the midlife transition well are thus prepared for later life tasks. Those who do not may be vulnerable to distress and despair in old age (Atchley, 1972; Cytrynbaum et al., 1980; Gutmann, 1979; Mayer, 1978; Pollock, 1981; Riegel, 1975).

For the purpose of this paper, the midlife faculty groups consist of men and women in their late 30's to mid or late 50's who are consciously or unconsciously confronting midlife tasks. These are individuals who have usually spent their entire working careers in academic settings. Midlife often coincides with the organizational age of associate and full professor. Due to the occurrence of many anticipated and unanticipated precipitators at this time, these individuals may now be in the process of consciously reassessing selected components of their entire personal and professional lives—past, present, and future. Part of this struggle may include conscious deliberation about a minor or dramatic career shift, whether to a new profession entirely or more focused pursuits within a similar academic unit.

Overt manifestations of this struggle may be present in the form of personal symptomatology and professional malaise. Personally, these individuals may be experiencing generalized depression, loss of motivation and enthusiasm, sadness at the loss of personal and career dream goals (Levinson et al., 1978; Vailant, 1977), and anxiety over awareness of decreasing time left to live and the professional time left to accomplish all of which they had hoped. Some suffer quietly, others enter states of temporary developmental crises, as in-

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1979; Holmstrom, 1972) have analyzed the dilemmas these couples face trying to match their individual career needs and obligations to their needs as a coupling unit. As with the Age-30 transitional faculty, many of the psychological studies on dual career individuals have focused on the specific problems encountered by women concerning their sense of self-identity and sexual identity. A major threat to identity comes from a perceived fear of having to choose between childbearing and career, thereby leaving a major part of their personality unfulfilled (Bardwick, 1971; Barnett & Baruch, 1976; Hennig & Jardin, 1976; Karpel, 1976).

While this may represent the most salient issue for the young dual career women where children are absent from the relationship, a slightly different set of problems exist for the couple when children are present. Here again the female partner appears to be the more affected of the two when she is faced with role conflict and role ambiguity. Recent studies suggest that for dual career marriages with children, there is an unequal division of child-rearing

would also be appropriate to explore the possibility of university-sponsored day-care facilities, or perhaps shared financial support for day-care services through affiliated agencies.

University-run or sponsored day-care facilities represent one of the best support functions the university can invest in to assist both members of the dual-career family in actively pursuing their individual career goals as well as those of the university itself. Continuation of liberal and flexible “hours” will also be facilitative to this couple when children reach school age. Decisions to have a family have both positive and negative implications for couples' career development. These normally occurring dilemmas are real for dual career couples, and universities are in a position to be facilitative and supportive.

Overt support can be given through sabbaticals, flexible teaching schedules, day-care arrangements, counseling, and the possibility of the husband and wife splitting the same position. Likewise the university must be prepared to deal openly and honestly with other unique problems a couple may face throughout

ternal adaptive resources and external support systems are overwhelmed, while still others manifest this pain via alcoholism, psychosomatic illness, and clinical manifestations of depression (Cytrynbaum et al., 1980; Gutmann, 1979b).

Midlife can characteristically be a time of review and disruption in one's personal, family, and work systems triggered by several manifest changes, events or precipitators in the personal, familial, biological, and occupational spheres. Typical internal and external precipitators are: parents become old and die; children leave the nest; friends become ill, die, or move; family and career objectives are accomplished; and opportunities for job advancement become more limited along with physical stamina and vitality (Cytrynbaum et al., 1980). Central to this process is the core psychological task of consciously confronting and acknowledging one's own mortality, giving up one's sense of personal invulnerability, and dealing with "time left to live."

Other midlife tasks are intimately related to the core struggle with death anxiety. Simultaneously one must deal with the emergence of unconscious anxieties and feelings of depression around loss of objects such as one's children, aging parents, and one's youth. One also becomes engaged in the struggle to integrate conflicting forces in the self (e.g., one's creative or loving and destructive or aggressive impulses as well as one's male and female components). In addition, one encounters the recognition that long held hopes, ambitions, and components of the "Dream" must be given up, in the context of the experience of declining health, strength, appearance, and opportunities (Cytrynbaum et al., 1980; Jaques, 1965; Levinson et al., 1978). Chart III, below, contains a convenient summary of the intrapsychic and social systems precipitators and developmental tasks of midlife.

The work of midlife—mourning various losses, confronting one's personal vulnerability and mortality, reassessing the past, and rehearsing in fantasy and action possibilities for the future—is consuming in energy, emotion, and time, for the midlifer as well as for members of his/her immediate family, work, and support systems. Professionally, midlife faculty may demonstrate an "intellectually fallow" period or even professional or personal withdrawal. Their writing and research may stop,

their teaching may be characterized by a lack of enthusiasm or infusion of new ideas, their administrative, counseling, and mentoring functions may be left incomplete or inadequately done. All in all, this can be an extremely stressful period in their lives, in which energy is low and used almost exclusively for defensive, ego review, or introspective work. They may manifest little excitement for the quality academic scholarly work of past periods of their lives.

#### **Faculty/Organizational Development Implications**

As with the other faculty groups, the major responsibility to resolve and adapt to these developmental challenges rests with the individual. However, since successful resolution and adaptation has such significant and widespread ramifications for the university

edge. Previous studies have identified the serious disruptive potential of the midlife experience for certain individuals; therefore formal counseling may represent an appropriate intervention for individuals seriously affected by midlife issues or in crisis.

2. The availability of flexible sabbatical leaves is another important option that can prove invaluable to the midlife faculty at this time. Such leaves will enable him or her to temporarily "step away" from the university setting during crisis or periods of stressful transitions and reassessment, without fearing loss of the security they have worked so long to achieve. The threat to the "financial security" of the university is often used as the major rationale for resisting this option. Since the leave might not be used for academic work or a major project that will directly and immediately benefit the university,

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**"All in all, this can be an extremely stressful period in their lives, in which energy is low and used almost exclusively for defensive, ego review, or introspective work."**

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as a whole, the university has a legitimate stake in assisting these individuals in their personal struggles. Several supportive options are available.

First, the University community must honestly and openly recognize the normalcy of these midlife struggles and costs. Midlife faculty may already be experiencing self-doubts about their state of mental health as well as ability to function as productive members of the faculty. By ignoring the issues, the University as a major work system may be covertly exacerbating the pathological experiences of this period of life, thus increasing the likelihood that the midlifer will continue to be stagnant or, at best, minimally productive within the community. Some of the options open to the University follow:

1. The University could recognize the problem with overt and covert support and encouragement (e.g., time off from teaching, advising, or administrative responsibilities) for individuals to seek professional counseling. This is a critical step in facilitating the successful passage through the midlife transitions, and perhaps the most difficult for administrators or midlifers to acknowl-

administrators may be reluctant to commit such resources. However, this may represent a narrow and short-sighted view. Although such leaves do not guarantee the return of a productive faculty member, the continued stagnation or "premature retirement" of a senior faculty member for another 15 to 20 years certainly does guarantee a drain of precious university resources.

Faculty members provided with flexible leaves at this developmental period at least have the potential for resolving or adaptively altering stagnation as a probable outcome. The University will, in fact, benefit in the long run if the leave results in the actual return of a productive senior faculty member who has found a new sense of personal and professional identity. This new lease on professional life may stimulate a burst of creative productivity, a sense of refocused goals and direction within one's profession, and the freeing up of psychological energy for teaching, counseling, and mentoring of students and junior faculty. One could argue that the university should examine its faculty in terms of their future potential, and not just in terms of their immediate benefit

### Chart III. Precipitators of Midlife and Concomitant Developmental Tasks

1. **Task:** Acceptance of one's own mortality, vulnerability, and the shortening of time left to live.  
**Precipitators:** Potential threat of death to self or immediate family member or close personal friend; serious illness to self or immediate family member or close personal friend; death of a more distant family member or friend; death of individuals associated with belonging to one's same age cohort. Unusual precipitator would be the death of an immediate family member or close friend.  
**Themes:** Death becomes personalized in terms of death anxiety as parents and friends become serious ill or die. The focus changes from time since birth to "time left to live."  
**Dilemmas for men and women are the same.** Midlife is a time of struggle with the meaning of death, mortality, and life. This sets the stage for a major reassessment of self, life structure, primary relationships, etc., in the present, and gives vision and hope for the second half of life.
2. **Task:** Acceptance of biological limitations and increased health risk, both physical and psychological.  
**Precipitators:** Decreased physical strength, stamina, and recovery rate from physical exertion; decreased potential for child-bearing; physical signs of aging (i.e., weight gain, wrinkles, graying hair, etc.); decreased sexual vitality; increased vulnerability to stress and physical illness. Unusual precipitator would include a major illness such as heart attack, cancer, major surgery, or a severe physical handicap.  
**Themes:** The major struggle is to recognize bodily changes, decreasing physical abilities, decreased sexual vitality, and greater vulnerability to stress and physical illness. The meaning of these changes must be translated to everyday living.
3. **Task:** Restructuring of sexual identity and self concept.  
**Precipitators:** Awareness of previously repressed components of the personality. For men this includes the desire to be more sensitive, nurturant, artistic, passive, and act on parts of their personality traditionally thought to be "feminine." For women the struggle between family or career reaches its peak at around 30, perhaps again in the 40s. Traditional "male" characteristics are awakened, i.e., competence, aggressiveness, competition, independence, etc.  
**Themes:** The major themes of this task are the integration of contra-sexual opposite components of the personality, the re-emergence of struggle for individuation from early parental and current relationships and systems, and a reassessment of the "fit" between current and projected needs for the second half of life and the reality of the work role and the personal identity.  
**Dilemmas for men** include recognizing, experiencing, and integrating emergent components of the personality that include the more passive, dependent, sensitive, and intimacy-oriented characteristics. They must also deal with the residual mother-son ties and related fantasies and/or acting out in relation to older maternal and/or younger seductive women as part of an integrative struggle. They must cope with their spouse's moves toward greater personal and career autonomy and individuation. They must re-evaluate work/career components of the Dream, including personal achievement-striving and projection and the recognition of what will be achieved and the extent of possible "ladder-climb." And, finally, they must explore alternative types of work and/or career possibilities, particularly if current options are limited.  
**Dilemmas for women** include recognizing, experiencing, and integrating emergent components of the personality that include the more independent, aggressive, and competitive characteristics. They must reassess current housewife, work/career goals in light of empty-nesting and come to grips with increasing wishes for personal independence and autonomy. They must explore and deal with anxiety, guilt, and fear aroused by the more aggressive, egocentric, and autonomous wishes and motives, particularly in relation to home, work, career, and primary relationships. They must also deal with the experienced threat to the spouse caused by increased need for intimacy and nurturance. This may be particularly strong in dual career families.
4. **Task:** Reassessment and restructuring of primary relationships.  
**Precipitators:** Aging and ill parents demand different relationships from midlifers; older children leave home and demand different relationships; spouses become aware of different components of their personality; they demand different relationships from each other.  
**Themes:** This task involves resolution of major conflict between nurturance/intimacy and independent/individuation needs in the husband-wife relationship. There are also major shifts in relation to children as they leave home and begin to individuate, as well as shifts in relationship to one's parents.  
**Dilemmas for men** include a struggle to achieve a balance between needs for intimacy and to "be taken care of" by spouse/partner and the growing individuation of the spouse. Children begin to leave home and distance themselves at a time when the man desires closer, more intimate relationships with them. A man must deal with the decreasing centrality of his life in their lives. He must also deal with the ambivalent and guilty feelings and fantasies that arise as he is placed in a decision making position over aging, dependent, and disabled parents.  
**Dilemmas for women** include a struggle to achieve a balance and integration of the emergent autonomous needs and the spouse/partner's emergent intimacy and care-taking needs. She must deal with the de-emphasis of homemaker and mother role as children leave home, and search for meaningful alternative roles and commitments. She must also prepare for possible widowhood and living alone. As with the man, aging and ill parents require her to become more maternal and she must deal with the ambivalent feelings triggered by conflict with her own needs for increased autonomy and decreased nurturant behavior.  
For both the man and woman, the possibility of serious illness or death, along with their own potential decreased health, offer the opportunity to balance the books, integrate ambivalent feelings toward parents which will set the stage for anticipatory grief and contribute to the personalization of death, death anxiety, and a shift in time orientation.

to the university.

3. Midlife faculty who are exploring a career shift or a refocusing of talents and energies will also benefit greatly from a leave of absence, or reduction of responsibilities for a period of time. This will allow them the opportunity to explore new possibilities and to obtain the training and education they need if they decide to make a shift within their own field or into new areas and/or new fields. The university need not lose these senior individuals because they have made major career shifts. By supporting such efforts, the

university could gain a faculty member who has greatly broadened his/her knowledge and area of expertise. Such faculty may be appropriate for assignment to another department, they could serve as interdisciplinary bridging persons, or the university can capitalize on their new talents and renewed energy by creating a new position which will allow them the latitude to engage in new areas of research and teaching. This kind of lateral move will also free up the former position, allowing the university to hire new and energetic staff to carry on in the vacated position.

### Late Entry Faculty Development

Over the last decade the phenomenon of older women returning to the labor force after empty nesting has been repeatedly described (Neugarten & Brown-Ruzanka, 1978; Sheppard, 1976). However, little has been written about the specific problems women face upon late entry to academia, especially in light of the development tasks they encounter. For our purposes, this late-entry faculty group is composed predominantly of middle aged women (40 years and older) who have recently



received a PhD and entered the university community as a junior faculty. While such women currently make up only a small percentage of the total faculty, educational and societal trends suggest a significant increase in this group in the future. The intersection of chronological age with organizational or professional age present this faculty group with unique developmental problems.

Late entry faculty tend to be highly motivated and serious about an academic career, despite their late start. Although they are usually chronologically middle-aged or older, they view themselves less as "forty and on the way down," like many of the midlifers, but rather more like "forty and on the way up." In this sense they resemble the Age 30 transitional faculty. Many have worked extremely hard, competently, and productively, not only to earn a PhD but to successfully compete for a position in the academic community. Regardless of their level of achievement, the discrepancy between chronological age and professional or organizational age can present entry faculty with unique transitional challenges, stress, and anxiety. Despite the fact that late entry faculty may be very bright, highly motivated, and committed to their new careers, the sense of being "off-time" and "out of phase" with their colleagues can be responsible for feeling isolated, unsure of how to behave, and open to feelings of self-doubt about their ability to compete successfully.

The experience of being socially "off-time" within a variety of occupations and careers, as well as in regards to predictable developmental milestones along the life course (i.e., marriage, childbirth, retirement, etc.) has been repeatedly documented (e.g., Bardwick, 1979; Butler, 1969; Cain, 1974; Livson, 1978; Maas & Kypers, 1974; Neugarten et al., 1964; Neugarten & Moore, 1968; Osherson, 1980; Riley, 1976; Sarason, 1977; Troll, 1975). These findings bear directly on the experience of the older woman entering academia 10 to 20 years off expected social time.

In terms of expected "social time" of academia, a forty year old faculty member should be closer to being a full tenured professor (or is at least viewed as a senior faculty member) rather than as a novitiate. Thus, other members of the academic community (students, staff, faculty, and administration) may relate to her as if she were senior faculty with expectations of advice, mentoring,

or assistance equivalent to that level of functioning. Such role stereotyping can cause conflict for the late entry individual who realistically sees herself as relatively inexperienced and "young" professionally. Being young professionally, late entry faculty need the freedom to make the same mistakes, fall prey to the same poor judgments, and have to "learn it the hard way" like other junior faculty much younger in age. Because they are in fact older and more experienced, late entry faculty may not feel the same freedom or experience the same "grace period" to learn the organizational ropes usually permitted junior faculty. Similarly, other colleagues may expect more from them faster than from other junior faculty. Under these social system pressures, some late entry faculty could experience considerable performance stress and risk a premature "burnout" and a sense of futility earlier in their careers.

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**"Late entry faculty may not feel the same freedom or experience the same 'grace period' to learn the organizational ropes usually permitted junior faculty."**

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Late entry female faculty, particularly those who are middle aged with children leaving or already left, may encounter unexpected conflicts and stress having to do with competitive and aggressive impulses and themes emerging in themselves and inherent in the academic social structure and culture. One potential source of internal conflict arises from personality changes and emergent potentialities which occur during the post-parental years, which have recently been described by Gutmann and associates (Gutmann, 1975, 1976, 1979b, 1980; also see Neugarten & Gutmann, 1968). The accumulated research outlines a theoretical framework for understanding the post-parental midlife experience and potential conflicts, stress, and psychopathology in middle and later adulthood.

Gutmann's view arises from the following assumptions:

1. New potentials for growth and disruption continue to emerge across the life span and especially during

midlife.

2. Midlife changes appear to be developmental in nature and occur in predictable sequences across widely disparate cultures.

3. The post-parental period of life marks the point at which three relational modes—communalistic in men, aggressive in women, and narcissistic in both men and women—once blunted and suppressed in the service of production and parenthood—become available to the post-parental midlife adult and can become the pivot of renewed growth or of vulnerability and psychopathology.

4. Cultural factors play an important role in mediating the outcomes of these transformations (i.e., a culture that provides proper collective representations at the proper time provides the psychological objects that allow for transformations and self-transcendence in later life).

According to Gutmann et al., both sexes reveal, in later life, the potentials that were blunted in the service of production, procreation, and parenthood. Thus, in their earlier years as young husbands and parents, men suppress those potentials within themselves—toward presenting sentiment, dependency, sensuality, aestheticism, and intimacy—that could interfere with their role as the productive or instrumental parent, the manager of the boundary to the external world, and the provider of physical security. The female partner de-emphasizes her potential for competitiveness, independence, assertiveness, and aggression, which could interfere with her primary parental child care task—the provision of emotional security and nurturance. Thus, "during the active and critical period of young parenthood, each sex concedes to the other that aspect of their sexual bimodality that could interfere with their special responsibility in parenting."



Guttman et al.'s viewpoint suggests several disruptive implications for late entry faculty and for academia. For example, late entry postparental female faculty who have been less than successful in integrating or who are conflicted about their emergent aggressive, assertive, and competitive impulses will encounter much difficulty as they are required to compete actively with other younger faculty at the same organizational level for promotion and other rewards, benefits, and resources.

Symonds (1976) has identified another set of risks for late entry female faculty which arises from the conflict between their own persistent dependency needs and the demands of newly available positions and roles in competitive work environments.

Symonds in part attributes these conflicts to new possibilities generated by the feminist movement. Women who now hold positions in traditionally

and experience severe anxiety when faced with it. After a lifetime of functioning in a self-effacing dependent manner, it is not surprising (p. 98).

For these personal and related organizational reasons, some late entry faculty may find it difficult to find mentors—an accomplishment crucial to survival and promotion in academia. This is particularly so if the available "pool" of senior faculty is limited, or younger than themselves. In other cases because of their own conflicts they may feel inappropriate approaching a senior faculty member and especially a male for this kind of relationship. Since competent mentoring may be essential to the promotion and tenuring process, late entry faculty who are unable to establish such a relationship may be at a distinct disadvantage. (The functions, dynamics, and complexities of the mentoring relationship are beyond the scope of this paper; the interested reader

to and recognize that the transition to academia for late entry faculty may initially be quite stressful because they are "off-time" or because of their need to further integrate internal changes or adapt to the challenges of the academic culture. The university must guard against stereotypically viewing them as less serious or only pursuing the academic career as an "afterthought." Like any group of junior faculty, they can, with competent mentoring and support, blossom into stable, energetic, versatile, and productive members of the university community for many years to come. Specifically, a faculty development program might:

- Reinforce the motivation and seriousness of the late entry faculty members;
- Reduce expectations and allow for initial learning and mistakes, during a grace period;
- Provide non-threatening experiences during which late entry faculty can gain their initial learning and make their mistakes;
- Provide opportunities for late entry faculty to recognize and deal with the internal conflicts they experience;
- Provide opportunities for females to learn the "competitive and aggressive" characteristics required for survival in the organization;
- Assist late entry faculty in finding mentors.

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**"Some late entry faculty may find it difficult to find mentors—an accomplishment crucial to survival and promotion in academia."**

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male-dominated professions such as law and engineering, may find themselves "required to make a characterological change from a predominantly compliant, dependent personality to a more expansive one. This causes...profound turmoil." Conflict may result when such women enter a competitive, aggressive work environment, seeking growth and fulfillment, but must deal with dependent character traits developed in childhood and reinforced by cultural stereotypes of femininity.

This conflict can result in neurotic dependency manifested by anxiety, turmoil, confusion, withdrawal, and marital difficulties as well as physical symptoms such as insomnia, and heart palpitations. Symonds states:

[Women] are entering these new experiences with psychological patterns which were developed for a totally different emotional climate. They are poorly prepared for the competitive demands of our culture

is referred to Lee, Gilbert, & Cytrynbaum, 1981, for an examination of the significance of this relationship for young professional women in academia.)

#### **Faculty/Organizational Development Implications**

Late entry faculty members do in fact represent a valuable resource for the university that should be supported and cultivated. They bring with them a rich and unique set of talents and experiences as well as wisdom and maturity gained over a life time of work elsewhere. In many cases these individuals are "post midlife crisis" or have used their graduate training and entry into academia as a means of making the transition into later adulthood. This unique group of junior faculty may present themselves as a confident, stable, and goal-directed group.

However, it is important that colleagues and administrators be sensitive

#### **Senior Retiring Faculty**

Recent developmental and policy research on aging and the elderly has raised serious questions about the organizational policy of age-based forced retirement (Baltes & Schaie, 1974; Binstock & Shanes, 1976; Laufer & Fowler, 1971; McFarland, 1973; Neugarten, 1970; Riley, Foner, Moore, Hess, & Roth, 1968; Shanas, 1972; Sheppard, 1972; Sheppard, 1976). These studies demonstrate clearly that many older individuals have both the motivation and ability to continue productive teaching, research, writing, administration, and a variety of other necessary tasks within the university for several years beyond the age of retirement. Perhaps a distinction between psychologically "younger" and "older" retirement aged faculty would be useful. It is somewhat paradoxical that the university should force retirement or impose special post-retirement emeritus positions (often token), when they still have so much to offer the university. Premature retirement can be seen as arising

from a policy of institutionally-based age segregation. Policies promoting realistic age-desegregation based on competency factors and desire to continue would certainly benefit the university and involved individuals.

Mandatory retirement results in the university losing many of their most experienced, seasoned, productive, and adaptive faculty. Many older adult faculty have either maintained their productivity over the years, have done some of their best work during this period, have even launched new careers, and clearly plan to continue to be productive and involved in their profes-

prerequisite to a secure sense of personal and professional identity during the second half of life. For many men and women, the midlife transition and concomitant stress can be met with mastery, adaptive resolution, and expansion of life's potentialities and goals. For others, such adaptation is not so easily achieved. As was indicated earlier, the transition to older adulthood may be laden with debilitating anxiety and an increased sense of vulnerability that may ultimately set the stage for later low level or acute psychological and emotional distress. Psychopathology may occur for the first time in some

members of the faculty, on policy and advisory boards, as consultants and mentors to other less senior faculty and administrators, as leaders for special ad hoc committees and as chairpersons for specific projects or politically sensitive inter-departmental or intra-departmental committees.

## Summary and Conclusions

Recent adult development theory and research served as a basis for conceptualizing specific personal and professional issues related to five university faculty groups. For each grouping, various developmental tasks and processes derived from work on critical transitional periods along the life course were presented and discussed in terms of their impact on faculty growth, commitment, productivity, morale, and compatibility with the university setting and their respective professional roles. Implications for personal as well as organizational support networks, policy reassessment, and change paradigms were presented and discussed in light of these specific, life-phase developmental tasks.

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## “Mandatory retirement results in the university losing many of their most experienced, seasoned, productive and adaptive faculty.”

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sions. Many are very desirous of maintaining their established role within the academic community and of contributing to the university in a “real and meaningful” rather than token way. The collective experience and wisdom of this group can represent a stabilizing force and a mentoring influence for the more junior faculty and/or administrators.

This view of aging faculty also assumes that not all retirement-aged individuals fit the above description. In agreement with others (e.g., Cath, 1963; Gutmann, 1975, 1976, 1979, 1980; Gutmann et al., 1979; Stein et al., 1978; Vaillant, 1977) it should be acknowledged that the ability of older faculty to maintain their personal and organizational productivity will be influenced by their developmental progress during the second half of life. The image of the “wise and loving” white haired grandfather figure within the academic community is sometimes more myth than real. The above and related studies demonstrate that the ability and willingness of an older adult to remain productive is contingent upon a variety of developmental progressions and adaptations. The degree to which some older adults are able to reconcile and reassess their personal and professional lives, especially during the midlife period, will impact on the quality of their lives during the latter half of life.

Adaptation to the developmental tasks discussed earlier may be crucial

midlife and older adults. Other midlife or old adults may encounter a resurgence of previous disturbances or the exacerbation of latent conflicts which remain unsolved. Such developmental vulnerabilities and potentialities could predispose older faculty who have been relatively productive and adaptive to develop symptoms requiring treatment during the second half of life (Cytrynbaum et al., 1980; Gutmann, 1979, 1980).

Those individuals who are successfully able to consciously struggle with the changes and loss brought about during midlife can look forward to an active and productive second half of life. Such individuals, in older adulthood, will experience a sense of purpose and integrated identity as well as considerable wisdom. They have struggled with the meaning of their lives, and in keeping with Erikson's (1968) view of generativity, wish to pass on to the “new generation” the lessons they have learned. Organizational intervention with this population is fairly straightforward.

### Faculty/Organizational Development Implications

Highly motivated, talented, and committed young retirement age faculty who so wish should be given genuine institutional support to continue their scholarly, mentoring, and administrative work in a meaningful way. They could function as active full time

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