

# Elaine Wethington

## Web Bio

### Information

### Biography

#### Biographical Statement

I am a medical sociologist, jointly appointed in the Department of Human Development and in the Department of Sociology. I study stress across the life course and how factors such as support from others may buffer the impact of stress on mental and physical health. I have been interested in this topic for most of my career because it is a way to "translate" basic research into ways that can improve people's health. I am currently working on projects relating to work and family stress in young families, the impact of life events on behavior that affects health, and social support in aging families.

#### Department Website Summary

Elaine Wethington is a medical sociologist whose research areas span the study of stress, protective mechanisms of social support, aging and the life course, and translational research methods. She directs studies on the health impacts of work and family demands during adulthood and how social isolation affects the health and well-being of older people. She is editor-in-chief of *Society and Mental Health*.

### Teaching

#### Teaching and Advising Statement

I teach basic and advanced undergraduate courses on gerontology, health disparities, and health and social behavior for the Human Development Aging & Health undergraduate concentration, as well as advanced graduate courses on translational research methods. My courses also contribute to the Gerontology minor at Cornell University. I specialize in advising about careers in medicine, public health and related fields and provide research opportunities for students interested in aging and health.

### Professional

#### Current Professional Activities

Co-Principal Investigator and Pilot Study Director, Cornell-Columbia Edward R. Roybal Center (Weill-Ithaca collaboration)

Co-Principal Investigator, SCALE: Small Changes and Lasting Effects (Weill-Ithaca collaboration)

Editor-in-chief, *Society and Mental Health*

Associate Director, Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research

Member, American Sociological Association, Gerontological Society of America, and American Public Health Association

## **Research**

### **Current Research Activities**

I collaborate with colleagues at Weill Cornell Medical College and the Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research to develop projects that improve the experience and treatment of pain among older adults. I am also collaborating with faculty at Weill Cornell Medical College, the Division of Nutritional Sciences, and Applied Economics and Management on basic research and interventions to reduce obesity among low income working adults. I have recently begun a new project on marital quality and health among older adults. My research has been funded by the National Institute on Aging and the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute of NIH, Smith-Lever., and the Cornell Institute for the Social Sciences.

## **Extension**

## **Education**

### **Education**

A.B. 1972 - Indiana University, Bloomington, History

M.A. 1975 - University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, History

Ph.D. 1987 - University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Sociology

## **Courses**

### **Courses Taught**

HD/SOC 2510, Aging and the Life Course: Introduction to Social Gerontology

HD3570/SOC3670, Social Inequalities in Physical and Mental Health

HD/SOC 4570, Health and Social Behavior

HD 6510, Seminar on Interdisciplinary Community-Based Scientific Research in Health Disparities

## **Websites**

### **Related Websites**

[www.bctr.cornell.edu](http://www.bctr.cornell.edu)  
<http://tripll.org/>

## **Administration**

### **Administrative Responsibilities**

Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Human Development

## **Publications**

### **Selected Publications**

Phillips-Caesar, Erica, Brian Wansink, Ginger Winston, Carol Devine, Bala Kanna, Elaine Wethington, Walid Michelen, Martin T. Wells, James Hollenberg, Janey Peterson, and Mary Charlson. Forthcoming. "Small Changes and Lasting Effects: Rationale, Design, and Methods." *Contemporary Clinical Trials*.

Cawley, John, Matthew Sweeney, Jeffery Sobal, Brian Wansink, David R. Just, Elaine Wethington, and William Schulze. 2015. "The Impact of a Supermarket Nutrition Rating System on Purchases of Nutritious and Less Nutritious Foods." *Public Health Nutrition* 18 (1): 8-14.

Wethington, Elaine and Rachel E. Dunifon. 2012. *Research for the Public Good: Washington, DC: American Psychological Association Press.*

Sutin, Angelina R., Paul T. Costa, Elaine Wethington, and William W. Eaton. 2010. "Turning Points and Lessons Learned: Stressful Life Events and Personality Trait Development across Middle Adulthood." *Psychology and Aging* 25:524-33

Ganzel, Barbara, Pamela Morris, and Elaine Wethington. 2010. "Allostasis and the Human Brain: Integrating Models of Stress from the Social and Life Sciences." *Psychological Review* 117:134-74.

Wethington, Elaine and Wendy L. Johnson-Askew. 2009. "Contributions of the Life Course Perspective to Research on Food Decision-making." *Annals of Behavioral Medicine* 38(Suppl. 1):S74-S80.

Sabir, Myra, Elaine Wethington, Risa Breckman, Rhoda Meador, M. Carrington Reid, and Karl Pillemer. 2009. "A Community-Based Participatory Critique of Social Isolation Intervention Research for Community-Dwelling Older Adults." *Journal of Applied Gerontology* 28:218-234.

Evans, Gary W., Elaine Wethington, Meredith Coleman, Margo Worms, and Edward A. Frongillo. 2008. "Income Health Inequalities among Older Persons: The

Mediating Role of Multiple Risk Exposures.” *Journal of Aging and Health* 20:107-25.

Wethington, Elaine, Risa Breckman, Rhoda Meador, Mark S. Lachs, M. Carrington Reid, Myra Sabir, and Karl A. Pillemer. 2007. “The CITRA Pilot Studies Program: Mentoring Translational Research.” *The Gerontologist* 47:845-50.