## Contents

## Part One

## Defining the Field

## 1 The Field of Social Gerontology 2

The Field of Gerontology 4
Defining the Terms 4
Successful Aging 4
Conceptual Issues in Research on Aging 4
Aging Around the World: Successful Aging on the Israeli Kibbutz 5

Defining Old Age 6
In Their Own Words: The Botox Diary 8
Cohorts and Generations 8
Ageism 10
Forms of Ageism 10
The New Ageism 10
Perpetuating Ageism through the Media 12
Diversity in the Aging Experience: Gender and
the Double Standard of Aging 13
A Profile of Older Americans 15
Health 15
Marital Status 16
Income and Poverty 16
Education 18
Programs for Older People 21
Social Security 21
Medicare 21
Supplemental Security Income 21

## 2 Theories of Aging 24

The Origins of Social Gerontology 27
Micro Theories of Aging 28
Psychosocial Theories 28
In Their Own Words: Portraits of Engagement and Disengagement 29
Diversity in the Aging Experience: Religion and Personal Well-Being 32

The Individual and the Social System 33
Social Constructionism 36

Macro Theories of Aging 36
Age and Social Status 36
Aging Around the World: Cross-Cultural
Variation in the Treatment of the Aged 39
Theories of Power and Inequality 42
An Issue for Public Policy: Should the World
Bank Determine Public Pension Policies? 45
Critical Gerontology 45
3 Life Course Transitions 50
The Life Course Framework 52
Methodological Issues in Research on the Life
Course 53
Age, Period, and Cohort Effects 53
Cross-Sectional Research 54
Longitudinal Research 55
Identifying Life Course Events 56
The Timing of Life Course Events 56
The Duration of Life Course Events 58
The Sequencing of Life Course Events 59
The Effect of Early Experiences on Adult Outcomes 60
Aging Around the World: The Effect of Military
Service on German Veterans of World War II 62
In Their Own Words: Mourning a Lost
Relationship 63
Demographic Change and Middle Age 63
The Theory of Cumulative Disadvantage 64
How Government Influences the Life Course 64
Diversity in the Aging Experience: Gender Inequality Across the Life Course 65
An Issue for Public Policy: Defining the Transition to Old Age 65

4 Demography of Aging 70
Sources of Population Data 72
In Their Own Words: Memorles of Times Past 73

Individual Aging Processes 73
Life Span 73
Life Expectancy 73
The Sex Ratio 74
Population Aging 74
The Demographic Transition 74
International Variations in Population
Aging 75
Aging Around the World: Infant and Maternal
Mortality in Afghanistan 78
Dependency Ratios 79
Population Trends in the United States 79

The Changing Age Structure 79
Fertility 80
An Issue for Public Policy: Will the Baby
Boomers Consume the Federal Budget? 81
Mortality 83
Migration 84
Diversity in the Aging Experience: Race and
Gender Differences in Life Expectancy 85
Dependency Ratio 87
Life Expectancy 87
The U.S. Sex Ratio 88

## Part $\tau_{w o}$ <br> Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Aging

## 5 Historical Perspectives on Aging 94

Were the Aged Venerated in Preindustrial Society? 96

Veneration in Non-Western Cultures 96
Veneration of the Aged in Colonial Times, 1620-1770 97
In Their Own Words: Cotton Mather's Disdain for the Aged 9

The Decline of Veneration of the Aged, 1770-1860 99
From Veneration to Degradation in the Post-Civil War Period, 1860-1920 101

Romanticizing the World We Have Lost 102 The Aged as a Social Problem, 1920-1970 102
The Tyranny of the Aged 103
Did Modernization Undermine the Extended Family? 103

Inheritance Patterns and Household Structure 103

Aging Around the World: Inheritance Patterns and Household Structure in the Old World 104

Urbanization and Household Structure 106
Diversity in the Aging Experience: The Mennonites on the Frontier 107
Did Industrialization Push Older Workers Out of the Labor Force? 108

Work for the Aged in the Old World 109
Work for the Aged in Colonial New
England, 1620-1770 109

The Decline of Skilled Craft Labor, 1860-1920 109
An Issue for Public Policy: Does State Support for the Aged Undermine Familial Obligations? 110

Retirement as a Tool of Labor Market Management, 1920-1970 113
Is Institutional Care a Product of Modern Society? 113

Boarding the Frail Elderly in the Colonial Era, 1620-1770 113
The Rise of the Almshouse, 1770-1850 114
The Growth of Specialized Institutions for the Aged, 1850-1920 114
The Growth of the Nursing Home Industry, 1920-1970 115
Modernization Theory and Historical Evidence 115

6 Biological Perspectives on Aging 120
Theories of Biological Aging 122
Environmental Theories of Aging 122
Developmental/Genetic Theories of Aging 123
The Aging Body 125
Aging of the Exterior Body: Skin and Hair 126
Aging Around the World: International
Variations in Active Life Expectancy 127
Aging of the Nervous System 129
Aging of the Sensory Organs 130

An Issue for Public Policy: Should the Driving of Older People Be Restricted? 134

Aging of the Skeletal System: Bones, Cartilage, and Connective Tissues 136
In Their Own Words: Living with
Osteoporosis 138
Aging of the Muscular System: Muscle Mass and Strength 140
Aging of the Reproductive System 140
Aging of the Cardiovascular System: Heart and Blood Vessels 141
Diversity in the Aging Experience: Women's
Health and Hormone Replacement Theory 142
7 Psychological Perspectives on Aging 148
Aging and Cognitive Change 150
Creativity and Wisdom 150
Intelligence 151
Aging Around the World: A Swedish Study of the
Heritability of Intelligence 153
Learning and Memory 154

Learning and Information Technology 157
Mental Disorders 157
Dementias 157
An Issue for Public Policy: Why the
Government Supports Research on Alzheimer's
Disease 160
In Their Own Words: The Story of My Father 161
Parkinson's Disease 161
Depression 162
Diversity in the Aging Experience: Racial Differences in Depression in Later Life 163
Personality and Adaptation 164
Personality and Aging 164
Personality and Health 165
Personality and Coping 165
Stage Theories of Adult Development 165
Erikson's Theory of Identity
Development 166
Transitions through Adulthood 167
An Evaluation of Stage Theories 172
Part Chree

## Social Aspects of Aging

## $\delta$ Family Relationships and Social Support Systems 178

The Social Support System 180
Defining the Concept of Social
Support 180
Gender Differences in Social Support
Systems 181
Changing Family Structure and Social Support Systems 181
Marital Status in Later Life 182
The Later Stages of Marriage 182
The Family Life Cycle 182
Marital Satisfaction over the Life Course 183
Marriage and Sexual Activity 185
Gender and Marriage 186
Retirement Satisfaction and Marriage 187
Parent-Child Relationships 187
Social Interaction and Exchange 187
Diversity in the Aging Experience: Racial and
Ethnic Variations in Filial Responsibility 190

Aging Around the World: Parent-Child Relationships among Chinese and Korean Immigrants to the United States 191

The Effect of Divorce 192
The Effect of Remarriage 193
The Unmarried Elderly 193
Sibling Relationships in Later Life 194
Grandparenthood 194
Styles of Grandparenting 195
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren 195
The Quality of the Grandparent-Grandchild Relationship 196
In Their Own Words: A Grandfather's Hope 197
The Grandparent Career 197
Grandparenting after Divorce 198
The Families of Older Gay Men and
Women 199
An Issue for Public Policy: Should Grandparents
Have Visitation Rights after a Divorce? 200
Friends and Social Support Systems 200

Patterns of Friendship 201
Dating in Later Life 203

## 9 Living Arrangements 206

Household Structure 208
To Move or to Stay 209
Geographic Mobility 209
Aging in Place 211
In Their Own Words: Disbanding a Household 212
Home Ownership 212
Aging Around the World: Growing Old in the
City of Light 213
Housing Quality 214
An Issue for Public Policy: Improving the
Housing of Older Americans 215
Alternative Living Arrangements 217
Board and Care Homes 217
Diversity in the Aging Experience: Life in a
Single Room Occupancy Hotel 218
Assisted Living 220
Continuing Care Retirement
Communities 222
10 Caring for the Frail Elderly 228
Family Care 230

A Profile of Caregiving 230
Gender Differences in Caregiving 231
Aging Around the World: The Effect of the One-Child Policy on Family Caregiving in China 233

Work and Caregiving 234
The Caregiver Burden 236
Caregiving and Family Relationships 236
In Their Own Words: An Elegy for Iris
Murdoch 238
Home Care 239
Home and Community-Based Services 239
Race, Ethnicity, and Long-Term Care 240
Private Long-Term-Care Insurance 241
Institutional Care 241
Diversity in the Aging Experience: Long-Term
Care of the American Indian Aged 242
The Nursing Home Industry 242
Staff Turnover in Long-Term Care 242
An Issue for Public Policy: Staff Levels and
Quality of Care in Nursing Homes 244
Access to Nursing Home Care 245
The Nursing Home as Total Institution 246

11 Old Age and the Welfare State 254
Social Programs of the Welfare State 256
Social Assistance 256
Social Insurance 257
Fiscal Welfare 257
The Organization of the American Welfare
State 258
Income Support 258
Health Care 263
In Their Own Words: Health Care before
Medicare 264
An Issue for Public Policy: Extending Medicare to
Older Workers and Early Retirees 266
Support for the Disabled 267
Long-Term Care 269
Social Services 271

Aging Around the World: International Variations in Health Care Arrangements for the Elderly 272
Diversity in the Aging Experience: The Use of Community Long-Term-Care Services among Elderly Korean Americans 274
The Age versus Need Debate 276

## 12 Work and Retirement 280

Trends in Labor Force Participation 282
Labor Force Participation of Men 282
Labor Force Participation of Women 283
Racial and Ethnic Differences in Labor Force Participation 284
Diversity in the Aging Experience: Work Experiences of Mexican American Farmworkers 285

International Trends in Labor Force Participation 286
Employment Prospects for Older Workers 287
The Effects of Age Discrimination 287
Aging Around the World: Age Discrimination in Great Britain 288
The Transition from Work to Retirement 289
Bridge Jobs 289
Phased Retirement 290
Contingent Work 290
Reasons for Labor Force Withdrawal 290
Social Security 290
Disability Insurance 291
The Shift from Defined Benefit to Defined Contribution Plans 291
Retirement as an Individual Decision 291
An Issue for Public Policy: Elimination of the
Earnings Test for Social Security Recipients 292
Being Retired 295
Satisfaction with Retirement 295
In Their Own Words: An Involuntary
Retirement 296
Daily Activities and Health 297
Volunteering 298
Religious Participation 300
13 Health and Health Care 304
Adding Years to Life or Life to Years? 306
Stage of the Epidemiologic Transition 306
The Compression of Morbidity Thesis 307
In Their Own Words: Recovering from a
Stroke 308
Social Determinants of Health 309
Health Lifestyles 309
Aging Around the World: Patterns of Lung
Cancer Death Rates in European Women 311
Social Support Systems 313

Socioeconomic Status 314
Gender 316
Race and Ethnicity 316
Diversity in the Aging Experience: The Puzzle of Hypertension among African Americans 317
The Elderly in the Health Care System 319
Health Care Providers and the Elderly 319
In Their Own Words: Physicians' Attitudes toward Elderly Patients 320

The Organization of Health Care 320
An Issue for Public Policy: Medicare's
Prescription Drug Benefit 322
14 Dying, Death, and Bereavement 328
Cross-Cultural and Historical Perspectives on Death 330

Death in Preliterate Societies 330
Death in Non-Western Cultures 330
Death in Western Civilization 331
In Their Own Words: A Filipino Man Dreams of
Returning Home to Die 332
Facing Death 333
Preparing for Death 333
A Stage Theory of Dying 333
Managing Death 334
The Right to Die 334
Diversity in the Aging Experience: Racial Difn ferences in Attitudes toward End-of-Life Care 335
An Issue for Public Policy: The Legal Battle over Terri Schiavo 336

Hospice Care 338
Aging Around the World: Suicide Rates among the Elderly in Denmark 339
Bereavement 342
Widowhood 342
The Death of a Parent 345

15 The Economics of Aging 350
Aging Policy and the Economy 352
The Changing Economic Status of the Aged 352

Today's Older Generation 354
The Aging of the Baby Boomers 356
Diversity in the Aging Experience: Income

## Inequality in Later Life 357

Restructuring the Welfare State ..... 358
The Status of Social Security ..... 358
Restoring the Trust Fund ..... 359
Means Testing ..... 363
Privatization ..... 365
Aging Around the World: Social Security in
Central and Eastern Europe ..... 366
Private Sources of Income in Old Age ..... 367
Employer Pensions ..... 367
In Their Own Words: The Risk of Defined
Contribution Plans ..... 370
Personal Savings ..... 370
An Issue for Public Policy: Should Pension PlansBe Invested in Employer Stocks? 371
16 Poverty and Inequality ..... 378
Aging and Social Stratification ..... 380
The Theory of Cumulative Disadvantage ..... 380
Income and Poverty ..... 380
Gender Inequality in Old Age ..... 383
Patterns of Gender Inequality ..... 383
Inequality in Social Security Income ..... 383
In Their Own Words: The Gendered Division ofHousehold Labor 384An Issue for Public Policy: Social Security andDivorce 388Inequality in Supplemental SecurityIncome 389Inequality in Employer PensionCoverage 390
Diversity in the Aging Experience: Sex and 401 (k) Plans ..... 391
Race, Ethnicity, and Inequality ..... 392
The Social Construction of Race and
392

Racial and Ethnic Variations among the Aged 393
Aging Around the World: Inequality in Pension Income in Europe 396

## 17 The Politics of Aging 402

Political Activism among the Elderly 404
Voting 404
Interest Group Politics 408
Social Movement Politics 411
Aging Around the World: Political Involvement among Older Europeans 412

The Aged as Political Office Holders 414
Diversity in the Aging Experience: The Red Hat Society 415

Other Forms of Political Involvement 416
Political Debates about the Aged 416
In Their Own Words: Reminiscences of a Lifelong Activist 417

The Deserving Elderly 417
The Generational Equity Debate 418
The Entitlement Crisis 420
An Issue for Public Policy: Should Social Security Be Privatized? 421

The Ownership Society 422
Career Appendix 425
Glossary 428
References 439
Acknowledgments 483
Photo Credits 487
Author Index 488
Subject Index 496

