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The twenty-first century is an exciting time to explore the relationship of human aging, individual processes, and our American society. The study of aging has changed dramatically since the late 1960s, when a handful of scholars began seriously exploring the human and social meanings behind longevity and the demographic shift from a nation of youths to one of adults, and on to an aging nation. This text, too, has grown and stretched with grace and vision in its history.

This edition benefits from the strength of previous editions and moves on to address many of the recent shifts in the rapidly changing field of human aging. The approach of this edition is interdisciplinary—a perspective that adds a valuable dimension to the text and lends itself to a fuller description of the meaning of aging in individual and in social terms.

The tone of this edition reflects the current understanding that aging is a powerful process and that growth and development do continue in later life. Indeed, as long as an individual lives, the personality continues to develop in complexity and richness. Additionally, no previous edition of Aging, the Individual, and Society so directly addresses the impact on society of the increasing adult populations that are living longer.

The eighth edition presents a multidisciplinary perspective from which to view the ways biology and psychology affect social structures. It also provides strategies for understanding the ways in which social systems impact an individual’s long life, now and in the future. The changes included in this edition are cutting-edge at publication and fully reflect the diverse paths of Americans who are aging into the twenty-first century. The bibliography is a broad reflection of scientific, professional, and popular literature that provides students outstanding exposure to the field.

In deference to different learning styles and various pedagogical approaches, each chapter begins with a news story providing a real-life illustration or account of a basic chapter concept. These stories are intended to help students make the connection between theory and life-as-lived. Summaries of research discoveries and snippets of information are provided in boxed sections throughout the text. These bits and pieces are designed to promote critical thinking by presenting ideas that can be explored further through library research, lecture, and/or group discussion.

Questions for discussion, for experiential learning, and for exploration on the Internet end each chapter. Each set of activities is integrated topically, theoretically, and pedagogically. They require a personal interaction of the student with material representing specific chapter concepts, thereby reinforcing the context of each
chapter. The text includes an appendix of Internet addresses to assist students and faculty who seek further information on a broad range of topics.

**Eighth Edition Features**

- **Old Is News:** Designed to jump-start student interest in each chapter with a news story to help students understand the practical reality of the chapter’s concepts
- **Chapter key concepts:** A pedagogic tool to help students and faculty keep focused on the main points of each chapter; can be used as a framework for teaching and learning key topical concepts
- **Chapter summaries:** An organizational tool for students to review; each summary is linked to the chapter’s key concepts, thereby reinforcing the learning framework
- **Key terms found in each chapter:** Another student learning tool
- **Discussion questions:** Designed to be used either in group discussions or as assignments for written work, the questions combine the need to critically think about both theory and practice
- **Suggestions for fieldwork experiences:** Experiential learning opportunities to guide teaching and learning
- **Online activities:** Suggestions for explorations of the Internet to help students understand the complexity of available information

**Supplements**

**Instructor’s Manual with Test Bank**

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Acknowledgments

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