



Chapter 13 Exercises

Multiple Choice

1. A cohort is _____.
 - a. A type of social structure wherein the power is held by a society's oldest members
 - b. A medical specialty focusing on the elderly
 - c. A form of discrimination based on age
 - d. A group of people who share a statistical or demographic trait
2. Jia's grandmother is still very active and loves to get her friends together for bridge on Friday. They always talk about the old-old people at the senior center who like to play bingo. About how old are the old-old senior citizens to whom they are referring?
 - a. 67
 - b. 72
 - c. 75
 - d. 85
3. When Karim's mother-in-law fell and broke her hip at age seventy-two, he was concerned because she is still _____.
 - a. young-old
 - b. middle-old
 - c. old-old
 - d. ancient
4. Sociologists have adopted the phrase "the graying of the United States." What does this phrase mean?
 - a. People are living under so much stress now that they are going gray early.
 - b. Gray is culturally considered beautiful, and thus people are bleaching their hair.
 - c. A larger percentage of the population is reaching the age of sixty-five and entering old age.
 - d. With industrialization and the building of big cities, there is very little green nature left, and everything is the color of steel.
5. Which approach has been used in the past to avoid the collapse of Social Security?
 - a. Increasing the work week to eighty hours so that there is more money coming into the program
 - b. Increasing the age at which someone can start collecting Social Security
 - c. Only paying Social Security to people who paid the tax; cutting out any spouses or dependents who might benefit
 - d. Make Social Security a private program, much like insurance or a 401(k)
6. What is a dependency ratio?
 - a. It is the comparison of working people to non-working people.
 - b. It is the comparison of children to parents.
 - c. It is the comparison of grandparents to parents.
 - d. It is the comparison of health care professionals to the elderly.
7. The world population is growing and aging. In an effort to collectively deal with some of the challenges facing the elderly, several countries gathered at a summit. Which plan was the result of this summit?
 - a. The Brussels Plan
 - b. The Berlin Plan
 - c. The Madrid Plan
 - d. The Paris Plan

8. While visiting her dad at his nursing home, Bea sees an elderly lady sitting at the table with a full tray of food in front of her. She is in a wheelchair and seems depressed. Bea concludes that she is experiencing:
 - a. Primary aging
 - b. Secondary aging
 - c. Tertiary aging
 - d. Quaternary aging
9. According to Erik Erikson's theory on aging, what is the final hurdle that most people who reach old age must overcome?
 - a. Despair
 - b. Loathing
 - c. Sentimentality
 - d. Concession
10. Which is a social issue that many elderly women discover they are victims of?
 - a. Being patronized by gas station attendants
 - b. Being suspected of shoplifting by sales assistants
 - c. Being carded to prove their senior citizen status
 - d. Having their medical ailments trivialized by doctors
11. Which of the following is *not* true about old age?
 - a. Women may notice wrinkles as one of the first signs of aging.
 - b. Elderly people lose all appetite and drive for sex.
 - c. Elderly men sometimes start to go bald as they age.
 - d. Some elderly people may dye their hair to replace the color they lose.
12. Elizabeth Kübler-Ross's book *On Death and Dying* added much content knowledge to which field?
 - a. Thanatology
 - b. Teleology
 - c. Metrology
 - d. Ontology
13. How do elderly widows and widowers tend to react to the death of their significant other?
 - a. Differently: elderly widows often do not remarry, while elderly widowers do.
 - b. Differently: elderly widows often remarry, while elderly widowers do not.
 - c. Similarly: both elderly widows and widowers often remarry.
 - d. Similarly: both elderly widows and widowers do not often remarry.
14. Which state was the first to allow some form of physician-assisted suicide?
 - a. Nevada
 - b. Georgia
 - c. Oregon
 - d. Texas
15. Accusing people of DWE (driving while elderly) is considered a type of:
 - a. Clairvoyance
 - b. Ageism
 - c. Behaviorism
 - d. Functionalism
16. When elderly people are considered elders and leaders of a group of people, they are functioning in a(n):
 - a. Republic
 - b. Meritocracy
 - c. Oligarchy
 - d. Gerontocracy
17. What causes some caretakers to abuse their elderly charges?
 - a. Job satisfaction
 - b. Depression
 - c. Lack of emotional attachment
 - d. Pride

18. What is the basic idea behind disengagement theory?
- As people age, they think less and less about being married to their spouse and more about their individuality.
 - As people age, they disengage with their friends in order to spend more time with their families.
 - As people age, they generally withdraw from all forms of society.
 - As people age, they begin to lose their friends and family and spend their last days mourning their losses.
19. Some conflict theorists ascribe to the idea that as time and technology move forward, elderly people are left behind and lose social standing and power. Which specific theory does this describe?
- Modernization theory
 - Age stratification theory
 - Exchange theory
 - Continuity theory
20. A symbolic interactionist may choose to study senior centers and other groups of elderly people. Which theory might they find most useful for their study?
- Subculture of aging theory
 - Gerotranscendence
 - Selective optimization with compensation theory
 - Age stratification theory

Free Response

21. Baby boomers have been called the “Me Generation.” Do you know any baby boomers? In what way do they exemplify their generation?
22. Conduct a mini census by counting the members of your extended family and noting their ages. Try to include three or four generations, if possible. Create a table and include total population plus percentages of each generation. Next, begin to analyze age patterns in your family. What issues are important and specific to each group? What trends can you predict about your own family over the next ten years based on this census? For example, how will family members’ needs, interests, and relationships change the family dynamic?
23. Test Elisabeth Kübler-Ross’s five stages of grief. Think of someone or something you have lost. You might consider the loss of a relationship, possession, or aspect of your identity. Did you experience all five stages of grief? If so, how did the expression of each stage manifest? Did the process happen slowly or rapidly? Did the stages occur out of order? Did you reach acceptance? Does your experience help you empathize with the elderly?
24. What do you think it will be like to be ten or twenty years older than you are now? What facts are your assumptions based on? Are any of your assumptions about getting older false? What kind of sociological study could you establish to test your assumptions?

25. What is your relationship to aging and to time? How much and in what ways have you changed? Does a decade seem like a long time or a short time? Do you think older people share similar experiences as they age?
26. Make a list of all the biases, generalizations, and stereotypes about elderly people that you have noticed. Include everything, no matter how small or trivial. Which statements can be considered myths? Which frequently lead to discrimination?
27. Have you known any person who experienced prejudice or discrimination based on age? Think of someone who has been denied an experience or opportunity simply for being “too old.” Describe the experience in a few paragraphs.
28. Think of an older person you know well, perhaps a grandparent, other relative, or neighbor. How does this person defy certain stereotypes of aging?
29. Older people suffer discrimination, and often, so do teenagers. Compare the discrimination experienced by the elderly to that experienced by teenagers. What do the groups share, and how are they different?
30. In your opinion, which aging theory proposes the healthiest lifestyle for aging people—activity, continuity, or disengagement? What are the pros and cons of each theory? Find examples of real people who illustrate the theories, either from your own experience or others’. Do your examples show positive or negative aspects of the theory they illustrate?