

interrogate the age/voice/dominance issues of ideas in theory, just as feminist theory has done in another way. What thoughts predominate and whose voices are heard? Third, conceptual frameworks emerging from social gerontology may find broader theoretical applicability. In terms of the title question of the book, *The Need for Theory*, the most fundamental conclusion reached by the editors and authors is a huge “yes”. Theory moves us beyond the what, to ask the how, the who, and the why. Without asking those questions, social gerontology is not producing new knowledge.

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## RÉSUMÉ

L’objet de *Community Resources for Older Adults: Programs and Services in an Era of Change* est d’offrir un aperçu des ressources communautaires dont les aînés américains peuvent se prévaloir à l’heure actuelle. L’ouvrage décrit le continuum des services et fournit d’excellents exemples de pratiques exemplaires en vigueur en Amérique. Chaque chapitre étudie les enjeux que présente le maintien des programmes et propose des orientations pour l’avenir. Les activités d’apprentissage génériques et les études de cas facilitent le passage de la théorie à la pratique. On regrette toutefois que l’ouvrage ne parle pas des contextes et programmes d’autres pays, cela aurait permis de faire des comparaisons internationales et aurait intéressé un public plus nombreux.

According to the authors, *Community Resources for Older Adults: Programs and Services in an Era of Change* is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of community resources currently available to elderly Americans, including both public and private programs. The book achieves this goal and successfully delivers an in-depth review of community resources for older Americans.

The book, targeted at students and practitioners, is comprised of 20 chapters, organized into three sections. Part 1, “The Social Context of Community Resource Delivery”, includes three chapters that outline the organization of the book and discuss demographic trends in populations of older Americans; review major American aging programs and legislation (e.g., Social Security, Medicare, and the Older Americans Act); and examine patterns of service use by older adults as well as theories to predict their help-seeking behaviour.

Part 2, “The Continuum of Services”, contains the next 16 chapters and is organized into three groups, encompassing community resources (information and referral, education programs, volunteer and intergen-

erational, income assistance program, seniors centres); support services (nutrition, mental health, housing, health and wellness, transportation, legal); and long-term care services (case management, in-home services, respite/adult day services, nursing homes). Each of the 16 chapters emphasizes the policy context of the program or service, the users and programs currently in place, and related challenges including service delivery. Part 3, “Preparing for the Future”, is composed of a single chapter on programs and services for the future and is followed by an appendix with contact information for individual state agencies on aging.

This book is designed for an audience of American students and practitioners. However, readers from other countries might also appreciate the discussion on the continuum of services and the excellent examples of best practices, which provide many ideas for program development and delivery. Nevertheless, a presentation of the context and programs of other countries would have allowed for international comparisons. As well, a presentation of the WHO perspectives on health promotion, aging, and primary care would have increased interest for a broader audience.

The summary of generic learning activities found at the end of each chapter offers many ideas, applicable in a variety of settings. A selection of case studies is also provided to apply learning to practice. Again, these case studies are specific to American governmental policies and, while they may be effective for students in the United States, the applicability of some cases to international contexts is more limited. Obviously, some of the scenarios described in the case studies would have been avoided or more effectively managed in countries with nationally administered and universally delivered health insurance programs.

The review of the legislation that underpins the delivery of services to older adults in the United States is very detailed and complex. The chapter on theories that help predict service use offers a useful framework to gain understanding of the behaviour of older adults. A more comprehensive and thorough discussion of theory and further illustration of its application in practice would have added a useful dimension to this text.

The chapters of this book are well organized but the inclusion of learning objectives at the beginning of each chapter would be a useful element to consider in a future edition. The extensive use of acronyms also has the potential to confuse the reader. Acronyms for

specific acts or programs, such as the Older Americans Act (OAA) and Administration on Aging (AoA) are plentiful, as are more general abbreviations, such as agencies on aging (AAA) and state units on aging (SUA). The provision of a glossary of acronyms would be useful in this respect. Finally, labels such as "low-income minority persons", "low-income and minority elders", "low-income older blacks", and "older ethnic minority groups" are used in the book. It is the opinion of the reviewer that such language in print serves to reinforce the labelling of people and should be avoided.

A constant of this book is its focus on the future. Each chapter reviews the challenges for the continued delivery of programs and provides future directions. The final chapter offers an integration of such perspectives. The authors, however, have chosen to focus on challenges specific to the Older Americans Act, stressing mainly the legislative aspects. A greater consideration of community, organizational, and societal aspects would have offered a stronger conclusion to this comprehensive guide on community resources for older adults.