

# INTRODUCTION

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**T**his special issue of the *Canadian Journal of Sociology* is on social theory and aging in a global world. It is an important process in bringing together evocative, engaged, and comparative insights to our understanding of complex aging and social issues through prisms of contextual, conceptual, and new theories.

The collection begins with a paper by Hongtu Chen, Sue Levkoff, and Arthur Kleinman. By illuminating three basic types of contextual knowledge, the authors argue that obtaining and accumulating contextual knowledge of local practice can be critical and productive, especially in the planning phase of an eldercare intervention project.

The second paper by Marinus Ossewaarde explores the issue of aging and the relevance of the 'sociological imagination' by utilizing comparative examples to illustrate the development of social theory and aging.

The third paper by Robert Sévigny and Sheying Chen investigates the conceptual issues of clinical sociology and their impact on understanding gerontology. They draw on international examples of theoretical/methodological development, in particular on China.

The fourth paper focuses on aging in Nigeria. Ayokunle Omobowale attempts to ground literature from the social construction of aging to examine and understand the impact of wisdom of elders in South West Nigeria.

The fifth paper by Sara Parker et al. explores the issue of aging in Nepal. It investigates the power of biomedicine and its impact on social policies. It also evaluates its ethical problems, as well as new theoretical issues raised in understanding aging.

The sixth paper by Jason L. Powell is a conclusion to the issue and raises the question whether aging should or should not be grounded by theories of globalization. It concludes by assessing the conceptual frames required to understand the comparative study of aging.

