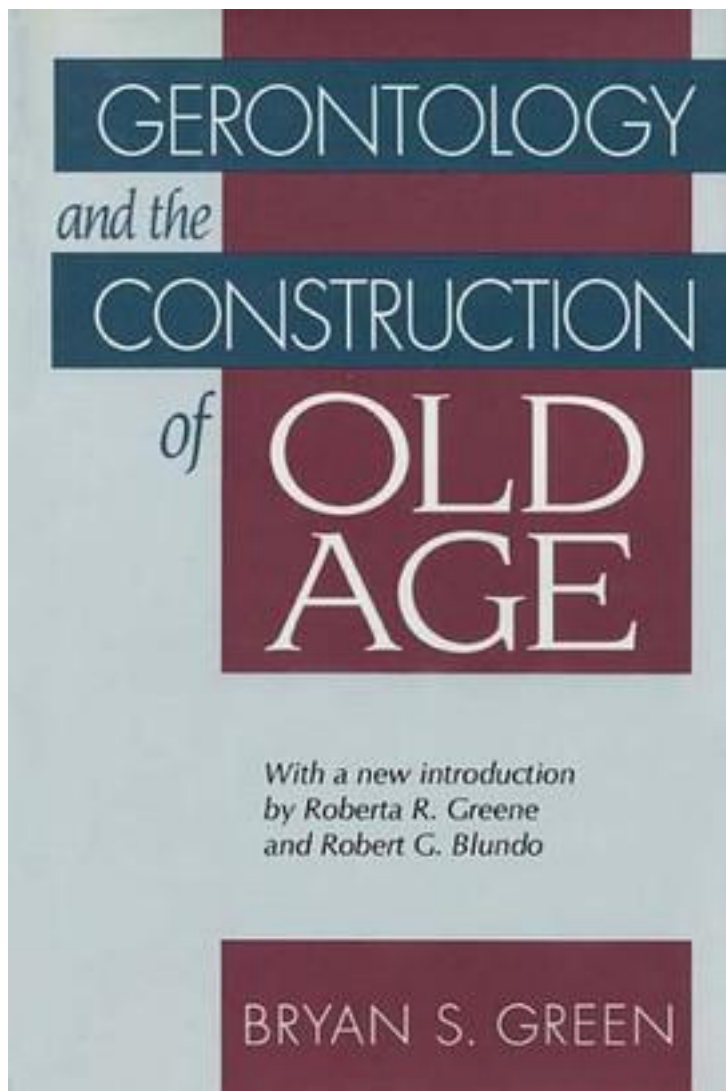# Gerontology and the Construction of Old Age

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Although attitudes toward the aged and their care are inherent in any society, gerontology itself is a relatively recent field of study and practice. Gerontology and the Construction of Old Age applies the methods of discourse analysis and textual analysis to texts and documents in this newly evolved and eclectic field. Green explores and identifies the literary methods and discursive regularities through which aging and the aged have been made into objects of study and treatment, and which together form a mode of knowledge production that will influence future texts in the field. Because such formats of representation limit rational diagnoses of problems and rational courses of ameliorative action, policy implications in the field of gerontology are a major interest of this study. Another interest is methodological. Within the broader constructionist approach to social reality, Green takes the position of "constitutive realism": the notion that social reality is linguistically constructed, primarily in speech and writing. The book's two aims are to describe analytically the field of gerontology. The field is important both for its growing academic presence and for its practical effects on discourse and policy concerning old age. It also hopes to help develop possibilities of inquiry associated with the linguistic, literary, and rhetorical turns of social science in recent years. Gerontology and the Construction of Old Age is a substantive investigation, at considerable theoretical depth, of gerontology itself, as well as a methodological treatise with broader implications for social science as it focuses upon the discourse of various professional fields.

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