

Table 6.2 Summary of sociological perspectives: Inequalities based on age and aging

	Functional	Conflict/Feminist	Interactionist
Explanations of age and inequality	<p>As we age, we enter and exit age-specific roles and statuses. Each status helps maintain social stability.</p> <p>Elderly disengagement is a normal and necessary process.</p>	<p>Inequality is based on one's relationship to the labor force—with the elderly having the least amount of power in society.</p> <p>Women are disadvantaged in the aging process more than men are.</p>	<p>Our age-related roles are socially defined and expected.</p>
Questions asked about age and inequality	<p>How do our age-related roles and statuses contribute to the stability of society?</p> <p>Is there a way to successfully disengage the elderly from society?</p>	<p>How does modernization contribute to lowering the status of the elderly?</p> <p>What can be done to improve the status of the elderly?</p> <p>How and why does society have two standards for aging—one for men, the other for women?</p> <p>What can be done to reduce the negative impact of the aging standard for women?</p>	<p>How do we learn our age-related roles?</p> <p>In what ways do our perceptions and beliefs perpetuate ageism?</p>