

Encore adulthood: boomers on the edge of risk, renewal, and purpose

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Abstrak

This book describes a new life stage, encore adulthood, sandwiched between conventional adulthood-traditional careers and childrearing-and conventional old age. A time of varied paths in work, retirement, family care, or civic engagement, this stage is made possible by medical advances and lifestyle changes improving population health and longevity. The encore adult years occur around ages 55 to 75, as Boomers begin to think about second acts. Twenty-first-century life in North America and Europe is changing in remarkable ways-characterized by the books four key themes: First are similarities in changes at both ends of adulthood, emerging adulthood and encore adulthood. Both Millennials and Boomers are without scripts for whats next. Second, these times of rapid social, economic, and technological changes enable people to experiment, opening up opportunities for some to fashion new ways of working and living. Third, opportunities for renewal and heightened risks are unequally distributed; education, class, gender, race, and age expand or narrow life chances and life quality. Fourth is the distinctly gendered life courses of women and men, with financial, physical, and emotional well-being implications. The book is divided into three sections, each representing one of three research, policy, and action agendas: first is recognizing institutional inertia, and the outdatedness of contemporary career, retirement and life-course templates. Second is supporting Boomers time-shifting improvisations, their alternative pathways. Third is institutional work, including social innovations in language, customs, and policies opening up varied and customized career, retirement, and life-course paths.