

experiences of assessing risk and the judgements they or their colleagues may make.

Chapter 4, 'Risk Management', cites risk assessment and management frameworks and suggests that the reader reflect on the importance of the process and communication of the assessment. The authors highlight the need for frameworks to take into account life histories, and they propose a framework which includes perspective, weight of risk and the consideration of past strategies for managing risk.

Chapter 5, 'Developing Practice in Risk Management in Dementia Care', revisits some of the key points discussed in the book, which may be useful for readers wanting a quick recap or to use the book as a guide. The authors also introduce a model to illustrate their view that risk avoidance can be harmful and that there is an optimal level of risk exposure which can enhance quality of life. This chapter picks up an earlier discussion on the stigma that can come with a diagnosis of dementia. However, neither this nor its relationship to risk management are explored in any great depth, although a discussion would have been a useful addition. 'Future Directions' is a useful sub-section linking the wellbeing of older people in society with a positive understanding of dementia care. The book concludes with a reiterated 'Risk and Dementia Assessment Framework' earlier proposed in Chapter 4.

In summary, this book provides a useful, easy-to-follow guide for practitioners who are involved with delivering services to people with dementia, wanting to better understand and navigate the complexities of risk assessment and management.

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Bill Bytheway, *Unmasking Age: The Significance of Age for Social Research*, The Policy Press, Bristol, UK, 2011, 256 pp., pbk £24.99, ISBN: 978 1 84742 617 8.

Social research is particularly susceptible to charges that many of its concepts are too broad or vague to be empirically measured. Studies of alienation, religiosity, and power, to name but a few key areas of social science, are confronted with the elusive problem of how to transform these overarching themes into constituent entities that can be observed. Bill Bytheway's new book makes an important contribution to our understanding of these complex issues by focusing on the concept that is at the heart of gerontology but which is all too often taken for granted as being understood – the meaning of age and ageing. Thus the purpose of this book is to address questions such as 'what is gerontology?', 'how do we study ageing?' and 'how is ageing measured?' With these questions, the author aims to alert all those involved in the gerontological enterprise of the volatility of their subject matter and to provoke them into using methods that better reflect the 'lived experience of ageing'.

The book can be read on three levels. It is first and perhaps foremost, a reflection of a long career spanning more than 40 years by one of the United Kingdom's most influential gerontologists. Bytheway takes us on a fascinating personal journey through the landscape of gerontological research as it emerged from the 1970s, detailing on the way his involvement with specific projects. Throughout all of these projects, and from the very beginning of his career, the author has consistently posed the question of 'what do we mean by old age?' At each stage of the journey, he demonstrates his capacity to question the rationale and aims of gerontological research, drawing on his experiences as a statistician as well as a fieldworker. Second, the book is a provocative and convincing attack on the methods used in social research, with the accusation that the framing of many, if not most gerontological research questions, serves only to reinforce negative aspects of ageing. The gerontologist is therefore in a methodological strait-jacket and ignores the potential of other tools, such as diaries, letters and fictional accounts that capture the ordinariness of ageing. Each chapter in the book draws on these sources, with citations from diary entries and letters of informants and published authors, narratives from interviews, and fictional writing that confronts the ageing process. Third, the book can be seen, as the title suggests, as both a homage to and continuation of the work of Mike Featherstone and the late Mike Hepworth, particularly the latter to whom the book is dedicated as a colleague and a friend. Drawing on their work, Bytheway seeks to find and develop new approaches to understanding the meaning of ageing in society.

The book is structured by ten chapters that deal with different facets of the concept of age. After an introductory chapter, the starting point of the task in hand is a critical appraisal of commonly used research strategies within gerontology. Bytheway delves briefly into the history of gerontological research, observing how it has 'developed primarily on the back of clinical practice . . . and surveys'. He is quick to show that gerontology 'has not yet established a clear location of its own on the academic map', instead having been drawn into the cul-de-sac of a social problem approach to old age. Chapter 3 addresses the temporal aspects of ageing and the author advocates 'freeing the conceptualisation of age from chronological time', and the decline with which it is invariably associated. The notion of 'timescape', a metaphorical concept, relating to 'relative, mobile and personal frames of life time, family time and illness' is presented, together with the importance of the ordinariness of everyday life and routine as pertinent subject matter for researching the process of ageing.

Chapter 4 engages with the issue of the representations of age through words and images, whilst Chapter 5 links the process of ageing as a 'lived experience' to the ageing body. Bytheway brings to life the significance of birthdays as markers of ageing, as well as focusing on the transformations that are associated with ageing, notably bereavements. Chapter 6 introduces the family and social networks into the process of ageing, showing how the notion of generation is made manifest through the passage of time. The following chapter confronts 'being older', or as Bytheway ingeniously puts it,

that time of life when one is 'indisputably old' or in 'extreme old age'. Chapter 8 deals with the way ageing populations have been defined in policy terms, and it provides a critique of the difficulties that surround the inclusion of age as independent variable in multivariate analyses. Bytheway is less convincing when he attacks, somewhat iconoclastically, research that accentuates the impact of shifting demographic structures that lead to ageing populations, and his criticism of apocalyptic demography only partially reaches its mark. Dependency need not have a pejorative connotation, and perhaps as a concept it needs rehabilitating too. The penultimate chapter deals with the importance of participatory research. Some first-hand accounts are given of the emergence of cultural gerontology, reflecting a reaction against research that has 'consolidated rather than challenged popular beliefs about old age'. The final chapter returns to the dilemma within gerontology of treating age as a 'real' process of decline (the author instead using the euphemism of 'facing up to the reality of our ageing bodies') whilst running the risk of reproducing and reinforcing negative representations of old age. Some pointers are given, including 'refocusing on seniority' or 'relative age', but these are no doubt the subject of a future book.

A series of thought-provoking discussion questions are given at the end of each chapter. I initially passed over them, but progressing through the book, I was increasingly drawn to reflect on the complex issues raised by these seemingly straightforward questions. Bill Bytheway succeeds in challenging our preconceptions, where often mundane events and experiences are treated as unworthy of research. For this reason, the book can assist social researchers, at any stage of their career, to design and implement innovative projects related to age and ageing.

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Michael Schillmeier and Miquel Domènech (eds), *New Technologies and Emerging Spaces of Care*, Ashgate Publishing, Farnham, UK, 2010, 240 pp., hbk £55.00, ISBN 13: 978 0 7546 7864 9.

In this volume Schillmeier and Domènech have gathered together ten contributions by authors from several countries, based on work that includes original empirical studies, reflections on previous studies, and theoretical examinations. These are gathered around a theme of new technologies for care and their effects on individuals as well as practice, viewed through 'the poly-theoretical lens of Science and Technology Studies' (p. 2). There are four basic concerns: the social control, surveillance and accountability that are common concerns for providers and users alike; boundaries and migrations between public and private; the new relationships and subjectivities generated by using these technologies; and the ethical