

widowers. The authors also discuss living apart together (LAT) relationships, a trend that is becoming more common in contemporary family life.

A unique contribution to this book is in chapter 8, in which the authors consider the challenges raised by globalisation on family practices in later life. With a focus on transnational communities, this chapter examines how families maintain ties across great distances, including an emphasis on the struggles faced in maintaining these relationships. The authors suggest that technological advances (e.g., email, video calling) can strengthen transnational relationships and have the potential to reduce exclusion. Overall, the authors make a significant point in this chapter – that the welfare state is withdrawing from “significant areas of responsibility” (p. 97). In short there is increasing emphasis on the role that families need to play in the care of their older relatives. For example, in the Canadian context as individuals are discharged from hospital earlier and/or are aging in the community with chronic illness and disease and as public home-based care provision is decreased there is increased responsibility on families to provide necessary care (Sims-Gould & Martin-Matthews, 2010). This withdrawal of the formal system is not just common to the Canadian system but in many industrialized countries.

Key themes on family practices are pulled together in chapter 9 through a vignette that highlights a number of the points raised throughout the book. The vignette illustrates the demographic and generational shifts that have been occurring in families, and it underscores the multiple relationships and bonds that constitute a family. It also demonstrates how these relationships are negotiated and how individual and family narratives can change over time.

Although the authors are explicit from the outset that this book focuses on a life course perspective and not on a “care” or “dependency” approach, their not thoroughly addressing these issues results in an underdeveloped point: namely, that the welfare state is

withdrawing, which has an impact on family practices (especially with respect to care). It is true that much of the family discourse is shaped by discussion of caregiving and care receiving, but this is due to the tremendous impact of care experiences on family life. Some discussion of how family practices are affected by changing public policy with respect to expectations for caregiving would have enhanced this book.

The strength of this book is in its ability to demonstrate that, despite changes over time (i.e., in public policy, family structure, family geography, etc.), the family – in whatever structure or form it manifests – remains of central importance. The book aptly draws on theoretical ideas and research from a number of internationally renowned family and gerontology scholars. The voices of older adults are interspersed throughout the book, grounding it in the lived lives and experiences of older people. This book would be a very good addition to sociology, gerontology, social policy, and family studies reading lists at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Further, it would also be useful for academics, practitioners, and policy makers interested in timely and salient issues facing aging families.

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Allison E. Smith. *Ageing in Urban Neighbourhoods: Place Attachment and Social Exclusion*. Bristol, UK: The Policy Press, 2009.

Reviewed by Caroline Holland, The Open University, U.K.

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Beginning with the premise that over half of the world's older population already lives in urban areas (with a continuing trend in that direction), this book

aims to further our understanding of the older person's relationship with such environments in order to inform better social policy and practice. Given the

nature of the urban neighborhoods that she examines, Smith's primary concern is: How do older people respond to living in deprived urban neighbourhoods? To answer this question, she positions her own empirical study of neighbourhoods in the U.K. and Canada within a framework of "refocusing" the notion of the person-environment fit.

Smith divides her book into three sections. In the first, "Revisiting the Person-Environment Fit", she reconsiders classics in the literature on person-environment (P-E) relationships. She provides a useful summary of key concepts and authors that also serves as an introduction for those new to this field. She pays particular attention to Lawton and Nahemow's (1973) classic, *Ecological Model of Ageing*, and to Rowles' ethnographic work and his notion of "insideness". In Part 2, "Rethinking the Person-Environment Fit", Smith describes and discusses an empirical study that she carried out in five deprived neighbourhoods in Manchester, England, and Vancouver, Canada. Finally, in section three, "Refocusing the Person-Environment Fit", Smith considers how the P-E relationship may need to be refocused in light of current and future challenges. Additionally, she considers what influence this might have on theorising and interpreting the relationship that older people have with their environments and what this might mean for policy.

Smith's opening premise is that environmental gerontology has been languishing since around the 1980s, with little theoretical or empirical progress in the intervening years. In particular, we have little understanding of cross-cultural and cross-national issues. Another significant research omission is the extent to which P-E relationships are significant within the multiple risks experienced in deprived inner city areas.

The author sets out to address these research gaps with a description of her research in three areas of Manchester (Cheetham, Moss Side, and Longsight) and two of Vancouver (Grandview-Woodland and The Downtown Eastside). These areas were selected on the basis of broadly comparable indicators of deprivation, and Smith has provided fairly detailed accounts of the historical development and decline of each area. Smith's method combined profiles and interviews with 52 participants, and more detailed case studies with 8 of them. Pictorial and descriptive accounts of their neighbourhoods produced by two of the residents of Vancouver and one person living in the Manchester area are also provided. Overall, this collection of data offers rich and engaging accounts of the lives and voices of older people living in deprived neighbourhoods (and certainly ones that have been labelled as such by others).

Indeed, one of the great strengths of the book is the extent to which the voices of the residents are allowed to shine through. Mrs. MacDougall (pseudonyms are used throughout), a 90-year-old resident of Grandview-Woodland and still a local activist, eloquently describes what for her are the pleasures and ambiguities of "insideness" within a diverse but low-income community. Mrs. Fox, aged 78 and in poor health, talks about the loss of neighbourliness and with it her sense of security in her Cheetham community. Each case study brings to life something of the everyday experiences of growing older in places where challenging environments can affect people's ability to engage fully with their communities and live a quality life. Smith also provides an analytical discussion on how each of these case studies relate to P-E theory.

The link between these case study accounts and the larger number of interviews, and Smith's criticism of environmental gerontology's theorising, lies in her analysis. Smith moves towards a cross-national analysis that posits a threefold categorisation of P-E relationships between older people and deprived urban environments. These three areas describe (a) environmental comfort, (b) environmental management, and (c) environmental distress. She bases these categories on an assessment: of the balance between environmental press/competence (the individual's experience of that specific environment set against their own ability to adjust to it or to change it); evidence of individuals' place attachment and disruption within and beyond the immediate neighbourhood; and the strength of the older person's desire to move. The quality of life associated with these categorisations ranges from "good or very good" (environmental comfort) to "poor or very poor" (environmental distress).

Does this categorization enable us to re-focus P-E fit? Smith directly addresses this question, a little strangely perhaps, by first examining the policy context (largely in the U.K., and in the U.S., and Europe – there is little here specifically about Canada) and then by contemplating current and future influences on P-E relationships. In the concluding chapter, she re-addresses the issue of how her work has enabled such a re-focussing. This discussion re-visits her key empirical findings in relation to her three environmental categories. In doing so, she observes that there were more similarities than differences in the experiences of the participants in Canada and the U.K. This is an interesting and important reflection. However, we are essentially looking at two mainly English-speaking "western" cities that, for all their differences, also share many commonalities that in a global context might not apply to other kinds of cities. What to my mind is more useful is her drawing

out of the complexity and temporality of how people understand, relate to, and work with the environments in which they find themselves, for good or ill, in old age. To her credit, Smith also states in this section of the book that her main objective was “to spark wider debate and present a forward look for

academic research, policy makers and practitioners” (p. 188). In summary, the book provides much food for thought in such a debate. And, it will be of interest to a much wider audience than a purely academic one because it is well structured and illustrated, and written in an engaging manner.

Anne D. Basting. *Forget Memory: Creating Better Lives for People with Dementia*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009.

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*Forget Memory: Creating Better Lives for People with Dementia* is a book designed to share Anne Basting’s 15 years of experience as an artist, teacher, scholar, and writer. The book, which will appeal to many who confront dementia, consists of three parts. Part One examines the fear of memory loss in dementia, how memory works, and how people with dementia are impacted by the fear of memory loss and the stigma associated with dementia. Part Two discusses how dementia is portrayed in the popular media, mainly in films. In Part Three, Basting discusses 10 U.S.-based arts programs designed for people with dementia and all those who care for them. These programs support her philosophical approach to the importance of the arts in dementia care. Basting advocates the enjoyment of the present moment through the engagement of meaningful multidisciplinary activities that are person-centred. The book concludes with 12 recommendations to improve the quality of life of people with dementia.

I like the book’s title, *Forget Memory*, which succinctly informs us of Basting’s approach to the relevance of memory in the arts as applied to dementia care. The title immediately sets the tone and invites questions for what lies ahead: just how important is memory, and why do we really need to remember just about everything in our very busy lives? However, we still need to recognize that various types of memories do exist at various capacity levels during the progression of this medical condition and no matter how accurate the memory is, it is still a memory. Basting’s intention to reduce anxieties about memory loss can be applauded but, in reality, some parts of memory are available to be used for the longest time before entering the final stages of dementia.

In the book’s Preface, Basting suggests that professionals and concerned people, including people with

dementia, are her targeted readers. If so, I find some sections of the book too complicated for people with dementia who are not academically inclined, especially the first chapter on understanding memory. The desire to include people with dementia is well intentioned, but perhaps not very realistic.

Whenever Basting includes stories from her childhood, her own family and her experience, I felt particularly drawn in. These stories made the reading highly personal and linked her background with her approach to dementia care. I found myself engaged in Part One, learning about the history of how memory has been treated over the years and the various types of memories we experience, although I did miss a discussion of how the various types of memories could impact the programs in Part Three of the book. Then, midway through Part Two, I began to question the need for discussing popular culture at this length. Although I understood the author’s intention of using films to describe how dementia is portrayed, I felt it could be shortened considerably and still achieve the same effect.

Part Three presents 10 arts programs developed for interacting with people with dementia. These programs involve song writing, dance, story telling, photography, and the visual arts. Among the programs mentioned was *TimeSlips*, a creative storytelling project that Basting herself developed.

Students in the field of gerontology and new facilitators in the field of creative expression programs in dementia care will find this book informative and helpful. The programs make good practical use of remaining abilities by being rooted in the present and by being person-centered – adjusting activities to the individuals. It would have been of great value if Basting had mentioned whether or not these programs were tested, such as the testing of her own program in *Impact of TimeSlips, a Creative Expression Intervention*