

this positive and beneficial relationship which may otherwise have been denied them.

Chapter 12, 'The Therapeutic Mountain', towards the end of the book, gives an inspirational picture of what the future of dementia care could be if enough time, thought and care were put into the provision and development of services. Taking its inspiration from the ideas of therapeutic architecture, The AlzheimerUR CENTRE in Murcia in Spain takes the mountain it is situated upon, its paths and qualities, fragrances, colours, sounds and light as central to facilitating not only human-to-human relationships, but also those with the sensory world around. The centre aims to encompass a dementia care unit and laboratories with a brain bank, as well as a day centre and a family training centre. All of these are infused with an emotional and cultural geography of place, linked both to the local climate and ways of living, as a form of non-pharmacological therapy.

As someone not greatly versed in dementia care I found the book an inspiration in terms of current practice that incorporates the natural world into care and therapeutic treatment. By giving voice to first-person narratives of those experiencing dementia to articulate the benefits they experience through contact with the natural world in all its myriad forms, as well as contributions from professionals and carers, the book weaves effortlessly between different narrative and perspectives remaining true to a holistic vision of care where the natural world is central.

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Pieter Vanhuyse and Achim Goerres (eds), *Ageing Populations in Post-industrial Democracies: Comparative Studies of Policies and Politics*, Routledge, Abingdon, UK and New York, 2012, 274 pp., hbk £75.00, ISBN 13: 978 0 415 60382 9.

Important domestic and international actors articulate often extreme views on the policy implications of population ageing, yet we have surprisingly little evidence of what these implications are. *Ageing Populations in Post-industrial Democracies* makes a major contribution towards addressing this paucity of data and empirically informed argumentation in an area that has raised so much interest and controversy in recent decades, but until now remained largely unexplored territory in the literature.

The acknowledgements to this book state that the editors benefited from blind-reviews conducted by referees: emulating the journal review process in this way is one way of raising the standard of chapters in edited volumes, but it may also lead to a weaker editorial imprint on a book. Indeed, in this case I would have liked to have seen more evidence of editorial synthesis in the form of a stronger concluding chapter by the editors themselves. Arguably the main comparative advantage of (edited) books over journal articles is that they allow for more summative accounts of the state of scholarship, and, very importantly, for theorising the field. I also feel that this book would have

benefited from a stronger editorial hand in organising and dividing the chapters into two or three sections to reflect the differences in generational politics in relation to younger people's welfare entitlements and fertility behaviour, and older people's entitlements, parties, voting behaviour and interest group activity.

Despite this, the reader of this book can piece together an interesting story. The excellent epilogue by Robert B. Hudson draws attention to some important differences between Europe and the United States of America, although it does not replace what could have been a path-breaking state-of-the-art encapsulation by the editors themselves. In my reading, the chapters amount to a firm rejection of the 'grey power' hypothesis and the 'war of generations' stereotype, with the complexity of generational politics convincingly highlighted in the individual chapters. Generation and age matter surprisingly little in the light of the empirical evidence marshalled here: rather, institutions and structures (welfare state design, electoral system, interest organisation) are paramount. Interestingly, perceptions are also highlighted as important, in particular the perceived need to control budgets which may trump over the perceived need to protect age-related entitlements. Grey power, to the very limited extent that it exists, is therefore highly conditional on favourable institutional factors. These are some of the important insights that I gleaned from the chapters, yet was left wondering what is the key message of the book as a whole.

The book is focused on macro-level politics, but some chapters shed light on socio-economic status and gender in shaping micro-level attitudes and engagement in generational politics. Entitlements are, in many welfare states, powerfully stratified by occupational status and income, and sustained differences in the lifecourse give men and women differential stakes in many age-related entitlements. Chapter 5, by Mehmet F. Aysan, contains some insightful discussion on gender, but is dominated by consideration of institutional factors in different pension regimes. Chapter 9, by Jonas Edlund and Stefan Svallfors, marshals data to back up the argument that class continues to supersede age as the key attitude-shaping variable. These are just some of the multiple variables that influence generational politics: the central contribution of this book is that these variables are discussed for the first time within a single volume, albeit with considerably more attention to the 'macro' than to the 'micro' level. Chapter 8, by Achim Goerres and Markus Tepe, takes some interesting steps towards hypothesising the inter-relationship between the two, including the 'socially constructed nexus between the family and the welfare state' (p. 199), which in turn points towards 'motives of reciprocal exchange between generations rather than pure age-based self-interest' (p. 200). These are important steps towards what may be major theoretical breakthroughs.

Reading this timely volume, with its many thoughtful contributions, I kept wishing the editors had seized the opportunity that books offer to theorise more boldly and thereby set the agenda for future work in the emergent field of generational politics. Nonetheless, in the light of their commendable ambition and prolific publications record, I am convinced that the editors,

and many of the contributors to this volume, will go on to produce such formative work in the future. *Ageing Populations in Post-industrial Democracies* has provided a tantalising invitation for advancing an increasingly important field of scholarship and is essential reading for graduate students and researchers working on this topic.

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Joan Price, *Naked at Our Age: Talking Out Loud About Senior Sex*, Seal Press, Berkeley, California, 2011, 400 pp., pbk \$16.95, ISBN 13: 978 1 58005 338 9.

This self-help style book focuses on sex in later life and combines case studies, sex and relationship education, sex tips and problem-page types of discussion. Each chapter takes a particular topic, with titles such as 'Reviving Desire', 'Sex Toys: Now More Than Ever', 'Surviving Divorce, Breakup, Betrayal', 'Erectile Dysfunction: Women Speak Out' and 'Better Now Than Ever: The Joys of Older Age Sex'. The main text is written by Price herself, often reflecting briefly on her own experiences of later life sex. This text is interspersed with stories from other older people that she has assembled from questionnaires filled in by people recruited via her blog and speaking engagements. Sometimes these stories stand alone as case studies of the issue being discussed in that chapter, at other times they are treated in problem-page format with the 'answer' coming either from Price or 'An Expert'. Most chapters additionally contain boxed texts titled 'Advice from an Expert'.

While this book is not an academic book and is aimed at a general readership of older people, it is likely to be of interest to researchers and students of sexuality, as an example of the explosion of discourse around later life sexuality in recent years (Gott 2005; Marshall 2002). It is interesting to contrast it with one of the first books for older people discussing sex (Greengross and Greengross 1989), published more than 20 years ago. Price's voice is markedly more liberal and permissive, to the extent that it sometimes sits oddly with a more conservative discourse of sexuality expressed in the stories. Her advice is also much franker and more specific: 'make sure you can work the controls on a vibrator without wearing your reading glasses'; different types of vulval and vaginal pain; the pros and cons of different types of lubricant. The explicitness of the content is signalled by the quote chosen for the cover of the book 'While this groundbreaking book will have some of you blushing, you won't put it down'. I can't help suspecting that a self-help book aimed at younger people with a similar degree of explicitness would not need to carry this kind of 'health warning' about the content, suggesting, perhaps, that later life sex is still not normative, for all that it may be becoming normalised.

In terms of shifting normativities, I was also interested to note that the chapter titled 'Off the Beaten Path: Nontraditional Sex Practices and Relationships', which I had assumed would be about lesbian and gay (and