

# Book Review / Compte rendu

Andrew King, Kathryn Almack, and Rebecca L. Jones. *Intersections of Ageing, Gender and Sexualities: Multidisciplinary International Perspectives*. Bristol: Policy Press, 2019.

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As we continue to witness the growth of populations of diverse older adults around the world, *Intersections of Ageing, Gender and Sexualities: Multidisciplinary International Perspectives* is both a timely and a much-needed contribution to current debates among social policy makers and researchers who grapple with these complex issues. This demographic shift, brought on by global aging, will continue to have unprecedented impacts on societies over the coming decades. These impacts will necessitate a rethinking of our current siloed approaches to, for example, social care policies and programs, and will push us toward “taking intersectionality seriously” (p. 2).

This edited volume is focused on the intersections of aging, gender, and sexualities, and was informed by an international conference of the same name that took place in the United Kingdom in 2015. This book is part of the “Ageing in a Global Content” book series published by Policy Press in partnership with the British Society of Gerontology. Under the leadership of the co-editors Andrew King, Kathryn Almack, and Rebecca Jones, this impressive array of international, multidisciplinary perspectives on key issues of aging, gender, and sexualities addresses an important knowledge gap by using an intersectional framing of the content presented. Specifically, this edited volume bridges – both theoretically and methodologically – the aging and sexualities bodies of literature to offer critical examinations of issues in relation to gender and sexualities in later life. What is crucial to the important content of this book is the inclusion of diverse populations of historically neglected segments of society, including those born at a time when their sexuality and/or gender identity were rendered invisible and/or psychopathologized, such as members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities, and how a sense of “unbelonging” is carried forward into their later years through regulatory social systems of power, privilege, and oppression. This is only one of many examples found in the book that serve as poignant illustrations of the urgent need to reimagine and reformulate our understanding of aging to be inclusive of intersections of gender and sexualities as well as ethnicity/race, disability, and class.

Organized into four overarching thematic areas consisting of theory; representations of aging, gender, and sexualities; power, privilege, and oppression; and finally, health and well-being, this book challenges the reader to reimagine the ways in which we explore and interrogate issues of aging, gender, and sexualities from diverse academic disciplinary perspectives, including social policy, sociology, social work, gerontology, gender and sexuality studies, and law, as well as health and social care. Specifically, Part 1 of this edited volume takes up the issue of “theoretical interpolations,” and includes three chapters, two of which examine their content through the lens of queer theory and the contributions of queer theory to disrupting normative concepts in aging such as time and life course. Part 2 addresses the issue of “representations” from several country contexts, and offers three chapters aimed at examining representations of menopause in medicine, literature, and culture; and the ways in which gendered language about sex in later life is understood; as well as midlife motherhood. Part 3, which addresses “dis/empowerments”, includes four chapters that offer an excellent examination of power relationships from a variety of contexts, including within education systems, in relation to life history research, in terms of sexual citizenship, and in the scope of elder care. The final part of this book, Part 4, examines “health and well-being” in three chapters that include a focus on the health of LGB individuals in later life with an eye to important health differences among these populations in, for example, the use of prescription drugs to treat sexual dysfunction in the context of “positive aging among later life gay men”; and the experiences of older gay and bisexual men in relation to prostate cancer and the connection to hegemonic masculinities.

This book will be of particular interest to social science and humanities researchers and student trainees as well as to social policy analysts interested in tackling one of the greatest challenges of our time. As indicated in the diverse perspectives offered in this book, the growth of older populations globally requires additional expansion of our current approaches to addressing complex and intersectional aspects of aging to move us toward innovative reframing of normative conceptualizations

of aging. This rich collection of varied, multidisciplinary content is a significant contribution to the scholarly literature on aging, particularly by advancing our

understanding of the importance of our theoretical and methodological framings of diverse populations in relation to later life, gender, and sexualities.