

approach is strictly a US perspective on grandparent care-giving. The specific geographical focus contrasts markedly from other recent collections on grandparenting, such as that by Arber and Timonen (2012) which adopts a global perspective (see the review in *Ageing & Society*, 33, 908–10, 2013), albeit covering grandparenting in its myriad of forms, in addition to parenting.

Resilient Grandparent Caregivers offers an in-depth resource for practitioners working with custodial grandparents. Many of the chapters would not be very accessible to laypeople (such as grandparents), but academics interested in grandparenting practices more generally, and custodial grandparenting in particular, will find much food for thought in this collection, both theoretically in terms of its strengths-based approach, as well as methodologically.

Reference

Arber, S. and Timonen, V. (eds) 2012. *Contemporary Grandparenting: Changing Family Relationships in Global Contexts*. Policy Press, Bristol, UK.

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Marvin Formosa and Paul Higgs (eds), *Social Class in Later Life: Power, Identity and Lifestyle*, Policy Press, Bristol, UK, 2013, 208 pp., hbk £70.00, ISBN 13: 978 1 44730 058 8.

A photograph of a middle-aged couple with a woman in a swimsuit and the man in shorts rowing on a deep blue sea forms the cover of this book. This could easily be the cover of a novel but the contents of this book could not be more different. Closely written, this book is not one to read from cover to cover. But it contains a wealth of detailed research about social class in later life. With glowing references on the back cover – ‘an exciting collection’, ‘eloquent, thought-provoking collection’, ‘The editors have done a fantastic job of bringing the diverse positions adopted by the contributors into dialogue with each other’ – my expectations were high. Indeed the book does fulfil its promise of bringing together a collection of experts on social class.

It starts with a thoughtful, well-written Foreword by Malcolm Johnson followed by an Introduction by the editors. The central tenet of the book is given by the editors in this Introduction. They say ‘we believe that the individual and collective experiences of growing old, as well as the very nature of age relations, differ so significantly by class that there is an urgent need for a unified analysis in which both age and class are taken into account’ (p. 7). Indeed the chapters and the summary at the end show just how complicated this relationship is. For example, social class is not just

related to former employment, education, *etc.* Indeed anyone hoping for a simple answer will be disappointed apart from the overarching theme of inequalities. The theme of inequalities needs stressing and is often missing in earlier studies. This is particularly brought out in Wendy Bottero's chapter on 'Social Class Structures and Social Mobility: The Background Context' (Chapter 2).

The chapters are varied in their approaches. They include those that use their own empirical research such as Martin Hyde and Ian Rees Jones in Chapter 5 where they use the International Social Survey Programme and the Citizenship Survey; and Alexandra Lopes who, in Chapter 4, uses the European Quality of Life Survey. Other chapters, such as Chapter 8 on caring by Christina Victor and Chapter 9 on social work by Trish Hafford-Letchfield, summarise the research and policies on these topics as well as discussing social class. Each chapter has extensive references and there is an excellent index.

What can the reader conclude about social class and, in particular, how it can be measured? A good summary of the issue of social class is the answer given by the author of Chapter 4, Alexandra Lopes, when she attempts to answer the question on how social class should be measured. She claims that it is a question worth asking 'even if we do not have a straightforward answer' (p. 53). This book is a good starting point for considering social class even if it does raise more questions than it answers – not a bad thing for an academic book.

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Jan Baars, *Aging and the Art of Living*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland, 2012, 304 pp., hbk US\$60.00, ISBN 13: 978 1421 40646 6.

Jan Baars wants us to 'learn to contribute to a culture that stimulates and supports aging people to lead full lives': his book aims to convince us that 'Developing an *art* of aging can help create such a culture' (p. 1). This book thus aims to make an intervention into its readers' lives, but it is conscious that they cannot change all by themselves: this is a social project too. For Baars, both as individuals and as societies we need to see the world, and ourselves in it, differently. While 'lifecourse' approaches stress the development over time of interrelated lives, Baars augments this by reflecting on 'life' from the inside: how the human condition is experienced by those who live it. This tends to be touched on rather slightly in gerontology. Researchers may mention that interviewees feel 'young', or feel 'old', or feel curious and engaged with life, or feel the opposite; but such accounts tend not to be envisaged as casting radical forms of insight on to the experience of living. This Jan Baars sets out to do, exploring ideas about the 'potential richness and fulfilment of later life' (p. 4). He celebrates humans' capacity for constructing their own lives creatively, together, and