interconnected with others and possess bodies that express their emotions and their spirit. He cites Heidegger in arguing that our very existence, again with and without dementia, is a source of wonder and calls for others' 'solicitude' because we are in essence 'beings-with' one another. In a congruent chapter, Clive Baldwin goes beyond Kitwood in drawing on other philosophers of relationship besides Buber, such as Emmanuel Levinas. We become human by responding to the needs of others, and thereby abandoning our self-focused possession of the world. Ultimately we cannot become a 'self' on one's own. Baldwin as well as other authors in this collection raise the possibility, acknowledged by Kitwood, and also attributed to William Penn, that dementia can also involve growth as a person. There is much in this book to make one reconsider deep-rooted prejudiced thinking about dementia.

University of Southampton, UK PETER G. COLEMAN

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Patrick Ryan and Barry J. Coughlan (eds), *Ageing and Older Adult Mental Health: Issues and Implications for Practice*, Routledge, Hove, UK, 2011, 296 pp., pbk £21.99, ISBN 13: 978 0 415 58290 2.

This concise book is a useful addition to the seemingly ever-growing number of books published on the subject of older adults' mental health. It takes a broad approach to covering the range of subjects that might be expected within such a textbook. Within its 15 chapters it provides a broad overview of current issues in the field of caring for older adults with mental health issues. The book is aimed at 'mental health professionals'. This can be viewed as a strength as it does not have a bias towards any one profession: conversely some readers might possibly find the book too generic and prefer a text that is more specific to their own profession within the field of practice.

Yet the book does include some chapters which are slightly different from the usual, covering, for example, the paradox of ageing and the relationship between older and younger generations: it is these chapters that for me make the book stand out from similar texts that already exist in this field of practice. I particularly like the way that the book begins with a chapter taking an historical perspective on how society has approached older people's mental health issues. This I think is very useful in putting the issues into context, and helps any reader who is new to the subject area to contextualise current developments by having insight into where practice has developed from within recent history.

From this initial perspective the book goes on to cover the range of subjects that might be expected in such a relatively concise volume, ranging from biology to grief loss and bereavement issues. The usefulness of the chapters in my view is a little variable. Chapter Five on the treatment of mental health issues is, from my perspective, rather 'medical model' in approach and fails to engage in psycho-social interventions in as much detail

as I would have liked. By contrast Chapter Fifteen, on 'older and younger generations', is innovative and fresh and I think provides a stimulating read, leaving one with lots of issues to consider about one's own attitudes to older people and how these impact upon one's practice.

A textbook on older people's mental health which is generic rather than focusing on more specific elements may present challenges to any author or editor working in this field, but on the whole this text manages the fine-balancing act rather well. Although depression does have its own focus in Chapter Eight, I would have liked to see a stronger focus on dementia: there is no specific chapter on it, and neither is there any specific detailed focus on such issues as schizophrenia or bi-polar conditions in older adults. These are significant issues which are only addressed in a limited way within the book.

However, putting these minor criticisms aside, this is a stimulating, readable and useful addition to the existing range of texts in this field of practice, with a couple of chapters that are outstanding and novel, and I believe add something new and exciting. These will really challenge readers to reflect upon and as a result develop their own approach to practice. It is therefore a book that deserves to do well and has the potential to make a significant contribution to the care of older adults with mental health issues

Sheffield Hallam University, UK BARRY AVEYARD

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Merryn Gott and Christine Ingleton (eds), *Living with Ageing and Dying: Palliative and End of Life Care for Older People*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011, 304 pp., pbk £32.95, ISBN 13: 978 0 19 956993 9.

This is a 'vital' book, as Paul Cann claims in the first sentence in the Foreword. After having the opportunity to acquaint myself with this work over the past few months, I strongly agree – vital both in the sense of it being dynamic, in stimulating thought and reflection, and addressing paradoxes, as well as in terms of its potential importance. This edited book makes a major contribution in filling the void in literature about what has been termed 'the disadvantaged dying' (p. xv): that is, those dying as older adults. The editors should be congratulated for so successfully enjoining some of the strongest experts in the fields of palliative care and care of the elderly to link knowledge and experience from a wide variety of relevant areas in this volume.

The book consists of five sections, which are in turn composed of four to six chapters each. Although the chapters naturally vary, they are of generally high quality. There are several themes which both cross-cut the sections of this book and are highlighted in different degrees in respective sections. As rightly pointed out by the editors, there is an effort to consider dying within wider socio-cultural frameworks about living and ageing. Underlying reasons for the lack of engagement of the palliative care community in issues of