are relevant to all. Each chapter contains a brief 'global perspective' which showcases an ageing issue from outside the USA. Of the 12 topics covered, only two relate to non-industrialised countries, and more examples about ageing in middle-income and developing nations would broaden the scope of the book.

This book is primarily aimed at gerontology students and academics and its merits are: accessible and clear organisation of a large amount of material; the collection of high-quality readings; and clear guidance for further reading and access to electronic resources. In the open access student site, the Web-based resources and short video links were particularly useful and I would certainly encourage my students to explore these in their assignment preparation. The link for teachers does not appear to work outside the Americas. There is also a useful section on carrying out library research for gerontology assignments which directs students to useful materials, again focused on the USA, but containing some of the key handbooks on ageing.

Framing the controversies through this wide-ranging collection of readings was a particularly useful way to convey the ways in which the study of ageing is subject to interpretation and revision, and the diverse sources and styles of writing successfully capture the reader's attention. This book would be a useful addition to a course reading list, although because of its US focus, is unlikely to be a primary reading elsewhere. However, it provides teachers and students with both a perspective and material with which to stimulate debate and discussion in the classroom, which is perhaps ultimately the mark of success for this book.

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doi:10.1017/S0144686X13000895

Ted Anton, *The Longevity Seekers: Science, Business, and the Fountain of Youth*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2013, 240 pp., hbk US $26.00, ISBN: 13:978-0-226-02093-8.

Stories of centenarians, and even super-centenarians, people aged 110 years or more, are frequently in the media today, but the general public are somewhat divided on whether this is a good thing for society. The recent Pew Research Centre study (2013) reported that while two-thirds of survey recipients thought most people would want to live 'decades longer', 56% thought they personally would not. Fear of dependence in very old age was, of course, a major reason for this attitude to increasing longevity. Yet regardless of general attitudes, longevity research actively continues in many centres across the world, and the so-called 'silver tsunami' of an ageing world is a demographic destiny we want to prepare for.

Ted Anton's new book provides some insight into this interesting scientific and social endeavour. Anton, a history professor at DePaul University in Chicago, has written a social history of the scientific search for longevity genes. As a non-biologist, he was fascinated by the idea of understanding and

maybe even slowing ageing, and in this respect the book will be of interest to other non-biological gerontologists. He interviewed key biomedical researchers over the period 2001 to the present, to document the development of the scientific search to understand the genes of healthy human longevity.

The structure of the book consists of two main parts. Part One, which Anton titles 'From Obscurity', covers the early research period 1980–2005 and documents the work of pioneer biological researchers like Cynthia Kenyon and Lenny Guarente. Their scientific work on the genetics of extending life broke with the dominant disease-specific tradition, to argue that understanding ageing could potentially provide greater health benefits to humanity because so many fatal diseases were age-related. It was also in this period that he notes 'Big Pharma' companies became more interested in ageing, and especially in the idea of controlling it, as he believes those companies saw potentially big profits emerging. What is then very interesting is the insight he provides into the day-to-day personal and professional pressure put on these brilliant scientists to quickly develop anti-ageing miracle products, because of the huge funding provided by commercial enterprises. Similarly, he notes a media frenzy developing around controlling ageing, which again put unrealistic expectations on these longevity scientists, while in reality their research was complex and far from resolved.

The second main part of the book covers the longevity research period 2005–2013, and discusses many of the other great researchers including Judith Campisi and others, and their specific longevity areas. There is more technical detail here on the specific areas of research such as insulin pathways and other key genes. Anton then concludes the book with a review of some of the implications of an ageing population, namely health and income issues, with which we are all familiar. However, there is no real discussion of some of the more complex and ethical issues around longevity. The Pew research is useful in that it gives us some insight into what ordinary people are thinking about the extent of human life, and whether we should keep extending it. On the other hand, a clear strength of this book is that it is an accessible insight into a complex research area, and the historical perspective will be useful to others documenting the on-going changes in this area.

Overall, this short book is an easy and interesting read, with a clear, well-structured format, comprehensive notes section, and index, and very interesting summary longevity gene timeline of developments (1934–2011). On this fascinating area of extending the healthy human lifespan, this book is probably most suitable for non-biologist academics, students and the general public. I'm sure there will be much more to come on this topic in the future.

## Reference

Pew Research Centre 2013. *Americans' Views on Aging, Medical Advances and Radical Life Extension*. Available online at http://www.pewforum.org/2013/08/06.

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