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Janet M. Wilmoth and Kenneth F. Ferraro (eds), *Gerontology: Perspectives and Issues* (fourth edition), Springer, New York, 2013, 384 pp., pbk US \$75.00, ISBN 13: 978 0 8261 0965 1.

This edited volume sets out to ‘help shape a gerontological imagination and work toward the definition of a paradigm in the study of aging’, in order, ultimately, to ‘enhance the experience of those fortunate enough to grow older’ (p. 16). To this end, the book adopts an explicitly inter-disciplinary approach seeking to encourage a broad interrogation of issues of ageing from a spectrum of key subject angles. Reinforcing this aim, Chapter 1 sets the scene with a revised version of Kenneth Ferraro’s classic treatise on the gerontological imagination – proposing seven central tenets of gerontological inquiry. The subsequent chapters are structured into three major parts. Part I discusses physical aspects of ageing, Part II concerns social aspects of ageing and Part III centres on public policy and service provision.

In each part, individual contributions focus on delineating subject-specific concerns, understandings and queries, as well as emerging frontiers and how they might be addressed by perspectives and approaches from other disciplines.

The chapters in Part I discuss, respectively, the ‘Biology of Successful Aging’, ‘Perspectives on Cognitive Aging’, ‘Communication Disorders and Aging’ and ‘Exercise, Nutrition and Aging’. In Part II, chapters concern ‘Social and Emotional Development in Adulthood’, ‘Age Structures, Aging, and the Life Course’, ‘Retirement and Financial Security’, ‘Demographic Perspectives on Aging’ and ‘Cross-cultural and Global Perspectives on Aging and the Lifecourse’. In Part III, finally, chapters examine ‘Politics and Policy in the Lives of Older Americans’, ‘The Role of Public Policy in Meeting the Needs of Diverse Aging Populations’, ‘Gerontological Social Work’, ‘Geriatric Medicine and Gerontological Nursing’ and ‘Legal Gerontology’.

Framed by Kenneth Ferraro’s inspiring opening chapter – which provides even those long established in research on ageing with a deeper appreciation of the broader gerontological enterprise they are part of – the book fully accomplishes its aims. While the chapters vary in strength, they all provide clear and accessible accounts of their subject area, which leave a reader, even from outside the discipline, with a grasp of the status and perspectives of the field. Subject-specific terminology, where used, is made understandable. One omission, possibly, is the lack of a chapter on public health perspectives on ageing.

Taken together, the volume conveys not only the breadth of the gerontological field, but also a true sense of ‘imagination’ about its potential. As such the book is relevant for students at advanced undergraduate and graduate levels both in gerontology and in discipline-based courses (biology, sociology, psychology) – as well as for established scholars. Overall, the work draws mainly on United States-based research and, especially in Part III, appears primarily targeted at North American audiences. And here – precisely because of the strength of its overall approach – lies, arguably, one key weakness. Whilst the book, particularly in Dena Shenk

and Jay Sokolovsky's chapter on 'Cross-cultural and Global Perspectives on the Life Course' makes reference to geographically divergent experiences of ageing, these are not systematically considered in other chapters. More fundamentally, the book perhaps leaves insufficiently explicit space for the possibility of divergent, non-Western gerontological imaginations themselves. In so doing, however, it serves to crystallise a key challenge for those researching ageing in other parts of the world. In his opening chapter, Kenneth Ferraro explicitly welcomes 'challenges and additions' to his take on a gerontological imagination and notes that the 'intellectual climate for discussion is vibrant'. The collection of perspectives that Janet Wilmoth and Kenneth Ferraro have put together makes an important contribution to this vibrancy.

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Maartje Schermer and Wim Pinxten (eds), *Ethics, Health Policy and (Anti-) Aging: Mixed Blessings*, Springer Science+Business Media, Dordrecht, The Netherlands, 2013, 311 pp., hbk £126.00, ISBN 13: 978 94 007 3869 0.

This is the first volume in a new series published by Springer in the field of ethics and health policy. It brings together contributions from a multi-disciplinary group of contributors based on presentations at a conference on ethics and ageing in Amsterdam in 2011. The book is divided into four parts: 'Setting the Scene: Views on Age and Ageing', 'Taking Care: Caring for Elderly in an Ageing Society', 'Looking Ahead: Ethics and Prolongevity' and, finally, 'Choosing Directions: Healthcare Policy and Ethics'. The editors succeed in bringing together a range of topics and disciplinary perspectives concerning ageing and longevity, the compression of morbidity, biomedical developments in anti-ageing and justice in care for older people.

For gerontologists, these are not new subjects and at times the book treads some very well-worn paths, but the variations in disciplinary stances throughout generate some fresh perspectives and different lines of argument from bio-gerontologists, physicians, medical ethicists and social scientists. The editors and around half of the 22 contributors are based in the Netherlands and this gives the book a strong orientation to health-related ethical questions, including – but not confined to – those concerned with end-of-life decision-making and physician assisted dying. For example, Haartogh's chapter on older people's death wishes and the role of doctors considers how best to respond to the requests of older people who are not terminally ill but 'tired of life' and how responses can and should be incorporated into law. I found the level of engagement with such fundamental ethical questions quite absorbing. For example, Touwen's chapter considers the ethical questions that arise when people with dementia behave in ways that are out of keeping with their lives before dementia