

highlighted, *e.g.* the ageing and health promotion agendas. While there are approaches that can work in different contexts, such as a multi-disciplinary team being a facilitator for the implementation of age-friendly initiatives, the problems with having a common framework with standard indicators are highlighted. Age-friendly policies in the context of austerity is touched on, as well as the importance of incorporating diversity in perspectives on ageing.

This book highlights both existing and new approaches to involving older people in the design of cities. It examines the potential of developing urban environments responsive to the needs of older people and at the end of the volume the editors provide a ten-point manifesto for the age-friendly agenda. It is focused around tackling social inequality and exclusion, as well as promoting community empowerment alongside addressing spatial injustice. The book refers to case studies, evidence and theories from many different disciplines in a complementary and informative way. These disciplines include gerontology (including environmental gerontology), architecture, sociology, social policy, urban geography and urban planning. Academics would find this book especially useful for the discussion and critical assessment of different theories, as well as the exploration of the complexities around intersectionality and ageing. Policy researchers and policy makers can understand the success and limitations of different strategies and policies implemented in various contexts and conditions. Students would also find this comprehensive and detailed volume useful to refer to at various points through their academic journey.

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Susan Pickard, *Age, Gender and Sexuality Through the Life Course: The Girl in Time*, Routledge, Abingdon, UK, 2018, 196 pp., hbk £105, ISBN 13: 97811388564635.

In this excellent book, Susan Pickard weaves a complex account of gender and age. As the book's subtitle suggests, 'the Girl' is taken as a late modern feminine archetype, one bound to a temporal regime that does her no favours. The Girl is not just the physical manifestation of youth, but the 'new Spirit of Capitalism personified' (p. 3) – her success pinned on the time-bound project of 'having it all'. Here, Pickard is picking up an argument first aired in her previous book (Pickard 2016) where the Girl embodied the contradictions of the postfeminist neoliberal reconfiguration that simultaneously promised women freedom and agency, but subjected them to unprecedented and age-graded scrutiny – of their bodies, their sexuality, their relationships, their life choices. Combining an astute theoretical analysis with an exquisite literary sensibility, Pickard draws on a wide range of resources (from secondary analysis of socio-economic data to self-help books to fiction) to go beyond an 'ages and stages' approach to gender

and sexuality across the lifecourse. In addition to its contributions to age studies, it will also greatly enrich analyses of post-feminist culture (e.g. McRobbie 2015) which have to date mostly focused on young women.

After a first chapter that sets out the case for a sustained examination of gendered temporalities, the second traces the historical genesis of the Girl and her relationship to time. The Girl's other is the Menopausal Woman, deeply essentialised through the hormonal turn in the 20th century and reminding her that 'like Cinderella at the ball at midnight, at mid-life the coach will turn into a pumpkin and everything will be snatched away' (p. 54). The rest of the book explores the structures and discourses that sustain this gendered relationship to time, including the self, femininity, the lifecourse and sexuality. Chapter 3 draws on Bourdieu to develop the concept of the 'gendered habitus' as a way of understanding how gendered temporality is 'translated into embodied and psychic dispositions that are maintained at a tacit or pre-conscious level' (p. 55). These dispositions are further explored in Chapter 4, which turns to a phenomenological exploration of the temporal aspects of 'feminine dispositions', including time anxiety, the centrality of and the complexity of planning given the contradictions between 'caring time' and 'economic time'. Here, Pickard introduces the concept of 'agescapes' to

signify a temporal sensibility specific to age and stage in which the combined product of everyday feminine dispositions in time and the inscriptions that mark the female body intersect at specific points in the life course to form a feminine subject position unique to this period in life. (p. 89)

Reproductive regimes figure centrally, with menstruation and menopause as key markers of the ways that feminine time is embodied. As she notes, a particular 'temporal disposition' is required in tracking and managing one's periods and inhabiting the 'zone' circumscribed by the biological clock. Even 'frailty' in later life is exposed as a particularly feminine disposition. Chapters 5 and 6 return to the embodied self-in-time, probing narratives of transition, progress and decline, especially with respect to sexuality. Echoing other feminist work on ageing and sexuality, she notes that compared to men, age 'figures more prominently in constituting women's sexual capital' (p. 136). Pickard argues, through analysis of women's sexual stories, that the potential for change lies not in seeking to extend the age limits on sexiness, but in seeing mid-life sexuality as 'the means for habitus change, a point of entry from which broader change to the inscriptions of femininity can be effected' (p. 150).

It is to that change that the concluding chapter returns, arguing that the way forward hinges on an embrace of androgyny – both of gender and age. She defines androgyny as 'the end of artificial distinctions between men and women where qualities that properly belong to the fully integrated person are split off and projected onto males or females as well as onto different ages' (p. 161). Overcoming the falsely naturalised divisions of both age

and gender and their intersections is a project to be embraced, but perhaps more imaginative language than that of ‘androgyny’ is required. Widely debated by feminists in the 1970s and 1980s, androgyny as a concept was mostly abandoned as overly psychological, metaphysical and as risking simply putting a new face on patriarchy (*see e.g.* McCormack 1983). Similarly, the language of ‘age androgyny’ risks suggesting another variation on agelessness. As Pickard acknowledges, it is social not personal change that will dismantle the artificial distinctions of gender and age, and she provides important resources here for grounding this project in her refusal to consider one apart from the other.

## References

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