

Overall this study can be read with benefit both by scholars with historical, sociological or theological interests and by non-specialists interested in how societies change their customs. At the same time, it also bears upon the issue of death and of our own desired form of funeral, though that is not the main aim of the book. Jupp informs us in the Preface that he is both a minister of the United Reformed Church and, as Chairman of the British Cremation Society, a cremationist: on both counts, he is a funeral reformer who desires the best for people at a difficult time in their lives. His work reflects something of the liberal British non-conformist ethos. This book is a worthy complement to Stephen Prothero's (2001) excellent, *Purified by Fire: A History of Cremation in America*, and provides detailed case-studies of the many international cases contained in the *Encyclopedia of Cremation* (Davies and Mates 2006).

## References

- Davies, D. J. and Mates, L. H. (eds) 2006. *Encyclopedia of Cremation*. Ashgate, Aldershot, Hampshire.  
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Sally J. Redfern and Fiona M. Ross (eds), *Nursing Older People*, Elsevier, Edinburgh, fourth edition, 2006, 778 pp., pbk £34.99, ISBN 0 443 07459 3.

First published in 1986, the fourth edition of this compendium proves to be a seminal text. Despite the title's focus on nursing older people, the text is relevant to practitioners from all disciplines working in a wide range of care settings. Whilst it has four sections, as did the last edition, it has been substantially updated with only 14 out of the 43 chapter authors remaining the same. Contributions are now included from a head orthoptist, a specialist nurse, a consultant nurse for older people, and a healthcare ergonomist. The other chapters are written by lecturers, senior lecturers and professors eminent in their multidisciplinary fields. The book takes a person-centred approach to understanding and meeting the complex needs of older people. Section 1, 'Ageing and old age', considers the nature of old age, demographic and epidemiological trends in ageing, together with the psychology and biology of human ageing. This is followed by a section on 'Policy change and contexts of care'. The third section focuses on 'Nursing older people' and emphasises independence, autonomy and self-fulfilment. The final section addresses 'Current issues in caring for older people', and includes chapters on assessment, older homeless people, health promotion, complementary therapies, abuse of older people, carers and lay caring. The section ends with

a reflection on the book's running themes, including images of ageing, valuing personal care and relationships, balancing rights and risks, rehabilitation and empowerment of older people, critical care, inter-professional issues and developing roles in nursing, with questions about raising the quality of practice and education.

An immediate and noticeable difference from the earlier editions is the many engaging photographs to captivate the reader. The book is also brought to life with literature, poetry, illustrative quotes by older people, case studies, useful tables of facts and figures, other boxed material and figures, as well as references to recommended reading, useful journals, sources and websites. There is something in this book for everyone, and the lighter presentation in no way undermines the quality and seriousness of its content. The book brings together the evidence base for nursing older people in an accessible, creative and sensitive manner. Given the ageing of the population and what we know about the prevalence of ageism in society, this book should be essential reading for all health and social care professionals (including managers), be they qualified or unqualified. Nursing older people is often delegated to others with little experience of care and sometimes no educational qualifications. The wisdom and expertise shared in this book should convince us all of the need to be more circumspect in our thinking and practice.

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Judith Phillips, Mo Ray and Mary Marshall, *Social Work with Older People*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, Hampshire, fourth edition, 2006, 208 pp., pbk £17.99, ISBN 1 4039 1613 6.

The first edition of this book, by Mary Marshall, appeared in 1983, when very little had been published on this topic in the United Kingdom. It preceded the *NHS and Community Care Act 1990*, and reflected our hopes that new community care arrangements would mark a sea change in the status and significance of social work with older people. At that time, children's services took the lion's share of qualified social workers and, outside hospitals, older people received little service from qualified social workers. Those of us who were involved in the drive to change this situation warmly welcomed Marshall's work.

There is sadness at the heart of this recollection because this latest edition puts forward sensible and sensitive models for social work practice at a time when the position of social work with older people is even more unsatisfactory than in 1983. The high hopes engendered by the work undertaken before the 1990 Act, including it must be said, excellent guidance from the Department of Health, have been dashed. A model of 'care management' has evolved in which there seems little place for the reflective practice described in this book, and moreover there are doubts about the contribution of social work to adult-care services in general. The authors refer to these issues in the epilogue and in Chapter 3, in the context of the changing social-work role. My own view is that it would have been