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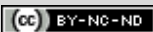
Book Review

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The World Health Organization estimates, by the year 2050, 22 percent of the world's population will be over sixty years old. Low to middle income countries may face the toughest burden, with over 80 percent of the world's older populations residing within their borders by 2050. As part 5 of the Berghahn series *Life course, Culture and Aging: Global Transformations*, anthropologist Philip Stafford's *The Global Age-Friendly Community Movement: A Critical Appraisal*, provides a multidisciplinary look at this contemporary aging phenomenon. With this volume, Stafford points to the importance of building the type of community that "addresses basic needs; optimizes physical and mental health and well-being; promotes social and civic engagement, and maximizes independence for the frail and people with disabilities" (7). Thematized into five sections, this volume's twelve chapters cover a broad range of topics, such as equity and sustainability, the building of age-friendly neighborhoods, cross-generational collaboration, aging in rural communities, and well-being in old age.

Contributions in this series address research and policy issues, using a variety of methods and covering numerous disciplines, including sociology, social gerontology and urban studies. This variety of research positions – not in the least those of public health researchers and workers who speak from everyday experience – is one of the publication's main strengths. By seeking to "reject the psychological reductionism so dominant in the study of aging" (xi), it adds significantly to a growing body of literature on gerontology and age-friendly communities worldwide.

Part 1 offers a critical appraisal of the Age-Friendly Movement, by challenging commonsensical assumptions, such as that it only benefits the lucky few. Tine Buffel and Chris Phillipson (Chapter 1) address some of the research and policy issues that come with attempts to build age-friendly communities, and Sharon Baggett (Chapter 2) examines a pilot project in Indiana, which sought to develop age and ability-friendly community initiatives. Here, training citizen advocates in their respective communities empowered groups that have been traditionally marginalized. Baggett notes that research is needed on the long-term effects of this intervention (49). Chapters 3 and 4 discuss the possibility of incorporating various sustainability practices – pedestrian-friendly streets and mixed-use development – into the design of safe and inclusive communities.

Part 2 looks into two urban case-studies in Berlin and New York respectively, that highlight the importance of collaboration in the creation of strong, lively communities. Mia Oberlink and Barbara Davis (Chapter 6) explore this participatory methodology through the development of the AdvantAge Initiative in New York City. Collaborating with an organization that assists aging individuals in the performing arts, the authors identified some elements of vital

importance to the ageing Manhattan population, such as the impact of the city's traffic, the lack of service networks and transportation resources (133).

Part 3 complicates claims that building age-friendly neighborhoods necessarily benefits *all* age groups. Corita Brown and Nancy Henkin (Chapter 7) look at development projects in Arizona and elsewhere to underscore the potentials and pitfalls of multigenerational spaces. Chapter 8, in its turn, gives an example of an effective collaboration across generational lines, through the creation of *Ibashi* café's, which provide opportunities for intergenerational knowledge sharing in rural Japan (169).

Part 4 moves from urban realities to the challenges faced by small towns and rural areas. Through case studies in the midwestern U.S. and rural Japan, chapters 10 and 11 respectively examine challenges in the revitalization of struggling communities. Providing aging populations with sustainable employment opportunities, and fostering intergenerational networking, may keep younger generations from leaving rural environments, while dampening the impact of a disappearing workforce. The last part of the volume, presents an ethnographic study of well-being in the United Kingdom, with a strong focus on collaboration with older research participants. Marian Barnes (Chapter 12) identifies what well-being means for her participants by focusing on the intersection of community spaces, individual health and social structures, among other metrics.

Age-friendly initiatives with far-reaching potential are found in Part 2 and 4, which provide different models that could be effectively applied in a variety of rural and urban communities. The rural economic models proposed by Zachary Benedict (Chapter 10) and Nanami Suzuki (Chapter 11) could be expanded to mid-sized cities facing economic downturn and the disappearance of major industry. Urban development strategies that focus on intergenerational collaboration and training can compete with theories that prioritize youth and "creative-classes" in attempts at urban revitalization (Florida 2002). Birgit Wolter (Chapter 5) examines the challenges faced by aging immigrant populations and resource-poor elderly in her Berlin case-study. She examines a voluntary Network of citizens, business owners, organizations and health professionals within a Berlin social housing estate, though the limited reach of the Network across cultural boundaries potentially limits important social and informational networking at large (120).

Given that "60 percent of the world population aged sixty and older lives in developing countries" (189), chapter 9 addresses the lack of representation of low income and developing countries in literature on aging. Arthur Namara and Kristin Bodiford look at an intergenerational community development project in Uganda and discuss some of the demographic changes in Africa. The authors acknowledge the lack of scholarship on aging populations in Africa (190), but also note some of the cultural and social challenges facing the elderly that are unique to Uganda. Readers may be disappointed by the lack of attention this volume pays to non-Western countries, especially given the scholarly interest in gerontology and the developing world (Nangia 2016; Panruti, Liebig & Duvvuru 2015). While designations of developed and developing can be problematic, the scope of this volume felt less *global* than one would expect.

The Global Age-Friendly Community Movement, provides an excellent critical appraisal of the challenges, successes, theoretical models and their practical applicability in the building of age-friendly communities. Importantly, this volume suggests that the Age-Friendly Movement must consider the needs of populations at large, or risks further segmentation and isolation of various age-groups. As Alan Delatorre (Chapter 4) notes, policies will have to meet current and future needs through sustainable development without assuming a particular gendered, racial or aging

composition of the population (95). The authors invite us to move away from the individual and the local as the smallest unit of health, to take into account the complex social conditions affecting a globalized world.

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