

From the Editor

Jason Danely, Ph.D.
Department of Anthropology
Rhode Island College
jdanely@ric.edu

AAQ Volume 33 has represented a revitalized effort on the part of AAGE to create a high-quality venue for work of scholars and researchers of aging in anthropology. Despite our rigorous peer review standards, the number of published articles in AAQ over the last year alone matches the number for the previous four years combined. This feat could not have been accomplished without the hard work and dedication of the AAQ editorial board and the many reviewers who generously donated their time and expertise. Likewise, AAQ is grateful to all of the contributors for their excellent work, helping to make AAQ an important resource for scholars, students and researchers around the world.

The articles in this issue serve as an excellent example of the kind of work AAQ strives to showcase. Each of them explores the ways that “care” reshapes the embodied meanings of the social life course and the felt experience of old age. Anna Corwin (121) examines the dynamics of care in a Catholic convent infirmary in the Midwest US, where the domains of spiritual and profane, faith and practice, become entangled with age in a setting where even everyday social interactions and experiences take on aspects of the sacred. Susan Rasmussen (131), too, is concerned with a religious and symbolic world that lends meaning to the care of elders. Among the Tuareg, the seclusion of frail elders coexists with beliefs of enhanced spiritual power, a source of meaning that links them to small children. Mary Alice Scott’s article on Mexican grandmothers caring for grandchildren shows how economies of care extend far beyond local communities, and offers an intimate portrayal of the hard decisions and harder consequences faced by families of migrants. As aging grandparents become exploited bodies, care can quickly create other burdens, what was a source of value becomes a form of structural violence.

This issue also features the first AAQ “Portfolio” section, a visual commentary on issues related to anthropology and aging. These photos, taken by Malik Alymkulov for HelpAge International, are powerful images of the intimate spaces of elder abuse in Central Asia. The signboards displaying the words of perpetrators are not “hidden transcripts,” but signal the all too visible failure of care in the everyday world.

They are potent reminders that our work is not done, but we are in the right place.

Thank you to everyone in AAGE for a wonderful year.

Jason Danely
Editor-in-Chief

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