Sue Westwood (ed.) (2019). *Ageing, Diversity and Equality: Social Justice Perspectives.* Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 376 pp. ISBN: 978-0-415-78669-0 (hardback)

Reviewed by Rosita Dissels[1] & Ada Lui Gallassi[2]

This edited collection brings a comprehensive insight into inequality and diversity of ageing, exploring the concept of social justice in gender; sexualities; culture, ethnicity and religion; disabilities, long-term conditions and care; and spatiality. The understanding of ageing diversity in social gerontology scholarship is underdeveloped and information about minority groups in the older population is often placed in retrofitted sections. Therefore, the aim of this book is to make an important contribution to fill this gap. It consists of five parts, in which inequalities associated with ageing and diversity are centred within Nancy Fraser's theory of social justice (2013). In Chapter 1, Sue Westwood, the editor of this volume, introduces the book and presents a deeper notion of the concept of intersectionality in the field of socio-gerontology. She recognizes the importance to employ this concept, which refers to intertwined inequality in people's experiences of disadvantage and discrimination, in order to understand the heterogeneity and diversity of ageing, enabling to clarify the complexity of inequality in old age.

[1]*Rosita Dissels*, Department of Sociology, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
[2]*Ada Lui Gallassi*, Department of Social Work, Örebro University, Örebro, Sweden

Part I addresses the underrepresentation and lack of visibility (recognition) in research and social policy regarding gender diversity and older people, especially in relation to the fourth age, older trans/gender diverse individuals and childless older people, particularly regarding the experiences of men. Chapter 2 (by Athina Vlachantoni) argues for the need to incorporate a social justice perspective into the design of pension systems, and its outcome, in order to tackle income disadvantages connected to gender. Chapter 3 (by Laura Hurd Clarke) assesses how older persons progressively experience devaluation and exclusion through the body image in later life. Chapter 4 (by Chris Gilleard and Paul Higgs) highlights that resources, recognition and representation are lacking components in the fourth age (which is over-represented by women) and claims for anti-ageist social welfare policies within long-term care and in the performances of long-term care work. In chapter 5 (by Robin A. Hadley), a perspective on the implications of childlessness of older adults on material resources, health, social networks and care needs is considered in relation to gender. Chapter 6 (by Jenny-Anne Bishop and Sue Westwood) sheds light on the cumulative disadvantages experienced by older trans/gender-diverse people, expanding Fraser's notion of resources to not only material but also health, care and support.

In Part II, chapter 7 (by Jane Traies) the focus is on the underrepresentation of older lesbians who have been trapped for years in the intersectionality of homophobic and misogynist inequality. With regard to recognition and representation of older gay men, which is distinctively highlighted in chapter 8 (by Mark Hughes and Peter Robinson), reference can be made to Wight, Le Blanc, Meyer, and Harig (2015), who introduced the construct of "internalized gay ageism," denoting feelings of depreciation because of aging in the context of a gay male identity. Inequalities emerging from the intersection of ageism and homophobia not only within the wider society, but even more within the gay communities, should evoke the attention of researchers as well as policymakers. All authors in this part of the book address that the accumulation of inequality and health disparities for older lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LBGT) people and in particular for older bisexual older adults is greatly overlooked by researchers as well as policymakers, as mentioned in chapter 9 (by Sarah Jen). Chapter 10 (by Sue Westwood) clarifies how

heterosexuality as the norm in gerontological research, results in a lack of understanding regarding the lives of older LBGT people and calls for scholars to pursue an approach for studies on older LBGT that is not caught in the dominant frame of heterosexuality.

Part III stresses the need for increased understanding and recognition of culture, ethnic and religious diversity within research and social policies in order to tackle the disadvantages and exclusions in later life faced by minority groups. Chapter 11 (by Sandra Torres) critically approaches the ethno-gerontology scholarship, emphasising the need for research to focus on what practitioners and policymakers can do to tackle the injustices faced by this group. Social networks are considered in chapter 12 (by Shreen Hussein) as key sources of resources, recognition and representation among ageing migrants in host communities, but can yet deepen social exclusion within the external community. In chapter 13 (by Alistair Hunter), a transnational comparative analysis on inequalities of older persons with a migration background evaluates that disadvantage has different faces depending whether comparison is made with peers in the hosting country or in the place of origin. In this context, the importance in analysing diversity both between and within groups of older migrants is highlighted. Finally, regarding religion, chapter 14 (by Peter Kevern) shows that although recognition is considered a positive contributor to equality in later life, invisibility and misrecognition within religious institutions increase with age and with other aspects of diversity, such as gender, sexuality and ethnicity.

The premise for successful ageing and also for the restructuring of long-term care is that older people are able to maintain control over their lives and that self-reliance is important. However, older adults with limited resources are not able to meet these expectations. In Part IV of the book, reference is made to "forgotten" groups that are excluded from an active, healthy, disability-free lifestyle as predicted by "successful ageing." Chapter 15 (by Sue Westwood and Nicola Carey) and chapter 16 (by Karen Watchman) address that people with mental and physical disabilities and long-term health problems have faced disadvantages, discrimination and stigmatisation during their life. In later life, ageism is added to their inequality experiences, which results in major negative consequences for their recognition and representation. Thus, accumulation of inequality

and accumulation of disability is intersected with ageism, leading to special needs in old age, apart from the ageing process itself. In chapter 17 (by Dana Rosenfeld, Damien Ridge and Jose Catalan), the authors present the complexity of the intersectionality of inequality experienced by older people living with HIV. They state that because their representation is strongly politicised, it is at the basis of and might even form a threat to recognition, and in particular to resources. An important message from chapter 18 (by Jonathan Herring) is that older people in residential care settings are excluded from optimum quality of care as predicted by the neo-liberal long-term care policies, in particular in the western world.

In Part V, which regards spatial inequality, chapter 19 (by Martin Hyde) presents a global take, revealing that the extent to which older people experience inequality with regard to resources, recognition and representation varies internationally. In chapter 20 (by Vanessa Burholt, Paula Foscarini-Craggs and Bethan Winter), the authors stress that in the United Kingdom, older adults living in the most remote and deprived areas are greatly susceptible to inequalities and exclusion. They propose that in order to enhance citizenship for all, according to standards prevailing in the society, public policy for rural areas should receive high priority. In the social gerontology field, exclusion in the workplace mainly reflects on job losses, the problems for older adults to be re-hired, and the underestimation and undervaluation of older adults' qualities. Chapter 21 (by Anette Cox) argues that the basis of this is that older adults are not being heard and that they are misrepresented or not represented, which also affects their recognition. Although spatial inequality has received attention in gerontological research, older adults in "hidden spaces" are still under-represented in this field. In Chapter 22 (by Helen Codd), advocacy to consider the position of older adults in prison is encouraged because these older adults are under-resourced not only compared with younger people in prison but also with older people in general.

Although we agree that most researches on inequalities in later life prioritise socio-economic issues, this differs regarding old age social exclusion research. The latter involves interchanges between multi-level risk factors, leading to inequities in choice and control, resources and relationships, and power and rights (Walsh et al. 2016). Scholars of old age social

exclusion not only examine its impact and prevalence due to old-age vulnerabilities but also the accumulated disadvantage for specific groups, as illustrated in this book.

To conclude, this multidisciplinary collection forms a valuable contribution to social gerontology scholarship, broadening and deepening existing knowledge of inequalities and exclusion in old age. As it makes an allusion to various intersections and a comprehensive approach to the social justice framework established by Nancy Fraser, this knowledge can be employed by policymakers to alleviate the negative consequences of multiple intertwined inequalities, experienced by the "forgotten" subpopulations of older adults. In all five parts of the book, it was highlighted that further research and policy awareness are required to raise redistribution, recognition and representation of older people in relation to its various diversities. Further intersectionality within this field would be an important step forward in research and policymaking process to shed light on and provide improved measurements for equality into the various diversities of older people.

References

Fraser, N. (2013). *Fortunes of Feminism: From State-Managed Capitalism to Neoliberal Crisis*. London: Verso Books.

Walsh, K., Scharf, T., & Keating, N. (2016). Social exclusion of older persons: a scoping review and conceptual framework. *European Journal of Ageing* 14(1): 81–98.

Wight, R. G., LeBlanc, A. J., Meyer, I. H. & Harig, F. A. (2015). Internalized gay ageism, mattering, and depressive symptoms among midlife and older gay-identified men. *Social Science & Medicine* 147: 200–208.