descriptive data detailing the situation of older women which allow for wider cross-cultural comparison and policy formulation. The abstracts all refer to texts which were either written as background documents for an international conference or were produced as a result of such meetings and provide important comparative data on a wide range of issues from both developed and developing countries. It is apparent from the material that despite cultural differences discrimination against older women, particularly in the fields of income support, employment, health care and education, is a worldwide phenomenon. Reports such as these help set the agenda for changes in policy at local, national and international levels. They also provide an invaluable source of basic information which can be used to unite those with an interest both in ageing and in women's issues.

NOTE

1 Sheila Peace, *An International Perspective on the Status of Older Women*, International Federation of Aging, Washington D.C., 1981.

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Geography and Environmental Factors   Tony Warnes

Graham D. Rowles, 'The geography of ageing and the aged: towards an integrated perspective'. *Progress in Human Geography*, **10** (1986), 511–540.

Over 150 items, most published in the early 1980s, are cited in this review of mainly North American and British work with some attention to French and Australian studies. Rowles argues that geographical studies in the field of gerontology have been passing through an information accumulation phase that precedes the emergence of a dominant paradigm, and his purpose in the review is to attempt a synthesis between studies of the spatial and place-related aspects of individuals' ageing experiences and those which feature the aggregated outcomes of population ageing processes on particular localities.

The first section deals with the 'Geographical experience of the ageing individual', and reviews diverse studies of activity patterns, mobility, perceptions of the environment, emotional attachments to place and the meaning of home. While Rowles believes that our understandings of activity spaces are becoming more refined, he argues that there is a need for greater recognition of the diversity of elderly populations. He

calls for further development of theoretical frameworks including the environmental docility, congruence and stress models.

The article then considers place or community focused studies of ageing processes, among which he finds a heavy urban bias. 'The paucity of research on the geography of ageing in rural settings is lamentable in view of the propensity of increasing numbers of elderly people to choose rural residence.' Several United States' studies of special housing, retirement communities and residential care are cited, and there is an extended discussion of some features of large, purpose-built retirement towns exemplified by Sun City near Phoenix, Arizona. There are concerns about the ageing-in-place of these towns' residents and their increasing frailty, partly because of the dearth of local support services, and partly because difficulties in the re-sale of properties have arisen in neighbourhoods dominated by residents in their eighties and nineties. Brief comments are also offered on the association of age-segregated communities with inter-generational conflict, as over the range of services provided by the local or municipal authority and the consequent level of local taxes.

The third section deals with relocation and residential mobility, with some emphasis on the stress generated by moves and upon their relationship to the search for more supportive settings. Few studies are apparent on short-distance, housing adjustment moves, and this is seen as an important omission given that over 40 per cent of migrations in the United States are intraurban. The review then turns to the well-researched but minority practice of long-distance moves around the age of retirement, finding a plethora of publications on their geographical patterns, motivations, and the phenomena of return and seasonal migrations. Trends in the geographical distribution of the elderly are the focus of the following section, with particular attention being given to the emergence of coastal and peripheral elderly concentrations in the USA, the UK and Australia. Also considered are the characteristic distributions of elderly people within large metropolitan areas.

Finally Rowles offers some reflections on the directions and achievement of geographical studies of the elderly and of ageing. He sees three relevant interdependent geographical themes. The first is change in the individual's transactional relationship with the physical and social milieu; the second is the cumulative outcome of this process, the geographical distribution of the elderly; and lastly there is the interest in developing prescriptive statements with regard to the equitable spatial allocation of resources and the development of appropriate models of service delivery. Within each stratum of society and within

different societies, these interlocking themes have manifestations that vary as a result of both regional differences in the environmental competence of old people and variations in the level of environmental opportunities provided by society. In many developed societies the old person is increasingly presented with an almost bewildering array of alternatives that promote independence.

COMMENT

Rowles offers both an excellently researched and up-to-date bibliography and pertinent comments on the strengths and lacunae of geographers' concerns with the elderly. He makes a strong attempt to write comparatively for studies in the English-speaking world, although for certain topics such as residential care the bias towards conditions in the United States is emphatic. His critical comments emphasise but are not confined to scholarly and disciplinary issues but there is also a useful discussion of the prospects of rapid ageing in less developed nations.

> G. Brent Hall, C. Roseman and A. E. Joseph, 'The changing geography of the elderly in metropolitan Auckland: pattern, process and policy implications', *New Zealand Geographer*, **42** (1986), 46–55.

The ageing process in New Zealand has lagged behind that of many developed nations: as late as 1926 only five per cent of its population was aged 65 years or more. But by 1981 the elderly share had reached 9.9 per cent, and currently the nation is undergoing the most rapid stage of absolute increase of its elderly population. In the country's principal city, Auckland, there is an over-representation of the elderly and a rapidly changing internal distribution. The objectives of this paper are to examine the related distributional trends of the degree of spatial congregation of the elderly within districts of the Auckland metropolitan area, and the degree of concentration of the elderly relative to other age groups. The paper also assesses the implications of these spatial trends for social policy.

The authors make use of a small area census data set for 164 'census area units' (equivalent to UK enumeration districts or US census tracts) standardised for the 1971 and 1981 censuses. Also employed in some analyses are data for the 24 local authorities of the Auckland metropolitan area. Distributions of both the 60+ and the 65+ populations are examined by means of maps and a range of statistical indices including coefficients of variation and various location quotients.

The population aged 65 + years of the region increased from 9.0 % in 1971 to 9.9 % in 1981 but the coefficient of variation among the 24 local authorities decreased from 85 to 71 per cent, largely because the number of areas with exceptionally low percentages of elderly people declined during the decade. A strong trend was for the emergence of unusually high concentrations of elderly people in a peripheral, attractive coastal area within the metropolitan area, the Whangaparaoa peninsula. Nonetheless, the most extensive areas of over-representation of elderly people, and the greatest absolute concentrations, were found throughout the decade in the older, central authorities of the metropolis.

The authors conclude that the major determinant of the changing distribution of the elderly between 1971 and 1981 was ageing in place: the pattern modifications at the end of the decade were to a large extent predictable from the distribution of people aged 50–59 years in 1971. The alternative process of distributional change, locationally selective migrations by elderly people, was also important not only for a small number of coastal suburbs of exceptional attractiveness and in causing marked changes in the age structure of districts in which self-contained retirement villages had been constructed, but more generally for the dispersal of the older population into peripheral, low density suburbs. The latter trend is common to that found in many large cities in north America and Europe.

The paper concludes with brief comments on the implications for local government authorities of the accelerating development of retirement communities in New Zealand. On the one hand, they are seen as beneficial welfare achievements with numerous positive externalities for local areas, but on the other hand, they are exacerbating the age and income segregation of the urban population which, for elderly people, 'represents a further erosion of their traditional role of *kuia*, or honoured elderly, and a possible expansion of the generation gap'. Another concern arising from the intrametropolitan distributional trends described for the 1970s is that inner city municipalities may increasingly be left with a less affluent elderly population and rising concentrations of 'rest' homes.

COMMENT

Basic studies are rare of the distribution of elderly people in large urban areas. This study, by three north American authors, is one of the more substantial to have been published. It makes slightly laboured but good use of basically simple statistical indices such as the coefficient of

variation, the location quotient, indices of dissimilarity and gini coefficients. These summarise interesting and rapid shifts in the distribution of elderly people within the metropolitan area. The strong suburbanisation of the older population during the decade needed fuller interpretation: it is not clear whether special factors are encouraging the elderly to leave the central city or whether their participation is no different to that of other age groups.

> David R. Phillips, John Vincent and Sarah Blacksell, 'Spatial concentration of residential homes for the elderly: planning responses and dilemmas', *Transactions, Institute of British Geographers*, **12** (1987), 73–83.

This paper examines the growing concentrations of residential homes for elderly people in areas already favoured for retirement and the consequent concerns expressed by local politicians, planners and service providers. It follows other publications by the authors which have focused on the distribution of homes in Devon and the characteristics of proprietors.[1]

It outlines the variety of responses in England to this phenomenon and discusses the limitations of the British planning system's abilities to guide and control the burgeoning of homes. References are made to the attempts of Worthing, Eastbourne and Bournemouth to restrain the multiplication of residential homes, and the authors provide a critical discussion of the arguments used to justify these policies, such as the notion that elderly people are a 'burden on the rates' or that they detract from the area's attractiveness for tourism. They also document contrary attitudes, as in East Devon, where the local authority believes that residential homes provide a more reliable base for employment than seasonal holiday trade.

A section on 'Planning accommodation for the elderly: the legal context' provides a valuable synopsis of the limited powers in statutory development control procedures to influence the establishment of residential homes. Attempts to broaden the scope of planning powers, through the discretionary element accorded to 'local plans', have made little progress partly because it has been left to the courts' handling of planning appeals to determine the legitimacy of other than land use criteria for refusals, 'A recent sequence of widely varying judgements has left little sign of any clearly consistent policy emerging.'

Torbay in Devon is then examined as an example of a district which has experienced considerable growth in numbers of the elderly and where planners have attempted to introduce regulatory local policies.

The number of registered homes in the district has more than trebled since 1974 to 170, and a further 62 granted planning permissions were unimplemented in late 1985. Problems of over-capacity have arisen, with 8 per cent of beds vacant in 1983. The Torbay planning department in January of that year adopted a policy of refusing further permissions to convert buildings to residential homes in four areas of the resort: the main hotel and sea-front districts and the neighbourhood of Cary Park, where one in six properties already provided specialised accommodation for the elderly. Location quotients are used to compare the concentration of homes in localities with and without restraints on the establishment of new homes. It seems that policies which seek to prevent 'overconcentration' in small areas have had some success. Indeed, only three appeals have been successful since 1983 against Torbay's policy to preserve the areas of holiday accommodation and two further appeals have fully supported restraint in Cary Park.

After further illustrations of the inconsistency nationwide of planning appeal decisions and discussion of the tendency for local authorities to turn to assessments of local need as a basis for restraint policies, the paper concludes with an assessment of the effectiveness of planning and the need for stronger national guidelines in the development of this key area of social policy.

COMMENT

While this paper contains some overlap with the authors' earlier publications, it adds valuable summary sections on relevant legislation, planning circulars and local authority practice. Both the general weakness of planning controls and the potential of well framed statements in local plans (at least for areas of severe pressure) are demonstrated. The article makes little reference to the 1984 Registered Homes Act or to the implementation of revised registration procedures for residential homes, but various statements suggest that however successful these arrangements may be in maintaining the standards of homes, they will be of little use in restraining their multiplication. The authors are ambivalent about the grounds commonly deployed to argue against the establishment of further homes in a district, rightly seeing in many cases simplistic and ageist prejudice, but have a clear antipathy to the crude distortions of market forces and rational welfare practice produced by the disguised subsidies to private sector residential homes.

NOTE

1 Phillips, D. R. and Vincent, J., 'Private residential accommodation for the elderly: geographical aspects of developments in Devon', *Transactions, Institute of British Geographers*, **11** (1987), 155–173.

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Clinical Psychology   Jeffrey Garland

C. J. Gilleard, Influence of emotional distress among supporters on the outcome of psychogeriatric day care. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, **150** (1987), 219–223.

High priority to 'more day care' is given by mental health planners anticipating a Big Bang in provision of community services for old people. Until quite recently such preference rested on little more than subjective impressions that it 'feels right' for day centres, often run by volunteers with relatively little professional input, to offer a low-cost means of reducing pressure on hospital resources. Most service providers are 'bullish' for day care, claiming that most provision is: local; relatively homely; able to relieve boredom and loneliness; actually or potentially a base for assessment, and in some cases, for therapy; offers practical respite for informal carers; and gives community workers resources to offer in negotiating shared care.

Only rarely does a 'bearish' tendency appear, in the misgivings of some critics who see day care for some attenders as a limbo, foreshadowing the parting that is to come, and augmenting 'confusion' in an unfamiliar environment buzzing with arbitrary 'games', like a nightmarish prolonged children's party run by well-intentioned adults who assume they know what's good for the guests. Such pessimists suggest that for the informal carer at home absence makes the heart grow harder, more preoccupied with engineering the next step of holiday relief admission to up the dosage of new-found addictive tranquillity.

Almost certainly, the true picture has been one of many shades of grey. Certain attenders or carers appear to show some net benefit, while others seem to gain little or nothing from the experience, and winners or losers are by no means easy to predict.

Slowly and steadily, though, our understanding of the impact of psychogeriatric day care is being advanced by Chris Gilleard and his