

## **SPRING NEWSLETTER 2005**

of the

**Research Committee (RC11) on the Sociology of Aging**

of the **International Sociological Association (ISA)**

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## 1. Welcome + about this newsletter

Dear colleagues, dear friends,

Welcome to the *Spring Newsletter 2005*! In the last newsletter I promised to dedicate the Spring Newsletter to our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as an organisation. But following the premature death of Betty Havens I decided against having a 'verbal celebration'. Instead, this issue will pay special tribute to Betty Havens and to her extraordinary contribution to the development of both Canadian and international gerontology. As many of you know, the name of Betty Havens is also inseparably associated with the very beginnings of RC11 – so, by remembering Betty Havens we do indeed remember our own past and history.

In a special editorial, our president Lars Andersson will share with us his thoughts on the past 30 years of RC11 on the one hand and some ongoing developments on the other, thereby linking our history with challenges that our immediate future holds for us. Neena L. Chappell, Anne Martin-Matthews, and Hal L. Orbach kindly agreed to write articles in memoriam of Betty Havens, which they will share with us in a subsequent section.

It feels somewhat awkward to return to the usual business of the newsletter following that. But I assume that Betty would like RC11 to continue growing strong. I will give you a brief update on recent developments ('News from the Executive Board'). Many things are underway – in particular the preparations for the ISA World Congress in Durban 2006. In particular, I would like to point your attention to the second Call for Papers for our RC11 sessions in Durban next year.

This year's great event in international gerontology is no doubt the XVIIIth World Congress of Gerontology in Rio de Janeiro later this month, where RC11 will also be prominently represented. I am delighted that Alda Britto da Motta and Benedita Edina Cabral generously agreed to introduce you to the situation of older Brazilians in their country report in this newsletter. I strongly recommend you to read their highly informative article!

As always, this is followed by information on work in progress and forthcoming publications. Hereby, I would like to call your attention to the inauguration of a new journal – the *International Journal of Ageing and Later Life* (IJAL). Last but not least the 'Conference Planner' will give you an overview of relevant conferences in the field of ageing.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all contributors to this newsletter – Alda Britto da Motta, Benedita Cabral, Neena L. Chappell, Anne Martin-Matthews, Hal L. Orbach, and Lars Andersson – and I would like to tell you once again how much I appreciate your effort.

I hope, you all enjoy reading the newsletter. Any comments or future contributions will be very welcome.

Andreas (Hoff)

## 2. Editorial from the RC11 President

RC 11 has existed for 30 years. Although the activity, as in all organisations, has fluctuated over the years, one thing's for sure, when it comes to the international congresses every fourth year, RC11 delivers! And that goes from the very beginning. When I joined the group in Uppsala, Sweden, in 1978, I got the impression that this was a bustling group of researchers that had been working together and meeting "for ages", although it had been formed just four years earlier, at the Toronto congress, and the congress in Uppsala was our first congress as a fully functioning research committee of ISA.

From a thirty-year perspective, one component of the history of the research committee is its leadership. It turns out to have been a fairly even distribution regarding the characteristics of our presidents. Four terms with a male president and four terms with a female president. The distribution on non-English speaking – English speaking background is three to five, and the distribution on North American background – European background is also three to five. Incidentally, this means that some parts of the world have never had an RC11 president, which brings me to the subject of the future emphasis of conference activities. Today, the conference scene in Europe and the US is quite competitive, and there is a risk that too many events compete. On the other hand, gerontological research in other parts of the world needs fora to develop and flourish. Admittedly, our economic resources are limited. Nevertheless, we should be able to encourage and support various initiatives within our field all around the world.

Something interesting that has been presented should also be published. The new journal *International Journal of Ageing and Later Life* (IJAL) invites you to submit manuscripts. Several of our members are on the editorial board, which in a way makes it our journal. There is no economical interest behind the journal, which is refereed, and only published electronically with free access. One can see this initiative as part of the "bring back the journals to the researchers" movement. Considering the cut-backs of library budgets leading to less subscriptions, and in particular the possibility for students, and researchers in developing countries to have easy and free access to high quality research publications, this Journal will contribute to maintain the dissemination of research results worldwide. The aim and scope of the Journal can be found on its website: [www.ep.liu.se/ej/ijal/](http://www.ep.liu.se/ej/ijal/)

Finally, I feel sad that Betty is not with us anymore. I remember when presenting at congresses, and after the sessions seeing Betty down at the end of the room giving her okay for the presentation with a short winking. Then I knew I could relax. I also think of things not being accomplished. We talked long ago about doing a comparative study of loneliness based on our data sets from Canada and Sweden. Lot's of other things came in between, and we would probably never have gotten the time to carry out the study. Even so, with Betty gone, it's obvious that life will not take that turn. It becomes a reminder of missed opportunities.

Lars Andersson

### **3. Obituaries for Betty Havens**

#### ***Betty Havens – A Tribute***

On March 1, 2005, Betty Havens passed away after 2 years of living with cancer. World-renowned for her work as a gerontologist, Betty will be missed by many. Her reach was vast, including the local, provincial, national and international levels. She was, in many ways, the essence of gerontology – caring and committed not only to research but to the relevance of that research to the lives of seniors. She worked tirelessly to ensure that lives were changed; she was involved to the end. As professor and senior scholar in the Department of Community of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba, she had just received a new peer-reviewed grant on which she was principal investigator.

At Betty's final meeting as a member of the advisory board of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research – Institute on Aging in June 2004, she was presented with a small stone replica of an *Inukshuk* (the term means "in the image of man"). These lifelike figures of stone were erected by the Inuit people and are unique to the Canadian Arctic. Standing along Canada's most northern shores, they endure as eternal symbols of leadership, "encouraging the importance of friendship and reminding us of our dependence upon one another". They were erected to make the way easier and safer for those who follow; an Inukshuk represents safety and nourishment, trust and reassurance, and signifies that: "I've been here before; you're on the right path".

The life and work of Betty Havens are symbolized by the Inukshuk. Her leadership influenced several generations of Canadian and international researchers in gerontology and health services policy makers. She led the way. She was the essence of strength, commitment, dedication and a dazzling font of encyclopedic knowledge. Betty commanded our trust, and earned our admiration and gratitude. She was a formidable and forceful personality. But what made her formidable was also what brought out the very best in those around her. She constantly challenged us to make well-informed decisions, to know our purpose, to do our best in advancing the profession and science of gerontology. Those of us who served with Betty on committees and advisory bodies over the past 30 years, can attest to the fact that no one worked harder, was better informed, was as dedicated, gave such good counsel, or demonstrated the essence of leadership as did Betty Havens.

Betty Havens was the province of Manitoba's, and Canada's only, provincial gerontologist, serving in this capacity from 1982 to 1994. This was after she had initiated the Aging in Manitoba Longitudinal Studies (AIM) in 1971. AIM continues to this day. It is one of the largest and most comprehensive population based longitudinal studies of aging in the world and is the only longitudinal study of aging to date that combines complete utilization data with extensive interview data. It is not

surprising that Manitoba has some of the most progressive health services for seniors (including but not limited to their home care and Support Services for Seniors programs) and has the first university-based research Centre on Aging funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, begun in 1982. In all of these endeavours Betty was a team builder, practicing inclusivity long before it became fashionable.

She was also one of the founders of the Canadian Association on Gerontology and, in addition to years of service in various capacities, was its President from 1981 to 1983. She contributed in numerous ways to advancing research and policy on aging nationally in Canada, serving on the Advisory Committee to Health Canada's Seniors' Independence Research Program, in various advisory capacities to Statistics Canada, and more recently, on the Steering Committee for the proposed Canadian Longitudinal Study of Aging – a project very dear to her heart. The Canadian Association on Gerontology will be establishing an award in her name – for longitudinal research, which she approved prior to her death. Her outstanding contributions in Canada have been recognized with an honorary degree from the University of Waterloo in 1994, the Commemorative Golden Jubilee Medal of Queen Elizabeth II awarded by Canadian Association on Gerontology in 2002, a Distinguished Service Award from the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation in 2003 and, in February 2005, the highest honour that Canada can bestow on one of its citizens: the Order of Canada.

Internationally, Betty was actively involved in every arena of gerontological research, policy and practice. She participated in the Congresses of the International Association of Gerontology, presenting the results of her research and the programs for community health and care of the aged developed in Manitoba. She helped draft the position paper of the Canadian government for the 1982 UN World Assembly on Aging and was involved in numerous international programs of the UN, serving as the chair of expert panels dealing with issues of community health and aging, health care for the aging and standardizing terminology and research instruments for the UN program on Aging, the World Health Organization and the International Institute on Ageing in Malta where she also lectured at their graduate school of gerontology. Betty also was invited to serve as an expert and present her research to the Pan-American Health Organization, the Select Committee on Aging of the U.S. House of Representatives and the Florida State Legislature among numerous other organizations.

In many ways, Betty Havens is unique in the history of gerontology in Canada and internationally. There is no one else with the experience, judgment and impact that she has had across so many dimensions of gerontology in Canada. In tributes to her in the weeks after her death, Canadian colleagues have recognized her exceptional leadership and her unique place in our profession in describing her as “the history of gerontology in this country” and “the very heart of Canadian gerontology”.

Beyond gerontology, Betty participated throughout her life in the Girl Guides and was a knowledgeable and ardent admirer of nature. Rural and remote areas had a special place in her heart. She rejoiced in the smallest of accomplishments, as well as big wins. She was an unwavering support to her friends, who were spanned the generations from young to old. She was always there, with a belief in what could be accomplished, unstinting in her acceptance and approval, and always faithful to the goals of the common good. The words painted on Bet's canoe paddle (from a French guide) read:

*As the flames point upward,  
So be Our Aims  
As the red coals glow,  
So be Our Sympathies  
As the grey ash falls,  
So be Our Errors  
As the good fire warms the circle,  
So may Our Ideals  
Warm the World*

Betty's legacy will endure. Friends and colleagues who gathered at the University of Manitoba in mid March celebrated the life and contributions of the leader, the beacon, the trail-blazer that Betty Havens has been for so many in gerontology in Manitoba, in Canada and around the world. For many of us, she has 'been there' for all of our academic careers and we simply cannot imagine Canadian gerontology without her. We celebrate her uniqueness, her place in our history, at the heart of gerontology, and in our hearts.

Neena L. Chappell  
University of Victoria

Anne Martin-Matthews  
University of British Columbia

## Remembering Betty Havens

Betty Havens was born in Omaha, Nebraska and educated at Milwaukee-Downer College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, majoring in sociology and psychology. While working she took advanced studies in psychometry, population and the study of mental diseases. After obtaining her first graduate degree in sociology, specializing in medical sociology at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, she entered the doctoral program at the University of Wisconsin in Madison studying sociology and social welfare. At the same time she received a U.S. National Institute of Health pre-doctoral training award as part of the first cohort of the research-training program of the Midwest Council for Social Research in Aging. This unique cooperative program of all the major public and a few private universities that encompassed twelve states

In the region served by the Midwest Sociological Society was where Betty received her education in the field of aging. Betty left Wisconsin without completing her dissertation at the end of her training grant and at the end of the 1960s moved to Canada where a more positive social and political climate and challenging work in aging was available. In this she was not unlike many U.S. citizens who found Canada a more humane society in which to live and work.

As Neena Chappell and Anne Martin-Matthews have pointed out, Betty quickly became one of the leading researchers in aging in Canada, initiating the groundbreaking longitudinal health studies for which she is noted and becoming the provincial gerontologist for Manitoba as well as stimulating and supporting the development of aging in Canada.

But Betty remained a central figure her entire life in the work of the Midwest Council for Social Research in Aging (MCSRA) and in the Midwest Sociological Society. She served in a variety of capacities including two years as President of MCSRA attending as many of its research seminars as she could and organizing sessions and presenting her research work at the annual meetings of the Midwest Sociological Society where MCSRA sponsored sessions and held meetings with its trainees and growing numbers of alumni over the years. Betty was always ready to share her knowledge and assist new students and young faculty interested in issues of health and community care. She served the Midwest Sociological Society as a member of just about every important committee and received one of the first Awards for Distinguished Service bestowed by the society, as well as a Special Presidential Award this year.

I first met Betty at MCSRA programs at the Midwest Society's Annual Meetings just after I came to Kansas and became its director for pre-doctoral students. When I began the process of organizing the ISA's first Congress program on aging in 1972 and later when I initiated the action in 1974 to create the RC on Aging in ISA, I called on Betty for help which was immediately forthcoming, as was her providing me with information about every aspect of aging in Canada at the same

time since I was spending the 1974-75 year as a visiting professor in Sociology at the University of Toronto where I taught the first course there in aging.

Betty was one of the original 51 people who signed the petition to create the ISA RC on Aging during our sessions in Toronto at the 1974 World Congress. She became our first Secretary-Treasurer and Newsletter editor from 1974-1978, helping organize our Uppsala meetings in 1978 and then served as first-Vice President from 1978-1982, playing a central role in organizing the program for Mexico City. Finally, Betty served as the third President of the RC from 1982-1986, taking the major role in organizing the New Delhi Congress program. Somehow she also managed the vast number of her other roles in helping create the discipline of aging in Canada and representing Canada in the world of health and community care, getting the University of Manitoba to create its Institute on Aging and bringing Neena Chappell there to direct it.

At the same time Betty kept up her connections to the world of U.S. sociology and gerontology. She was a life-long member of the American Sociological Society active in the Section on Aging. Her name was the first on the petition to create the Section on Aging and she served on the Section's Council for two years. And she also was a life-long member and elected Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America, participating in the annual meetings when her schedule permitted.

I know that I would not have made it through the first years of our Research Committee without Betty's steady hand and dry sense of humor. In the days before email, or its predecessor bit mail, we were dependent on the postal service and if it wasn't a postal strike in Italy where the ISA Secretariat was until fall 1974, it was two months of postal strikes in Canada in 1974-1975 as if to greet the new ISA secretariat in Montreal. Betty took it all in stride exhibiting the qualities that made her such a marvellous friend and accomplished and humane professional dedicated to the development of knowledge in order to make life better for all.

Harold L. Orbach

Kansas State University

## **4. News from the Executive Board**

The following information was provided by a hands on core group of the executive board who communicate regularly and are very much committed to building RC11 into a vibrant group for now and the future.

### ***Membership***

Especial thanks to all who recently renewed their membership – that's been a great help! At the same time, I would like to ask everybody whose membership expires this year and who has not renewed it yet to do so at his or her earliest convenience. If you are uncertain, please check your membership status with the ISA ([isa@cps.ucm.es](mailto:isa@cps.ucm.es)) or contact our secretary Susan Feldman ([Susan.Feldman@vu.edu.au](mailto:Susan.Feldman@vu.edu.au)).

### ***RC11 Research Project***

Following a suggestion by Kwok Hong Kin, a group comprising of Kwok Hong Kin, Merrill Silverstein, Lars Andersson, and Andreas Hoff formed to discuss the idea of a joint RC11 project that could unite RC11 members from all over the world. In a first step, we tried to identify themes that would appeal to researchers from all continents. So far, two themes were suggested: "Globalisation and Ageing" (Silverstein) and "Migrant Labour in Informal and Formal Care" (Hoff).

We would welcome any comments and suggestions from you. In particular, it would be helpful to know whether you would rather endorse an all-embracing theme (e.g. "Globalisation and Ageing") that could be divided into several smaller sub-themes (e.g. "Migrant Labour in Informal and Formal Care") or whether you would prefer a slightly more concrete theme. Please feel free to suggest alternative themes that you would be interested to pursue in a global context!

### ***Workshop/seminar in developing countries***

Arvind K. Joshi offered to host a conference/workshop under the auspices of RC11 to promote ways of developing research capacities in the sociology of ageing in India. He is following up a suggestion made at the last Executive Board meeting in Surrey 2004 (see previous newsletter). I think, this proposal deserves maximum support from RC11 – therefore, could you please get in touch with Arvind to bring this idea to life!

## **5. XVI World Congress of Sociology 2006 in Durban, South Africa**

### ***Call for Papers***

***International Sociological Association – RC11 Sociology of Ageing  
at the XVI World Congress of Sociology in Durban  
July 23-29, 2006***

## **The Quality of Social Existence in a Globalised World**

We invite abstracts for any of the session topics listed below:

- Family ties in the later stages of the life course
- Ageing families and multigenerational households in developing countries
- Poverty, health and the impact of social change on older persons in Africa
- The status of older persons in developing countries
- Aged care, individualisation and risk
- Anti-ageing and the constitution of old age
- Rethinking gender inequalities in later life
- Social policy and ageing in a globalised world
- Workforce ageing in the new economy
- Intergenerational relations
- Socio-economic, racial and ethnic health disparities in aging
- Care work and care workers
- The body, ageing and everyday life
- Other research on aging and social life

Papers by researchers from the African continent, with an international focus, and papers by researchers earlier in their career are particularly welcomed. Papers may be presented orally or as a poster.

This call for papers has a deadline for receipt of abstracts by **31 October 2005**. Abstracts of a maximum of 200 words should be sent to the respective session convenors. For their names and contact details please refer to our website on [http://www.ucm.es/info/isa/congress2006/rc/rc11\\_durban.htm](http://www.ucm.es/info/isa/congress2006/rc/rc11_durban.htm).

Abstracts **MUST** include:

- Name(s) and affiliation(s) of the author(s)
- Contact details of presenting author (postal address, telephone, fax + email)
- Title of the proposed presentation
- Indicate whether an oral paper or poster presentation

Please note that individuals should not be the first author (the presenter) of more than one paper.

## **Procedures and guidelines for session conveners**

The session convenors will be responsible for selecting papers for their sessions. Those proposing contributions will send their proposed papers directly to the session convenors before the deadline of October 31, 2005. Alternatively, convenors may also recruit other speakers to the session if they wish. Copies of all abstracts will have to be sent to Susan Feldman of the program committee ([Susan.Feldman@vu.edu.au](mailto:Susan.Feldman@vu.edu.au)), regardless of whether the abstract will be accepted or not.

The idea is to have some form of backup available if needed. This also helps cover papers that have been submitted to the wrong session, and also acts as a sort of check-up procedure to ensure that there is as truly representative and international coverage as possible. Moreover, the program committee might be able to place rejected papers in alternative sessions.

That said, session convenors and programme committee alike would aim to ensure that the program is as internationally representative as possible, and as varied and interesting as we can make it. More specifically, we will aim for having a paper presented by an African researcher in each session.

Much more information and advice can be found at the following web site: <http://www.ucm.es/info/isa/congress2006/index.htm> The section titled 'Guidelines for Coordinators' is particularly useful.

### ***Joint and integrative sessions:***

We will have two joint sessions with RC19 – session 8 on “Social Policy and Ageing in a Globalised World” and session 15 “Reshaping Programmes for Long-Term Care. The Effects of Reforms”. Moreover, we are currently discussing the opportunity of having a so-called ‘integrative session’ (i.e. involving two other RCs) on “Intergenerational Relations”. We would appreciate any feedback on that.

The Program Committee:

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## **Support for Researchers from Africa**

Over the next decades we will see exponential increases in the absolute size of Africa's older population. The proportion of people aged 60+ is projected to double from currently 5 to 10 per cent by 2050. That may seem a rather low rate compared with the Western world. However, the absolute number of older people is projected to rise four-fold from currently 47 million to 193 million over the same period.

An even sharper surge in population ageing can be expected if the HIV/AIDS epidemic – and the disproportionate death of younger and middle aged adults – continues. Therefore, ensuring the wellbeing and capacity of Africa's present and future older populations is an integral part of overall efforts to achieve societal development on the continent.

RC11 is in the unique position to promote research into population ageing globally at this critical juncture in time. Facing these challenges, it will be vital that as many African ageing researchers as possible will attend the Durban Congress. Therefore – taking advantage of the conference “Research on Ageing, Health and Poverty in Africa: Forging Directions for the Future”, which was held at the Oxford Institute of Ageing in April 2005 – I invited the African researchers present there to join our email network and to attend the RC11 sessions at the Durban Congress next year.

Quoting Dr Sarah Harper, Director of the Oxford Institute of Ageing: “One of the key issues faced by African academics is that they do not have the resources to attend international meetings and thus learn from and contribute to international academic debate. Our second immediate priority [ought to be] to involve publishers in assisting African universities to access international journals. Simple factors that academics from the developed world take for granted – exchanging information through [AH:email/internet,] journals and conferences – is still a real challenge for many of our African colleagues.” (Blueprint, 12 May 2005, p. 8)

I therefore very much appreciate a step taken by the Oxford Institute of Ageing to launch a bursary fund to enable African colleagues to join the discussions at the ISA World Congress in Durban next year. It would be absolutely wonderful if we could also contribute to sponsoring African colleagues wishing to attend the conference!

And please do let me know your thoughts on other ways of how we might be able to help our African colleagues.

## **6. Country report: Older People in Brazil**

Alda Britto da Motta

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Brazil is the country with the largest number of older people in Latin America and the fifth in the world. Although its present 9% of senior citizens seems incomparably smaller than the around 20% in many European countries, the manner in which society accommodates the participation of the different age groups within the heterogeneous population is more serious. While in the Old World there was a slow demographic transition, with time enough for the gradual development of public policies that treated with equanimity the citizens of various ages, and more specifically, the older people, Brazil has had to skip a few stages in the process, with difficulty - and its public policies are still incipient.

Because Brazil is a country of continental proportions with great regional diversities, with a class society, and a demographically bigger contingent of women than men, it is no wonder that its population of older people(almost 15 millions) is heterogeneous. The majority of them live in the Southeastern and in the Southern states, which are among the most developed in the country, mainly in Rio de Janeiro, 12.3%, and also in the Northeastern State of Paraíba, with 11% in Campina Grande.

Apart from the census data, research has also revealed this heterogeneity. Social practices which have been studied in depth show that there is a diversity of ways in which to grow old that do not correspond to the traditional expectations that used to associate old age to poverty or disenfranchisement, with consequential attitudes related to the isolation of the older people, be it in the work environment, or in the forms of sociability themselves and their definitive relocation to domestic life. Thus, the experience of ageing in Brazilian society offers us a clear view presenting unsuspected possibilities in the horizon of being old in post modernity.

It is evident that the condition of poverty persists, since the amount of money paid to old age retired and pensioners is very small – part of this group of older people earns even less than the minimum wage in the country (US\$100), but the fact that they can count nowadays with some kind of benefit (mainly retirement benefits and pensions) guarantees their survival and that of their own family, i.e., of other generations.

At the same time, the development of the medical sciences and the broader scope of State involvement in the implementation of public hygiene measures and disease prevention, has made it possible for old people to live longer, in good health and, thus, allowing them to work until they are older, or even, to go back to work,

which helps, even in a small proportion, increase their earnings and the level of help they can actually give their families. These two intertwined facts constitute two of the basic characteristics of the older people's present situation in Brazil.

Due to the high levels of unemployment, or to the precariousness of employment these days, young generations have difficulty in finding jobs – specially those from the poorer ranks of society, but not only them - and they carry on living in their parents and grandparents' house for long periods, even after they themselves have got married. Thus, there is an increase in the number of multigenerational families where, grandparents, children and grandchildren (and not rarely great-grandchildren) share the same roof, owned by the older generation, and the income of parents and grandparents ensures the possibility of reproduction of various generations.

On the other hand, the return of the “young” older person (in their 60's to 65's) back to the work force is following a surprising and marked pattern of involvement in Brazil. This is not only advantageous for the companies that employ them, since they have to pay out fewer benefits, as it is to the aged persons, that have their earnings increased. At the same time, working out of home allow the old aged persons the opportunity to extend their sociability and forms of self-expression.

A third marked feature in the life of a Brazilian older person nowadays is precisely this intensification and variety of forms with which they can exercise their sociability. The traditional older person is always thought of individually, solitarily, as someone's grandfather or grandmother; a gathering of senior people or even the concept of them as a group is a sign of our times. They make possible a new image of old age and are a consequence of the social conditions that produce, not only a growing longevity, but also of cultural, educational and social services put at their disposal. And they love it.

However, regarding the income and the possibility of helping their families, and the chance of being part of the work force and of being sociable, the older people differ internally not only with reference to their class situation, but also due to gender conditions. Women, who tend to live longer than men, consist of 60% of the older people in Brazil; because traditionally they have less access to education, they have received less formal education than men (this is changing among the younger generations) and, consequently, they have had less access to employment and to the possibility of receiving benefits (which has also been changing). They also are the ones who receive Social Security pensions as widows and who contribute additionally towards the income and the sustainability of the family with the carrying out of domestic chores in their own houses. The fact that the old age pensioners' movement is made up mainly of men who used to be union leaders in a recent past, is also a gender issue. The movement in Brazil is widely responsible for this new, more dynamic image of the older people. Finally, it is mostly the women who take part and who are more enthusiastic in the many social older people's groups, the

universities for senior people and the specific activities for the retired, as a means of making new friends, having fun and taking part in public life.

Thus, with so many social innovations with dynamic resonance among the older people, one must highlight the fact that the traditional expectations society had of this group has also suffered changes. This can be seen by their effective participation in family, professional and community life, by their affirmative actions, which are explicit in the Retired and Pensioners' Movement in the struggle against the Federal Government to increase their earnings, and by the integration of considerable amounts of older men and women in convivial groups where they can build different forms of sociability in public spaces.

The media has contributed towards the greater visibility of older people through articles that look at the different aspects and ways of life of senior citizens, producing and influencing new social representations about them.

## **7. Work in progress**

### **African Research Network on Population Ageing**

The Oxford Institute of Ageing will take the lead in a new pan-African initiative called AFRAN, the African Research on Ageing Network. The Network will be a co-ordinating body for African research, collaboration and capacity building, and a platform for forging partnerships and exchange between institutions in Africa and the rest of the world.

The network will be coordinated jointly by the the Oxford Institute of Ageing and the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). The council, an independent, pan-African research organisation, is recognised as the pioneer African social research organisation.

AFRAN has been established following discussions between African, UK and international researchers and practitioners in the field of ageing, health and poverty at the Oxford conference "Research on Ageing, Health and Poverty in Africa: Forging Directions for the Future". Dr Isabella Aboderin, Research Fellow at the Oxford Institute of Ageing, will coordinate AFRAN with Dr Ebrima Sall from CODESRIA.

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Comment AH: I came across the following note a while ago. I thought it might be of interest ...

### **Ageing and Employment Policies: United States**

In the face of rapid population ageing and the trend towards early retirement, there is a need to promote better employment opportunities for older people. Much has been said about the need for reform of old-age pensions and early retirement schemes but this may not be sufficient to raise employment rates for older people significantly or to reduce the future risk of labour shortages.

Both governments and firms will need to take active measures to adapt wage-setting practices to ageing workforces, to address the extent to which other welfare schemes act as pathways to early retirement, to tackle age discrimination and to improve the job skills and working conditions of older workers. In addition, older workers will need to change their own attitudes towards working longer and acquiring new skills. Little is known about what countries have been doing or should be doing in these areas.

This report on the United States is part of a series of around 20 OECD country reports that are intended to fill this gap. Each report contains a survey of the main barriers to employment for older workers, an assessment of the adequacy and effectiveness of existing measures to overcome these barriers and a set of policy recommendations for further action by the public authorities and social partners.

This report is based on the proceedings of a seminar and is published in English only. For more information, you can download the country note : OECD recommends balanced approach to social security reform in the United States (pdf 36 Ko)

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/38/35/34744509.pdf>

## 8. Publications

### The International Journal of Ageing and Later Life

[www.ep.liu.se/ej/ijal/](http://www.ep.liu.se/ej/ijal/)

### Call for submissions

The International Journal of Ageing and Later Life (IJAL) serves an audience interested in social and cultural aspects of ageing and later life development. In addition to studies on later life, IJAL also welcomes contributions focusing on adult ageing as well as relations among generations. As an international journal, IJAL acknowledges the need to understand the cultural diversity and context dependency of ageing and later life. IJAL accepts therefore country- or cultural-specific studies that do not necessarily include international comparisons as long as such contributions are interesting and understandable for an international audience. The Journal includes a review section, which ensures that readers are kept in touch with new work and current debate.

To assure high academic standard IJAL uses a double blind review process. In order to stimulate exchange of ideas on ageing across many parts of the world, IJAL is available free of charge to anyone with Internet access.

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**Submissions should be sent to: [ijal@ituf.liu.se](mailto:ijal@ituf.liu.se)**

## 9. Conference Planner 2005

- June 7-8 London, UK

Improving Care for Older People 2005

For more information please visit:

<http://www.healthcare-events.co.uk/conferences/confdisplay.asp?id=383>

- June 11-12 Sigtuna, Sweden

Conference 'Social Security and the Labour Market in an Ageing Society'

For more information please send an email to Lisa Goode: [lg11@york.ac.uk](mailto:lg11@york.ac.uk)

- June 26-30 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

XVIII World Congress of Gerontology

For more information please visit the conference website at:

<http://www.gerontology2005.org.br/>

- June 27-29 Lexington/KY, U.S.A.

22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Summer Series on Aging Conference "Conscious Aging"

For more information visit:

<http://aarp.co.mansellgroup.net/UM/T.asp?A910.52852.2116.15.905215>

- June 27-29 Trondheim, Norway

International Association of Homes and Services for the Ageing (IAHSA): Sixth International Conference

For more information please visit the conference website at:

<http://www.healtheconomics.org/conferences/2005/06/27/international-associat.html>

- July 5-9 Stockholm, Sweden

37th World Congress of the International Institute of Sociology in Stockholm

Please check the call for papers in the previous section and the conference website for more information: <http://www.SCASSS.uu.se/iis2005> or contact Michelle Ariga at:

[michelle.ariga@scasss.uu.se](mailto:michelle.ariga@scasss.uu.se)

- July 14-16 Keele, UK

The British Society of Gerontology 34th Annual Scientific Meeting

For more information please visit the conference website at:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/depts/so/csg/bsg2005/>

- August 16-17 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

HEALTHCOM 2005 International Conference on Health Communication

For more information please visit: <http://www.aidcom.com/overview.htm>

- August 22-25 Orlando, U.S.A.

Florida Conference on Aging

For more information please visit: <http://www.fcoa.org/Conf2005/conf2005.html>

- September 8-10 Chicago, United States

Annual Conference of the ISA RC19 on Poverty, Social Welfare and Social Policy  
"Rethorizing Welfare States: Restructuring States, Restructuring Analysis"

For more information please visit the RC19 homepage at:

<http://www.ucm.es/info/isa/rc19.htm> or contact Torben Fridberg ([TF@sfi.dk](mailto:TF@sfi.dk))

- September 9-12 Torun, Poland

7th European Sociological Association (ESA) Conference

For more information please visit the conference website at:

<http://www.7thesaconference.umk.pl>

For more information on the Programme of the 'Research Network on Ageing' please refer to the call for papers in the previous section or contact one of the conference organisers: Ricca Edmondson ([ricca.Edmondson@nuigalway.ie](mailto:ricca.Edmondson@nuigalway.ie)) or Andreas Motel-Klingebiel ([motel@dza.de](mailto:motel@dza.de))

- September 15-16 Malta

RC41 (Sociology of Population) Symposium on Inequalities in Population

For more information please see the call for papers in the previous section or contact one of the conference organisers: Bali Ram ([rambali@statcan.ca](mailto:rambali@statcan.ca)) or Joseph Troisi ([joseph.troisi@um.edu.mt](mailto:joseph.troisi@um.edu.mt))

- September 29 St Gallen, Switzerland

World Ageing & Generations Congress 2005

For more information please visit the conference website at:

<http://conference.viva50plus.org>

- October 29-30 Vancouver, Canada

Canadian Conference on Elder Law

For more information please visit the conference website at:

<http://www.ccels.ca/conferences.html>

- November 18-22 New Orleans, U.S.A.

Gerontological Society of America (GSA) Annual Scientific Meeting

For more information please visit the conference website at:

[http://www.eshow2000.com/geron/about\\_the\\_meeting.cfm](http://www.eshow2000.com/geron/about_the_meeting.cfm)

- November 28-30 Dhaka, Bangladesh

International Conference "Mainstreaming Ageing in Health Systems and Rural Development

For more information please see the call for papers in the previous section or contact the conference organiser Zarina Nahar Kahir ([zarina.kabir@neurotec.ki.se](mailto:zarina.kabir@neurotec.ki.se))

## 10. Outlook

That's it for the moment. I hope, you enjoyed reading this newsletter and it contained information useful for you. As always, I look forward to receiving your comments on this newsletter and your suggestions on how to improve future editions.

I wish you all a very successful and enjoyable conference in Rio and a very good summer. Do take care + I hope to read, listen to, talk to, or meet you soon!

With my kindest regards,

Andreas (Hoff)