



Australian
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Influences of life histories, inequality and social life on retirement

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Overview

1. Social Constructions of Retirement and Ageing
2. A Social Structural Perspective
3. The Importance of Social Context
4. Policies and Purposeful Social Change?
5. Some references (the research behind the ideas presented here)

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1. Social Constructions of Retirement and Ageing

- a) Retirement as an event, a process (and reversible) stage of life
 - From whose viewpoint? (workers, retired, employers, governments etc)
- b) Ageing and older people
 - Age as an index of time, duration of exposure, maturation, etc
 - Older person, senior citizen, etc as social categories
 - A new third age? (longevity, working less/more, an earned right to leisure?)
 - And whose ageing (social segments including his and hers)?
- c) Conceptual approaches
 - Political economy and critical as well as social structures and life transitions
- d) Methodological approaches
 - Qualitative as well as quantitative (people's own stories?)



2. A Social Structural Perspective (complements individual perspective)

- a) The Age Period Cohort Paradigm
- b) Periods (eg early 1990s recession, Global Financial Crisis, & future?)
- c) Life Course Accumulations (diversity and inequalities)
- d) The Baby Boom Cohort and future trajectories
- e) Cohort succession, momentum, social change
- f) Adaptation and change by individuals and social structures (& interactions)



3. The Importance of Social Context

- a) Australia has been different from the US and Europe (population growth, economic growth, government fiscal position, employment growth for over 55s in all social segments)
- b) Prevailing Attitudes (eg on the productivity of older workers and generational equity)
- c) Individuals' expectations and attitudes (eg Kerry Sargent-Cox)
- a) Employers and Markets
(more from other speakers)



4. Social Issues & Policies: Big issues

- Macro-economic prospects: workforce shortages, population growth, etc
- Human capital and inequalities over the life course
- Adequacy of income, enabling paid work, and valuing non paid work
- Age discrimination
- Treasury Advisory Panel on Positive Ageing
- The Intergenerational Reports (the 3 'Ps)
- Changing attitudes and behaviours?



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