



The Leverhulme Trust

THE AGEING OF BRITISH GERONTOLOGY: LEARNING FROM THE PAST TO INFORM THE FUTURE

Ageing, it now seems, is everybody's business. Yet, whilst many gerontologists have always been interested in the relationship of their discipline to prevalent cultural attitudes about ageing, much popular and societal understanding often has very little basis in the rapidly accumulating body of gerontological research which has been undertaken in Britain over the past 40-50 years. Our two-year project (2015-17) looks at the evolution of this increasingly important inter- and multidisciplinary field. However, rather than concentrating on reviewing and synthesizing the actual research per se we look, instead, at what we can learn from people who have been active in building the gerontological knowledge base since the establishment of the British Society of Gerontology in 1971. Filmed interviews will be supplemented with an examination of the Society's archives.



Research Aims and Objectives

Our overarching aim is to look critically at key developments and milestones in gerontological research, theoretical development, policy and practice, over the last 40-50 years. Our objectives are fourfold:

- To chart the evolution of gerontology in the UK.
- To learn from the experiences and motivations of people who have been fundamental to its growth and development.
- To explore the connections and disconnections between 'the professional' and 'the personal' amongst those for whom ageing has been central to their professional/academic lives, as well as part of their lived experience.
- To articulate what these professional and personal experiences and reflections might mean for future generations of academic colleagues, policy makers and practitioners.

Outputs

We will work with cultural gerontologist and professional photographer, Sukey Parnell, and with a filmographer, to produce:

- A library of 'talking heads' to be hosted on the BSG's website.
- A photographic exhibition featuring key figures in British gerontology.
- An accompanying DVD.
- A companion book of portraits and interviews.
- Academic articles and conference papers.

Research Team

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