This chapter considers how individuals imagine solutions for the social welfare problems they confront. The process of imagining alternative social arrangements for social welfare problems involves the evaluation of a range of culturally available models. In choosing from among these alternatives, individuals turn to those social arrangements that are consistent with more familiar ways of thinking and talking about social welfare. For individuals to accept an expanded state role in the case of long-term care, they require a model of state intervention that does not substitute the state for family responsibility for care, but that instead integrates the need for state assistance into a belief system that privileges family responsibility for health care. This produces claims for state entitlements that do challenge existing social arrangements for care provision, but within a welfare state framework that conceives of only a minimal role for the state in safeguarding social welfare.

The main objective of this chapter is to describe the main features of the Swedish voluntary sector and the enrolment of older people in this sector. Sweden has a large non-profit and volunteer sector. The
Swedish experience shows that a large voluntary sector is compatible with a strong and universal welfare state. Since the State is strongly involved in the provision of social services and the financing of a generous and encompassing social protection system, the Swedish volunteer organisations are less active in the fields of social services. By international standard, the participation rate of older volunteers is high and Sweden offers more opportunities than restrictions for older people to be engaged in volunteer activities. In spite of a recent retrenchment of the public sector and an increase of more welfare service oriented associations, the large majority of volunteer organisations are voice organisations and less of a philanthropic nature.

Introduction: reconstructing retirement

David Lain

in Reconstructing Retirement: Work and Welfare in the UK and USA

This chapter provides an overview of the book and introduces the changing context of work and retirement in the UK and USA. It starts by reviewing explanations for the rise of early retirement up to the early 2000s. It then introduces the topic of employment after typical retirement age; this is harder to explain through existing models classifying both countries as liberal welfare states. It argues that the US has done more than the UK to promote employment beyond age 65, through a ‘self-reliance’ policy logic. The UK has adopted a more ‘paternalistic’ policy logic, focused on the provision of a safety net of means tested benefits. Reforms in both countries have, however, increased both the need and opportunities to work beyond age 65. The chapter finishes by summarising the empirical findings of the book, and highlighting the need for policies to support financial security and autonomy for older people.

Beyond Successful and Active Ageing

Virpi Timonen

This book argues that concepts such as successful, active, positive, healthy and productive ageing - ubiquitous terms in research, marketing
and policymaking concerned with older adults – are paradigms that reflect and exacerbate inequalities in older populations. The book presents a new theory to make sense of the popularity of this family of successful and active ageing concepts. Readers are invited to view them through the prism of model ageing – a new social theory that throws light on the causes and consequences of attempts to model ageing as a phenomenon and stage of the life course that is in need of direction, reshaping and control. The term model ageing encapsulates systems of ideation pertaining to the question of ‘how to age in contemporary Western society’: these systems amount to a distinctive and coherent social construction of what it is to live like a model older person in 21st-century welfare states. Model ageing comprises policy ideals, commercial depictions and academic conceptualisations of what model old adults are or ought to be like. The theory of model ageing offers an explanatory account of the origins, mechanics and consequences of this ubiquitous activity of modelling ageing. This is an interpretive theory that seeks to make sense of how later life is socially constructed and moulded in contemporary aged societies.

The problem with Modelling Ageing

Virpi Timonen

in Beyond Successful and Active Ageing: A Theory of Model Ageing

Published in print: 2016 Published Online: January 2017
Item type: chapter

This chapter argues that the term ‘model ageing’ encapsulates the drive towards reorienting and reconceptualising old age that is increasingly evident in international, supranational and national policy texts and rhetoric, and in academic literature. Model ageing is an integrative concept that throws light on the reasons for, and the consequences of, thinking about ageing populations within models of ‘how to age well/properly’. In order to examine the interface of these models and individual experience, the chapter employs the heuristic devices of ‘model’ and ‘antimodel’ older person – ‘model’ being aligned with active/successful ageing, and ‘anti-model’ deviating from the model behaviours and outcomes. ‘Model’ and ‘antithetical’ behaviours are examined within the three key realms where increasingly strong individual agency is expected from older adults: living independently, working longer, and being socially productive. In discussing these realms, examples of policy development are drawn from diverse contexts including mostly European welfare states (Denmark, Finland, Italy, and Poland) but also the United States and Australia. The chapter contests the premise that
all older adults have equal access to and capacity for the model ageing behaviours. As a result, model ageing is becoming another engine of exacerbating inequality.

The state in ageing Canada
Kathrin Komp and Patrik Marier

Due to population ageing, old age policies have gained increasing attention over the last few decades. For example, many countries reformed their pension systems and their long-term care regulations to counter the increasing number of frail older people. However, researchers underline that policies dealing with population ageing cannot focus on older people alone. Instead, they need to account for life-course effects and, therefore, tackle the situation of individuals of all ages. This chapter discusses how policy-makers can utilize life-course effects in old age policies. It explains the potential and the pitfalls of such a step, using Canada as an example. Canada is trying to prepare for population ageing through e.g. by promoting ‘Active Ageing’ and ‘Age-Friendly Communities’, which this chapter describes.

Older volunteers in France: recognising their social utility in a less and less corporatist welfare state
Marielle Poussou-Plesse, Elena Mascova, and Mélissa Petit

This chapter examines the volunteering of older people in France in a context of an evolving welfare state and non profit sector. It explains why public policies aiming at promoting the active ageing have not led more baby boomers to become involved in volunteer work. Poor public recognition of social utility of senior volunteering and its possible causes are discussed in this chapter in a historical perspective linking employment and retirement policies developments. It concludes by pointing out alternative ways to address the gap between public
policies focusing on a productive utility of volunteering, organisational challenges that non profits are facing, and the real nature of volunteers' commitment to non-profits.

**Contextualising ageing in Ireland**

Sheelah Connolly

in *Ageing through austerity: Critical perspectives from Ireland*

This chapter contextualises ageing in Ireland in a time of austerity. It describes the current demographic and socio-economic situation of older people in Ireland and recent changes therein; where relevant, it compares the situation in Ireland to that of other high income countries. The chapter goes on to examine the impact of the 2008 economic downturn on older people in Ireland. It examines the direct effects of austerity measures on the Irish welfare state as well as some indirect effects, including the impact of emigration and depopulation on older people.

**The labour market in ageing Sweden**

Mikael Stattin and Daniel Larsson

in *Population ageing from a lifecourse perspective: Critical and international approaches*

Population ageing goes hand in hand with an increasing number of healthy life years, which individuals can use for various activities. Policy-makers encourage individuals to spend at least some of these life years on paid work, because such a step would boost the economy and consolidate the financial basis of pension schemes. Employers are sometimes interested in older people working, because such a step maintains the size of the workforce, and it ensures that workers with experiential knowledge are available. This chapter discusses life-course influences on older people's workforce participation in Sweden, where individuals work until a comparatively late age.