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Book Review / Compte rendu

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Although the research focus on resilience in aging has been increasing steadily over the last several years, the vital importance of this topic became abundantly clear with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the introductory chapter, editors Andrew Wister and Theodore Cosco highlight the numerous physical, social, and emotional challenges experienced by older adults, many of which have been exacerbated by the pandemic. In addition to the rapid aging of both the Canadian and global populations, the recent deleterious circumstances presented by the pandemic underscore the relevance and urgency of increasing our understanding of resilience in older adulthood. *Resilience and Aging: Emerging Science and Future Possibilities* is a timely edited volume that brings much needed breadth to the resilience and aging literature.

This volume consists of 12 chapters of moderate length, beginning with an introduction from the editors, and an initial summary chapter that defines and describes different types of resilience and factors associated with resilience, as well as interventions to strengthen resilience (Chapter 2: Resnick). The remaining chapters can be largely categorized as reflecting one of three themes. The first overarching theme is the exploration of different resilience domains relevant to aging; for example, physical (Chapter 9: Peters), mobility (Chapter 10: Seetharaman et al.), multi-morbidity (Chapter 5: Wister), psychological (Chapter 7: Ong et al.), and community (Chapter 11: Wiles) resilience are all specific types of resilience that are particularly relevant to aging and are explored in this volume. The second major theme is the application of resilience to specific populations of older adults. Older adults with dementia and their caregivers (Chapter 3: Windle), older adults experiencing homelessness (Chapter 12: Canham et al.), and individuals who have experienced spousal bereavement (Chapter 8: Carr) are three specific populations for whom resilience research is illuminated. Lastly, the third theme is centered on quantifying resilience in older adulthood. This includes a summary of quantitative methodological approaches to studying resilience in aging (Chapter 6: Kok et al.) as well as applying a disaster systems approach to allow for better quantification of resilience factors among older adults (Chapter 4: Klasa et al.).

The chapter titled *Quantitative Approaches to Examine Resilience and Aging* (Kok et al.) was especially notable and stood out as a practical chapter for use in research. As someone with a measurement background predominantly in relation to resilience, I found it to be a well-written chapter that clearly and concisely summarizes six main quantitative methods employed in resilience research. For each approach, the authors provide a general description, examples from the literature, and the strengths and limitations of each method. As an additional strength of this chapter, the authors highlight the underlying theoretical assumptions for each approach. For example, they identify which approaches fundamentally consider resilience as a process rather than an individual attribute, and which approaches require adversity as a prerequisite to resilience and which do not. This chapter would be valuable for anyone interested in conducting resilience research (in aging or otherwise), as it serves as a guide to selecting a methodology that is appropriate for their theoretical assumptions, research questions, and data.

As may be an inevitable feature of an edited volume consisting of chapters from numerous contributors on a related topic, the introductions of each individual chapter are largely redundant, as most authors begin with a broad description of resilience, its various definitions, historical roots, and traditional conceptualizations. However, this repetition—perhaps unintentionally—emphasizes the growing consensus in the conceptualization of the resilience construct as an area of traditional dissensus. For example, across the chapters, authors largely agreed that resilience is a dynamic process that consists of individual factors, as well as environmental and broader societal factors, with influences from across the life course. They also emphasize that in the context of aging, resilience is a more positive concept than other aging models, such as successful aging.


Upon reflection, this is the book that I wish had been available while I was completing my graduate studies focused on resilience in aging. It provides exceptional scope of research perspectives in an area that, although rooted in psychology, is inherently interdisciplinary given the wide range of adversities experienced in older adulthood. Indeed, one of the strengths of this book, compared with other more general resilience volumes, is the diversity in author disciplines. The contributions are from authors specializing in gerontology, nursing, public health, medicine, biostatistics, psychology, sociology, and social work. This diverse collection of perspectives emphasizes a common theme throughout this volume, which is that resilience in aging extends beyond the individual, as numerous systems at multiple levels contribute to resilience in older adults.

This book would serve as an excellent resource for students and researchers investigating resilience in later life. With the rapid expansion of research in this area, a resource that highlights the extant contemporary work on this topic was needed. This volume also contains content that

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would be relevant for those in public policy, with some chapters having significant applied relevance to enhancing older adult resilience in the real world in the context of mobility resilience (Chapter 10: Seetharaman et al.) and community resilience (Chapter 11: Wiles). Additionally, some chapters focus on medical and therapeutic applications, such as those focused on physical resilience (Chapter 9: Peters), spousal bereavement (Chapter 8: Carr), and positive affect (Chapter 7: Ong et al.), which may be useful to clinicians. Overall, this volume provides an excellent

snapshot of the recent research on resilience in aging from the perspectives of numerous disciplines, and would be a valuable resource for aging-centered resilience research and policy exploration.

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