



Department of Sociology

Seminar

Intersections of Gender and Marital Status in Later Life: Links to Material Wellbeing, Social Support/Participation and Sleep

Speaker: Professor Sara Arber
Emeritus Professor of Sociology and Co-Director,
Centre for Research on Ageing and Gender (CRAG)
University of Surrey, UK

Date: 9 May 2018 (Wednesday)

Time: 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Venue: Rm 1045, 10/F., Academic and Administration Bldg.,
15 Baptist University Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon

Abstract

There have been major changes over recent years in marital/partnership status in later life, including increases in divorce and new forms of partnership status. The paper, first, examines how marital status in later life is linked to material disadvantage and connectedness with social networks, but in complex and gender-differentiated ways. Older British men who are never married or divorced are disadvantaged both socio-economically and in social connectedness, while married men are advantaged. The pattern differs for older women, with divorced women materially disadvantaged and never married women advantaged. There is little association of women's marital status with social involvement and access to carers. Second, the paper discusses sleep and ageing. The quality and timing of sleep is influenced by the social context within which it takes place. The paper examines social factors that influence sleep as women and men age, including caring responsibilities, illhealth, partner's behaviour (snoring, illhealth, etc) and worries.

Bio

Professor Sara Arber is Emeritus Professor of Sociology and Co-Director, Centre for Research on Ageing and Gender (CRAG) at the University of Surrey, UK. At Surrey, she was Head of the School of Human Sciences (2001-04) and Head of the Sociology Department (1996-2002). She was also President of the British Sociological Association (1999-2001) and President of the International Sociological Association Research Committee on Sociology of Aging (RC11) (2006-2010). Professor Arber received the British Society of Gerontology Award for Outstanding Achievement in 2011, and the British Sociological Association Distinguished Service to Sociology Award in 2017. She was a member of the Sociology Panel for the UK Research Excellence Framework (REF) for 2014.

Professor Arber has written over 300 journal articles on gender and ageing, inequalities in health, and sociology of sleep. Her books include *Contemporary Grandparenting: Changing Family Relationships in Global Contexts* (with Virpi Timonen, 2012); *Gender and Ageing: Changing Roles and Relationships* (with Kate Davidson and Jay Ginn, 2003); *The Myth of Generational Conflict: Family and State in Ageing Societies* (with Claudine Attias-Donfut, 2000); *Connecting Gender and Ageing* (with Jay Ginn, 1995), and *Gender and Later Life: A Sociological Analysis of Resources and Constraints* (with Jay Ginn, 1991).

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