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Matters of age: An introduction to ageing, intergenerationality and gender in Africa

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“Old age is not pleasant; it buggers up your life” (Khushwant Singh, *The freethinker’s prayer* book, 2012: vii)

“to jump from the ageing body to Death/has suddenly become a cop-out act” (Antjie Krog, *Body Bereft*, 2006: 20)

Abstract

This introductory essay to this special issue of *Agenda* draws together a wide-ranging, cross-disciplinary literature on ageing, intergenerationality and gender, and locates the significance of writing from Africa within this context. The first half of the essay provides a critical and comprehensive review of available literature in the field, highlighting the significance of research and writing on the ways in which gender mediates ageing and intergenerationality as both process and emotional space. The latter half of the essay engages the significance of the depth of contributions in this issue as critical in the conversation around ageing, gender, and intergenerationality in the context of Africa and the South, and the need for perspectives from multiple disciplines to continue engaging the field through both scholarship and advocacy.

Introduction

There is something deeply autobiographical to this issue. Crisscrossing a number of intersecting pathways, we believe this edition is reflective of personal histories, social responses to life course matters, and institutional changes in the social life cycle. But at its core this issue is a feminist and gendered view of the subject of ageing and intergenerationality. If we extend the metaphor, *Agenda* itself is an institution that is ageing. Having celebrated a quarter of a century this year, and growing from humble beginnings with the dedication of a small group of feminists in Durban, the journal now has continental coverage and is slowly and steadfastly approaching adulthood even though we are still in a youthful phase. At another level, the theme had a long gestation period since when it was first mooted. This edition grew out of a discussion among Editorial Advisory Board members several years ago about the need to interrogate, more closely, the prospect of ageing (and intergenerationality, precisely because of the temporal linkage to matters of biology

and the life course) within the pages of *Agenda*. It is timely that we foreground the theme in a milestone year of the history of the journal. At another level, for the editors - and we assume most editors would probably say the same - it is also representative of how we too take into account our own ageing process in relation to facets of our own life course. Ageing, we realise, means much more than numbers. While Vasu and Nadia are by time-lines separated generationally, we are also simultaneously aware of the meaning, function, symbolism, and significance of the fact that age, and its attendant processes do not simply rely solely on biology and chronological time, but also on our complex interaction as individuals between society, culture and history.

Ageing is a necessary and indeed inescapable experience of being human. Also as a personal and societal problem, it sparks complex debates about assets and deficits. In fact, the deficit model of ageing as a dull, dreary dead-end is not the view we want to forge with this volume, but that rather through some of the gaps and problems that accrue, we want to also emphasise the possibility of agency and change. To this end, in this cluster issue, our focus on two interrelated themes, ageing and intergenerationality, are deliberately brought into the fold precisely because both have much to say about the fact that there is still much that we do not know, that is unexamined and indeed riddled with taboo, stigma and denial. An African focus in this edition suggests themes that offer coverage of the material context of Africa and the South by engaging some of the critical scholarship in the field.

Ageing and intergenerationality bring particular modalities and challenges in this edition that are implicit to its aim. First, we hope that it will stimulate and open up the meanings of age, ageing and intergenerationality as relevant topics; second, to enable writers to engage the complexities of these concepts in relation to the social dynamics of life course matters; and third; to give attention to new ways of thinking that may account for what may be minimised and lost should we deny and misrecognise these issues.

A critical field of study

Ageing and intergenerationality in the South (African context) remains remarkably under-studied except for a few texts that speak to the issue (and many ungendered) from a social policy perspective in South Africa's Eastern Cape (Sagner, 2000), the development agenda and ageing in sub-Saharan Africa (Aboderin and Ferreira, 2008), demographic (Van Dullemen, 2006), housing in South Africa (Kotze, 2006), as a pathology in respect of the institutional production of care (Myburgh, 2010), linguistics perspectives (Makoni and Stroecken, 2002), anthropological considerations on famine in rural Africa (Cligget, 2005), poverty and ageing in Uganda (Williams, 2003), intergenerational solidarity in the social security system for unemployed youth (Møller, 2010), a postmodern exploration of intergenerational practices in Africa (Hoffman, 2004), and the impact of urbanisation, impoverishment and AIDS in intergenerational relations (Geissler, Alber and Whyte, 2007). Ironically there exists a plethora of texts in northern

scholarship that straddles a rich breadth of topics, issues and concepts and indeed, not without its controversy too. Remarkably it was especially some ageing northern feminists who took up the cudgels about the absence of ageing in discussions within the feminist project (notably Cruikshank, 2009; MacDonald and Rich, 2001; Copper, 1988). There is, however, a growing interest in ageing and intergenerationality, also as a feminist and a gender issue (Bernard, Phillips, Machin, Davies, 2000; Bengtson and Achenbaum, 1993; Izahura, 2010). Ageing and intergenerationality directs attention to relations and life course matters that rely not just on chronology or biology, but are part of a complex interaction between individual, society, culture and history (Sokolovsky, 2009; Andersson, 2002). The gender dimension of ageing, for example, is not simply confined to the “elderly” in a population, but clearly has differential implications on the life course of men and women within the broader context of class, disability, ethnicity, race and sexuality (United Nations, 2000).

A cursory review indicates that the topic of ageing and intergenerationality is remarkably rich and offers broad coverage from a number of varying fields. Some key delineations cover encyclopedic perspectives (Bengtson *et al*, 2009; Coyle, 2001; Dannefer and Phillipson, 2010; Johnson *et al*, 2005; Palmore, Whittington and Kunkel, 2009; Settersten and Angel, 2011), a history of ageing (Botelho and Thane, 2001; Johnson and Thane, 1998), and conceptual and methodological perspectives (Bond *et al*, 2007; Biggs, Lowenstein and Hendricks, 2003; Hillier and Barrow, 2010; Hoff, 2011a; Jamieson and Victor, 2002; Ö berg *et al*, 2004; Phillips *et al*, 2010; Vincent, 2003). Emerging gender and feminist perspectives address how gender and power relations interface with ageing (Calasanti and Slevin, 2006; Calasanti, Slevin and King, 2006; Garner, 1999; Mehta, 1997; Pearsall, 1997; Rosenthal, 1990; Vincent, 2000; Woodward, 1999); how older women experience the complex challenges of the ageing process (Poole and Feldman, 1999); ageing and the impact on gender roles (Arber and Ginn, 1995) and the resistance to the ageing process in an anti-ageing culture (Clarke, 2011).

Scholarship also covers the laws governing ageing (Doron and Soden, 2012), the policy domain, serving to reassess current social policies and options available to older people (Bass, Caro and Chen, 1993; Estes, Biggs and Phillipson, 2003; Gibson, 1998; Saraceno, 2008); fiscal and economic implications (Eich, 2004; Lee and Mason, 2010), the complexities of ageing within varying institutional arrangements (Zaidi, 2008); welfare provision and general conflict (Anxo, Bosch and Rubery, 2010; Arber and Attias-Donfut, 2008); the idea of welfare and retirement in relation to pension policies and pension systems (Ginn *et al*, 2001; Mann, 2001), and the social nature of later life in the context of welfare states (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005; Blome, Keck and Alber, 2009).

Ageing and intergenerationality are, therefore, not simply to be understood as linear processes of gradual, physical, and social decline, but as a dynamic and fluid process in the human and social life cycle (Austrian, 2008; Carr and Komp, 2011;

Grenier, 2012) drawing on gender perspectives (Arber, Davidson and Ginn, 2003; Hatch, 2000); comparative biological and medical technology dimensions (Wolf, 2010); the challenges of ageing to the sexual life cycle (Hillman, 2012), and the relationship between intergenerational family ties (Connidis, 2010; Chambers *et al*, 2009).

Research also addresses health and the relationship between population ageing and productivity (Garibaldi, Martins and Van Ours, 2010), and the relationship between and the influence of culture, health, social context and change on ageing (Backes, Lasch and Reimann, 2006; Phillipson, 2008; Weisstub *et al*, 2010). The material, relational and cultural dynamics of ageing and intergenerationality also shape and construct people's diverse life experiences through narrative constructions of experience and identity (Chapman, 2005). In what is now considered a classic in anthropological writing on ageing, Cohen (1998) presents a rich ethnographic argument on senility in India to caution against reducing Alzheimer's to pure biology, and rather to claim that it also reveals deep-seated social differentiation. In this regard, scholarship suggests that ageing brings with it much diversity in a globalised context (Baars *et al*, 2006; Bengtson and Lowenstein, 2003); uneven population ageing (Davies and James, 2011), and new meanings in relation to nostalgia and remembrance of things past (Ray, 2000). In addition, ageing also brings experiences of loss (Brown, 2008; Graham and Stephenson, 2010). And there is much to tell in the narratives of ageing widows (Chambers, 2005; Jenkins, 2003), as well as about the specific needs of older men adjusting as resilient widowers (Moore and Stratton, 2003). There is also much to be gained with the visibility that experiences of being between 50 and 70 brings to challenge social exclusion (Bell, 2012), and much to learn via a rich ethnography of rural Bengali women's construction of ageing and embodiment (Lamb, 2000). Noting that age forms part of the individual's personal identity, people are also caught up with the obsession to stay young (Gullette, 2004), drawing into the arguments ideas about resistance to the ageing process (Slevin, 2010).

A significant corpus of texts also exists on discrimination and diversity in the field of ageing research that concerns, for example, inclusion and exclusion in respect of social cohesion (Scharf and Keating, 2012), and age discrimination and ageism (Sargeant, 2011). At a conceptual level, Macnicol (2006) considers the historical dimensions of age discrimination in relation to employment and the impact of mandatory retirement. In an earlier study, Nelson (2004) examined both conceptual and empirical aspects addressing the origins and effects of ageism and potential correctives to such prejudice. In another study, Daatland and Biggs (2006) assess the stereotypes of ageing and offer perspectives from a transnational perspective in relation to older migrants and ageing identities. Marginalised sexualities (with a focus on gay and lesbian populations) address the experiences and challenges faced by gay men and women (Brown *et al*, 1997; Brown, 2009; Sears, 2009; Witten and Eyler, 2012).

Comparative and country-specific studies have also considered demographic trends in a range of geopolitical contexts. For example, Phillips (2000) considers the impact of ageing, including its structural and behavioural impact on older persons in one of the world's largest ageing populations in the Asian-Pacific region. Coulmas (2007) considers population decline and ageing in Japan, while Hoff (2011b) examines the context of Central and Eastern Europe. Teo *et al* (2006) examine the ageing population of Singapore in relation to their service needs and the role of the state. Turning to Australia, Borowski *et al* (1998) provide a perspective on ageing and social policy in the Australian context by drawing into their argument, analysis around women and Aboriginal Australians. In their comparison of Sri Lanka, India and the Netherlands, Rajan *et al* (2008) examine the institutional provisions of care for the aged. And in drawing lessons from three multicultural nations (United States, Israel and Australia), Carmel (2007) focuses on the problems and challenges related to care and caregiving of the aged.

Consumption patterns of ageing populations also fall under the spotlight where the role of older persons as consumers and their experiences are examined (Jones *et al*, 2008; Hedrick-Wong, 2006). Another study examining perceptions and media images investigates consumption patterns of various goods, indicating that there is an extended leisure phase for the elderly known as the Third Age (Blaikie, 1999). Contrary to popular perception, older persons are active agents in economic consumption.

The relationship between ageing and the criminal justice system from the perspective of criminology and gerontology have also addressed the implications for older people as victims and perpetrators of crime (Wahidin and Cain, 2006). The broader question of social security, family and public support is examined in case studies of gender and social security in India and Burkina Faso (De Jong *et al*, 2005).

Perspectives on broad human and social development have prioritised analysis of adult development into old age in respect of experiences related to physical, mental and psychological development (Coleman and O'Hanlon, 2004; Ryan and Coughlan, 2011; Stuart-Hamilton, 2006); rural ageing (Keating, 2008); urban ageing (Smith, 2009); the meaning of space and place (Andrews and Phillips, 2005), as well as transcending the myths for women who age (Gannon, 1999). Ageing also opens up concerns with ethical issues around care, disability and the incorporation of a spiritual dimension and pathways in well-being (Mackinlay, 2008; Coleman, 2011), as well as contexts of care and work in which the elderly find themselves (Lechner and Neal, 1999; Martin-Matthews and Phillips, 2008), and general concerns with improvements to a quality of life (Mollenkopf and Walker, 2010).

The Humanities dimension on ageing has often provided insight into the meaning attached to creativity in relation to ageing (Cole *et al*, 2000); cultural proscriptions on artists; on embodiment and dance, and the challenges faced by older dancers

(Schwaiger, 2012). Literary representation on ageing and gender is also explored in relation to fictional depictions of older female protagonists (Brennan, 2005); the impact of growing older and psychological development (Wyatt-Brown and Rossen, 1993); ageing as a theme in Indian writing (Raja, 2009); positive perspectives of the ageing experience in memoirs, stories and poetry (Weinberg, 2006), and the value of narrative gerontology (Kenyon, Bohlmeijer and Randall, 2011) in storytelling about ageing (Hepworth, 2000).

The broad coverage of scholarship on ageing and intergenerationality confirms that this is a field replete with new ideas and some cutting edge research, but still sadly very largely focused on northern contexts, and to a lesser extent the East. There is no doubt from our assessment that there is a dearth of scholarship, and we hope that contributions to this edition will reinforce debate, discussion and perspective from an African perspective.

Overview of the Special Issue Writers in this edition engage multiple perspectives around ageing, gender and intergenerationality, or otherwise draw consequential readings from these concepts. While distinctive in each contribution, the pieces are in conversation with each other, attesting to the significance of feminist dialogue in sub-Saharan Africa on ageing as it intersects with, for example, gender, sexuality, class, culture, and place. Within globalised discourses that position youth and reproductive sexualities as desirable, the writing in this special issue brings to light concerns with intergenerational sex, early childbearing, and the potential role of sex worker activists in providing creative education and awareness to young women and older men. But also important is a common idea that is at times implicit in the writing, namely that ageing is never a homogeneous process, but rather is profoundly mediated by gender, race, class, and place. While a feminist and gendered lens on ageing enables perspectives that take into account how gender matters as we age, we believe that contributions to this edition also offer at times intersectional views as well. Intersectional approaches to ageing in some of the contributions is significant when considering how gender and ageing interlink, and how we experience being an elderly person.

Makiwane, Ndinda and Botsis' *Article* presents an important analysis of the 2010 General Household Survey data, revealing how race, gender and ageing intersect in the current South African context. Distinguishing between chronological age and functional age, the writers astutely point out that the intersections of race, class and gender impacts on our experience of ageing, with black poor women experiencing ageing "qualitatively worse than that of other social categories of the elderly"(p 26).

Such an analysis is critical in understanding how ageing is inextricably linked to the social conditions in which we are located, and how conditions of struggle affect the lives we are able to lead as elderly persons.

In her *Briefing* on the differential socio-economic effects of neo-liberalism on women in Ibadan, Nigeria, Grace Adeniyi-Ogunyankin cautions that “longer life must be accompanied by improvement in the quality of life experience for those who reach that age” (p 30). The effects of neo-liberalism in Ibadan contribute to classed and spatial consequences, so that low-income elderly women are affected negatively. Consequently, strained economic conditions mean that these women’s experiences of ageing are tied to the economic well-being of their families. For lower-income women, this entails contributing financially to the care of children and grandchildren to a greater extent than elderly women who are economically more secure.

Similarly, in the South African context, Vivienne Bozalek and Nancy R Hooyman confirm the view that the burden of care falls primarily on women, including poorer elderly women in strained socio-economic familial contexts. Using a political ethics of care and feminist gerontology perspective in considering the life course experience, they argue that older women are both the receivers and givers of care, with grandmothers often being the primary caregivers of children and grandchildren in poorer homes. Bozalek and Hooyman advocate for a redefinition of care “as a societal responsibility requiring adequate resources rather than the responsibility of a particular group of people” (p 38). Based on interviews with a group of students from the University of the Western Cape in South Africa, the authors reveal cultural and religious values that are resistant to old age homes as a space for elderly grandparents. Consequently, it is women family members who become the primary caregivers to their elderly parents/grandparents, with little or no recognition and support from the state.

Feminist takes on ‘sugar daddies’, transactional sex, and HIV in the sub-Saharan African context has been well documented, and continues to be of concern to scholars and activists across disciplines. In this edition, the authors provide an alternative lens in reading intergenerational sexual relations in the contemporary South African context. In an *Open Forum* in response to the stigmatisation of cross-generational sex articulated in a KwaZulu-Natal campaign, Pierre Brouard and Mary Crewe suggest that “a more nuanced, historically informed” (p 55) approach needs to accompany our questions about the relatively common practice of intergenerational sex. The authors argue for an acceptance of transactionality that understands the practice as valid human conduct, particularly where material conditions underpin such relationships. Campaigns that work against transactional sex through stigmatisation of young women, in particular, are according to the authors, “attempts to control the sexuality of young people” (p 55) in ways that signify our societal denial about a range of other social phenomena, such as high levels of divorce, and the fiction of monogamy as an appropriate HIV preventative measure.

Keeping with the theme of sugar daddies, Tamara Shefer and Anna Strelbel add another dimension to the discussions on intergenerational relationships in their

Focus article. Arguing for a move away from depicting men centrally as “perpetrators of unequal sexual relationships with younger women”(p57), the authors suggest more critical feminist analysis is required to better understand men’s constructions of sexuality, and their investments in intergenerational relationships. Reflecting similar concerns to those raised by Brouard and Crewe, Shefer and Strebel advocate for a “self-reflexive” approach that critiques the notion of all intergenerational relationships as “inherently exploitative”(p 58).

Gabrielle le Roux’s extraordinary portraits in the *Living Ancestors* exhibition is an excellent representation of the focus of this special edition. Showcasing her work from this exhibition, Gabrielle’s portraits of Dominican women - most of whom are over 100-years old - allow us a glimpse into these women’s lives. In conversation with Nadia Sanger, Gabrielle tells us about her experiences as a feminist artist and activist, the politics behind and within her work, and why the opportunity to work with the women in creating *Living Ancestors* was so significant for her. These portraits are moving images of material lives written and etched into the faces of magnificent women with deep histories.

Nolwazi Mkhwanazi’s *Article* focuses on how the discourse on teenage motherhood by South African government officials and the black elite in the contemporary Zuma era, serves to demonise young mothers. Motivating that government policies and programmes, predicated upon a better life for all, do not consider the conditions that disable young women from achieving this goal, Mkhwanazi contends that highly patriarchal and violent value systems enable a policing of young women’s fertility. An effect of this, according to Mkhwanazi, is that it allows for teenage mothers, in this instance, to be punished for deviating from the life trajectory that is imagined to underpin ‘a better life for all’. In this *Article*, Mkhwanazi makes the case for a broader understanding of the conditions in which teenage pregnancy comes about, and challenges a punitive approach to young motherhood.

Based on findings from an ethnographic study in the Peruvian Amazon, Yasmin Lalani discusses how female sex worker activists use various education initiatives to raise awareness about HIV among young women and older men. Lalani describes her conversations with sex worker activists (SWAs) who articulate concerns about young women on ‘The Boulevard’ engaging in transactional and intergenerational sex with local and tourist men, but refuse to claim the label ‘sex worker’, disallowing the HIV/AIDS education offered to them by SWAs. The SWAs’ conversations with older male clients about HIV preventative measures are interestingly exposed in this *Briefing*, highlighting sex workers’ creative engagement around condom use with their male clients.

The idea that older people lack sexual desire and intimacy is carefully interrogated in the critical *Briefing* by Gloria Chepngeno-Langat and Victoria Hosegood. The idea that somehow old age minimises sexuality, is challenged in their reading of older

people and sexuality in sub-Saharan Africa. The focus that almost exclusively in sub-Saharan Africa falls on young persons, reproduction, and HIV and AIDS, implying that older people are largely asexual, is dealt a serious blow in this perspective. The authors discuss how various religious and spiritual beliefs construct sexuality in ways that exclude older persons, particularly older women, as desiring sexual subjects. This, the authors argue, has serious consequences for older people's health, especially under conditions where medical advice is sought.

In an *Article* on women's positive personhood in Manenberg in the Western Cape, Anna Versfeld deliberates on her ethnographic research that sees a removal of the resources once available to women under apartheid, and no longer accessible to younger women in the post-apartheid space. Representing the life histories of two women across generations in Manenberg, Versfeld explains that younger women are finding it harder to construct positive personhood due to the macro-political economic shifts post-apartheid.

Nompumelelo Thabethe and Lucy Chioma Usen zone in on older women's rights in home-based care in the Nigerian and South African contexts. Situating the oppression of older women as central to feminist concerns, in this *Briefing* the authors discuss how older women's labour, as the primary caregivers of people living with HIV and AIDS, orphans and vulnerable children, is "invisible in both policy and practice" (p 114). Older women's labour in caring for the ill within impoverished contexts, the authors posit, is expected by governments who do not provide the necessary support for these women, who have emotional and physical requirements of their own.

In their *Briefing*, Manase Kudzai Chiweshe and Mandida Gusha tackle the struggles experienced by older women in Bako Redonhodzo Old People's Home in Harare, Zimbabwe during the country's economic and political crisis in 2008. The authors' life history interviews with 10 women at the Home, depict the latter's difficulties to survive in a context where the lack of a policy on elderly care means further neglect and marginalisation within a country in crisis. The recently instituted (2011) Zimbabwean Older Persons' Bill is a highly significant step taken by the government to prevent discrimination and prioritise the needs of older people.

The *Report* in this special issue, while not directly addressing the theme of ageing, is a timely reflection of a forum discussion on 'The state of women's health' which focused on an *Agenda* special issue, edited by Mandisa Mbali and Sethembiso Mthembu. This forum allowed for an intense discussion between some of the journal contributors and the Deputy Minister of Health, Dr Gwen Ramokgopa. Through a feminist lens, the *Report* highlights women's health concerns, and the policies and commitments by government and civil society in working towards a comprehensive women's health

policy that should make central the various health needs of women and the required government services in order to provide for these needs.

In this issue, the *Profile* authored by seven women academics from the University of Limpopo's Women's Academic Solidarity Association, reminds us of the challenges that black women academics continue to face in higher education institutions. The women's narratives in this *Profile* draw attention to the importance of collaboration and support between women at academic institutions, where "values of individualism and subjectivity ... pre-empt any possibility of real dialogue and transformation" (p 145). This *Profile* reminds us of the significance of feminist thought and feminist solidarity, and the possibilities that emerge when women work together and use their agency to create a space where they can progress and excel in their academic work.

A life steeped in a difficult and simultaneously rich history is Ethiopian-born, Hannah Yilma. In her interview with Vasu Reddy, Hannah provides a candid account of a multifaceted and indeed multilayered life in politics, war, her family and survival.

Two book reviews are included in this special issue. Benita Moolman provides a critical reading of Mark Hunter's (2010) *Love in the Time of AIDS: Inequality, Gender and Rights in South Africa*, and Amanda Mtshengu offers a perspective on Vicci Tallis' recently published (2012) *Feminisms, HIV and Aids: Subverting Power, Reducing Vulnerability*.

Conclusions

Veneration of the elderly, widely accepted in many cultures, is premised on the idea that honour and respect is accorded to those who have achieved old age, and the notion that it is also a time to rest from work. Yet, elderly women, as the research contributions in this issue testify to, are among one of the most poverty-stricken groups, among the hardest working as caregivers and the most socially resourceful, yet are far from receiving the social respect that they deserve. In this sense, investing in longevity research therefore cannot be overstated (Warner and Sierra, 2009). Feminist attention to the gender inequalities that are experienced by the elderly, as a socially vulnerable group, has not been notably significant, and is not an identifiable priority in the Beijing Platform of Action. Ageism and the social prejudice which results in the elderly as a social group being constructed as having no social value, social needs or the capacity to participate in the decisions that affect their lives, need to be challenged. Indeed many countries in Africa, including South Africa, have yet to implement a comprehensive policy to protect the rights of the elderly and gender-sensitive approaches that addresses the gender-specific needs of women and men. This issue has sought to open up such debate and it will hopefully stimulate further inquiry on gender, ageing and intergenerationality.

Compiling this issue has enabled us, the guest editors, to consider the depth and range of possible issues that ageing and intergenerationality opens up. If the ideas and issues contained in this volume remain of interest that is, at least in part, because we still have much more to explore and learn, as some recent studies focused on gender and ageing are suggesting (Leathwood and Francis, 2006; Kaplan and Kuntz, 2008). We hope the ideas contained in this volume provoke further discussion and continue the conversation. We are only beginning to scratch the surface of this topic in the African context. The pieces in this special issue weave well, we think, the empirical, policy, programmatic, conceptual and indeed, the methodological.

But we should conclude these comments by indicating that our framing is not a definitive guide to all arguments. We have said that each contribution offers its unique elaboration and expression, and leave you, the reader, to make your own decisions as you rethink ageing and intergenerationality as modalities that matter in the gender spectrum. The idea that age matters is a real, tangible and material reality inasmuch as it is also an epistemological issue worthy of further gendered and feminist investigation in Africa.

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