Active Ageing and Misrecognition: How Older People in Australia Perceive Respect and How this is Reflected in Popular Film.

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Contents

Candidate Statement

This work is wholly my own and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Signature:

L Ryan

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Abstract

A dispositive approach to critical discourse analysis of five films and a content analysis of fourteen interviews was undertaken.

Results indicate that active ageing discourse fails to recognise older people's agency and autonomy, and is a form of symbolic violence. Further, active ageing discourse is found to infantilise older people because it suggests that policy makers and researchers should explain to them what is appropriate behaviour as they age. Active ageing discourse suggests that older people are only 'worthy' of respect if they engage in work and exercise and is regarded as a lack of recognition.

Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition is used to define respect and the theory is applied to the social category of older age. Analysis of the films revealed that the protagonists were represented as being recognised chiefly in their intimate sphere. They were recognised in the work sphere in all the films except one movie, but they were only portrayed as being recognised in the legal sphere in two of the films. Analysis of the interviews showed that the respondents felt recognised at the micro and meso level of society. Australian legislation ensures that older people are recognised in the legal sphere, and in the work sphere.

Conclusions drawn include changing the discourse from 'active ageing' to 'a positive engagement in life' thus removing blame and the fear of being regarded as 'failures'. Further, discourse around 'positive engagement with life' would allow older people the choice relax and enjoy leisure; or to engage in exercise for health benefits or to not engage in exercise, and to engage in work if they so desire or to not engage in work if that is what they want. Discourse about 'a positive engagement with life' would allow older people to exercise autonomy and agency and would recognise them as partaking in life.

List of Abbreviations

ABS   Australian Bureau of Statistics

AFI   Australian Film Institute

AHRC Australian Human Rights Commission

INPEA International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse

OECD Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

UK   United Kingdom

UN   United Nations

US   United States

WHO World Health Organization

Introduction

1. Research Study and Objectives

Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition proposes that an individual feels respected when he or she receives recognition. Mutual intersubjective recognition (Honneth, 1995, p. 92) is how an individual develops a positive sense of self. Recognition occurs in three spheres: love (intimate relationships), legal (core institutions of the state) and achievement or work. This study investigates recognition of and respect for older people in these three spheres for fourteen respondents and the protagonists in five movies, and it compares recognition received by the respondents with recognition received by the protagonists. The interviews provided rich data about whether the older people felt they were receiving recognition, and the findings were compared to cultural representations of older people in movies and the recognition (or lack thereof) they experience. Each sphere has distinct potential for moral development in the individual, and a distinct way in which the individual relates to self. The subjective autonomy of the individual increases with each stage of mutual regard (Honneth, 1995, p. 94); therefore, the individual obtains a higher sense of self if he or she receives recognition in all three spheres. Honneth (1995, p. 112) proposes that 'the respect for a human being as a person' can be traced 'back to a type of "recognition respect", because it primarily involves cognitively recognising the fact that, with regard to the other, one is dealing with a being possessed of personal qualities' (Honneth, 1995, p. 112). Thus, according to Honneth's theory of recognition, respect is 'recognising' the other person as a human being. This relates respect to visibility and disrespect to invisibility. Thus, recognition does not mean a person has to 'earn respect', but that the individual is simply recognised as an individual and is thereby respected. Honneth (1990) suggests

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that individuals perceive social injustice as not receiving recognition from the intimate sphere, the legal sphere or the work sphere; for example, low pay for what is perceived to be a 'feminine' job is social injustice in the work or achievement sphere.

The findings of this study suggest that active ageing is failing to recognise the autonomy and agency of older people, and that active ageing is infantilising older people by proposing that researchers and policy makers know what is best for older people rather than the older people themselves. Infantilisation actively rejects the agency of older people, treats them like children (rather than adults with power and choice) and discusses their issues in a disrespectful manner (Gilleard & Higgs, 2005, 2007; Powell & Longino, 2001; Rowland, 1984; Walker, 2009). Although people who engage in the discourse of infantilisation and dependency may consider it non-abusive, it is misrecognition of older people and therefore disrespectful. The respondents in this study felt that active and healthy older people were respected by society, whereas older people who suffered from ill health, age-related disease and disability suffered from disrespectful treatment and a lack of recognition. This belief was part of the respondents' overall acceptance of active ageing discourse; that is, older people who work and engage in physical activity and exercise are ageing 'successfully', whereas older people who want to rest and relax, or who suffer from health problems, are regarded as ageing 'unsuccessfully' or are considered 'failures' (see Chapter 5, Section 6).

Since 1975, when granny battering (Baker, 1975; Burston, 1975) was first researched, a significant amount of research undertaken into the abuse of older people has found that 6% of older Australians suffer some form of egregious abuse, and that older people in other countries also suffer from egregious abuse (e.g., Kurrle & Naughtin, 2008; Kurrle,

Sadler, Lockwood, & Cameron, 1997; Sadler, 1992; Sung, Kim, & Torres-Gil, 2010; World Health Organization (WHO)/International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA), 2002). Ageism and disrespect have also been widely researched (e.g., Australian Human Rights Commission [AHRC], 2013; Biggs, 1993; Butler, 1969; Featherstone, 1982; Hockey & James, 1993; Palmore, 1999; Powell, 2001; Powell & Longino, 2001; Walker, 2009; Wilkinson & Ferraro, 2004), with researchers concluding that ageism is an underlying paradigm in Western discourses such as governmental, media and popular culture discourse. Growing older in a youth-oriented culture (Furze et al., 2012, p. 412; May, 1980, pp. 114, 124–125) may be a distressing experience, but no empirical evidence has been found to support the literature suggesting that Australia is a youth-oriented culture.

Disrespect, which is arguably the precursor to even more damaging abusive and violent behaviours (Doe, Han, & McCaslin, 2009) may be experienced by some of Australia's ageing population. Further, during a time in which people are already experiencing upheaval due to retirement, children leaving home and other ageing issues, disrespectful treatment can add to the burden of stress and result in fear, loss of self-esteem and depression (Doe, et al., 2009).

The Australian Government's anti-discrimination policy includes anti-ageist policies (ComLaw, 2015). This means that older people are experiencing recognition from the core institutions of the state as a result of laws passed by the federal government. For example, the respondents in this study reported that they had 'no problems with Centrelink' (the government department that oversees pensions). However, the Australian Government's policy on active ageing, which is a state-sponsored fiscal policy designed to reduce medical and care costs, and to reduce the length of time that

pensions are paid out for older people, misrecognises older people in that it infantilises them and tells them how to live their lives.

Policies on pensions for people over the age of 67 and superannuation as an essential part of salary and wage packages (Workplace Info, 2015) recognise older people in the work sphere for the work they have already performed. The respondents in this study reported being recognised and respected in their work spheres (see Chapters 4 and 5).

Some researchers (e.g. Minichiello & Coulson, 2005; Wilkinson & Ferraro, 2004) suggest that ageism is an important paradigm in Western culture, and that the discourse on older age (e.g., governmental, media and popular culture discourse) is ageist, particularly in nations that are part of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), as older people are disregarded, misrecognised and infantilised. However, there is a gap in recent research into ageist paradigms and discourse, and the findings of this study do not support the view that ageism is rife in Western countries. Although this lack of support could be due to the limited and non-representative sample chosen, this study argues that it is possible that disrespect of older people is not as prevalent today as it was in the twentieth century.

In this thesis, I analyse the interviews with the respondents to determine whether they feel recognised, and I analyse the movies to discover whether the older protagonists receive recognition. Honneth's theory of recognition thereby underpins the empirical work of this thesis. This work connects Honneth's philosophical work on recognition (Maia, 2014) with a sociological investigation into the social category of older age. Honneth is a social philosopher whose work is based on critical social theory and the universal or supra-individual (and may therefore be applied to various social categories, including 'older people in Australia') who gains a sense of self through recognition

accorded from 'the generalised other' (Honneth, 1995, p. 79). Honneth's discussion of individuals' experiences of misrecognition:

> reflect not just the idiosyncratic misfortune of individuals but experiences shared by many others, [therefore] the potential emerges for collective action aimed at actually expanding social patterns of recognition. (Anderson, cited in Honneth, 1995, p. xix)

Therefore, this thesis investigates the recognition (or lack thereof) that is accorded to the social category of older people in Australia. When Honneth speaks about the individual, he is referring to the universal or supra-individual; thus, throughout this thesis, I use 'individual' in the same way that Honneth uses the term. When I refer to individual respondents, I call them respondents, interviewees, participants or by their pseudonyms, and when I refer to individual protagonists in movies, I call them protagonists, characters or by their character name.

Walsh (1989, pp. 74–75) discusses the sociology of film as being:

> uniquely suited to the analysis of cultural undercurrents. Within the popular universe of myth and symbol, dissident and alterative voices can more easily find expression, cloaked safely in narrative disguise. Taken together with other sociological methods, such as interviewing … the interpretation of popular film offers a more complex and multidimensional analysis of a given historical period.

This research project analyses contemporary movies rather other media e.g. newspapers, magazines or online content, in order to add a multidimensional

component to the research. This provides data on respect for older people in popular culture.

The films chosen for analysis are either about older people and issues that are relevant to them, or that have an older protagonist who experiences issues relevant to older people. However, all the films portray active ageing as either the only successful way to age (three of the five chosen movies showed this) or as one successful way to age (two of the five movies showed this). In the respondents' interviews and in the films, active ageing discourse is disrespectful of the right of older people to choose whether they want to rest and relax, or whether they want to engage in work and exercise. Further, active ageing discourse suggests that policy makers and researchers know what is best for older people rather than the older people themselves, thereby infantilising them. Although active ageing appears to be good for older people because it promotes healthy outcomes through exercise, a healthy lifestyle and work, it fails to recognise their autonomy and agency, and it shames and coerces them into exercising and working when this may not be what they desire. Further, it may be detrimental to them both individually and as a group because it shames and coerces them.

The interviews show that active ageing discourse is firmly entrenched in the minds and attitudes of the respondents. Analysis of the movies shows that discourse about active ageing is prominent in contemporary films. The attitudes of the respondents and the discourse about active ageing in the films produce a picture of active ageing discourse embedded in societal thinking. Further, the respondents with health problems felt that they were blamed for their poor health. They described themselves as being actively engaged in a voluntary capacity in communities, clubs and churches, regardless of whether they suffered from ill health or disability.

This qualitative research project explores the social dynamics of respect and how it is experienced in the everyday lives of individuals aged sixty-five years and over. It explores the questions: does active ageing recognise older people's choices as valid, are older people portrayed with recognition in popular film and do older people in Australia feel they receive respect at the micro and meso levels of society? This is done by conducting interviews with older people and analysing movies with older protagonists in order to compare older people's experiences with representations of older protagonists in movies to obtain an overall picture of societal treatment of older people. The interviews have been designed to determine whether older people feel respected in their intimate relationships, at the meso level of society (e.g., churches, clubs and shopping centres), in the legal sphere (by the core institutions of society) and in the achievement or work sphere. The rich data gathered in the interviews will answer the questions of whether or not older people feel recognised at the micro and meso levels of society and if they are portrayed respectfully in popular film. The movies have been chosen for analysis to determine whether popular culture reflects the same kinds of experiences reported by the respondents. Popular culture is chosen because it reflects current discourses in society and shows the tensions within those discourses. A critical discourse analysis of the movies is considered appropriate for analysing popular discourse. The movies will provide rich data to answer the question 'Are older people portrayed respectfully in popular culture?'

This research study aims to understand the respect that older people experience and to enhance their lives. The researcher expected to find that the older respondents felt disrespected; however, the results did not reflect this expectation. Instead, the results show that active ageing creates misrecognition of older people; therefore, this thesis argues that active ageing discourse should be replaced with an approach that recognises

older people and their agency, and that allows them to make choices based on what they want to do. This discourse should be around positive ageing rather than active ageing.

2. Significance of the Research: Ageing Populations

Research into respect for older people in contemporary Australian society is significant because Australia's population is ageing, as is the population of other OECD countries. There are four generally accepted reasons for the ageing of the population: declining fertility, baby boomers turning sixty-five years of age from 2011, immigration not keeping pace with the ageing population and increased longevity (Walker, 2009). The study of respect for older people has become increasingly significant, as the topic affects almost one in five Australians, or nearly four million people, whereas twenty or thirty years ago the percentage of Australians over the age of sixty-five was significantly smaller at only 11.6% in 1993 (ABS, 2014a).

Historically, ageing theory has been dominated by 'physical, psychological and biological dimensions' (Powell & Longino, 2001, p. 200), and the social aspects of gerontology have largely been ignored. Recognition of and respect for older people have continued to be largely ignored within the research community. However, given that respect and disrespect are about power and inequality, it is important to research older people's experiences of power and inequality in the form of recognition or a lack thereof. Although power and inequality have been researched in terms of gender and sexuality, it is important to focus on older people as well.

The proportion of the older population potentially exposed to disrespect, ageism, ageist attitudes and abuse is significantly increasing as the twenty-first century progresses (Minichiello & Coulson, 2005). This research hopes to add to the quality of life

experienced by older people by focusing attention on respect for older people and thereby making it a topic of concern for society.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This thesis presents a qualitative study of the social dynamics of respect. It explores whether older Australians feel that they receive respect from their communities and whether they are portrayed respectfully in films. Interviews were conducted with older people, and a dispositive approach to critical discourse analysis was undertaken of five movies in which older characters were the main protagonists, and that portrayed relationships between older characters and younger characters, to obtain rich data about contemporary relationships between older people and younger people and whether they are respectful. A dispositive approach to critical discourse analysis expands elements of discourse to include non-linguistic elements such as images, actions and material objects, as well as spoken and written language. The film analysis shows how older people are portrayed in popular culture, and this provides general cultural representations of ageing and whether older people are respected. The interviews provided rich stories about older people's relationships with their family, friends and within their community. The rich stories told by older people about their everyday experiences of respect with family, friends, professional people and the public gave voice to what the participants felt about other people's attitudes and the treatment they received. The thesis analyses the movies in chapters two and three to ascertain the wider societal representation of older people and their issues and then compares this data with the data from the narrower perspectives of the interviewees in chapters four and five, thus creating a logical progression from wider to narrower perspectives. It

was important to explore the engagement between the film protagonists and the respondents' reports of respectful treatment, therefore the analysis of the films included references to the analysis of the interviews.

Five movies were chosen that have done well at the box office in the past ten years (i.e., movies that were profitable, not ones that simply broke even), and that included characters who were portrayed as being 'older'. In Hollywood terms, this is forty-five years and over (Barsam & Monahan, 2013, p. 314). The financial success, or otherwise, of a movie is very important, as it has implications for how widely viewed the movie is, and for the production and funding of sequels or future movies about similar stories and topics. Movies were chosen for analysis to determine whether older people are represented respectfully in popular culture, and thereby to obtain a macro-level view of respect for older people. Critical discourse analysis was undertaken using a basis of dispositive analysis, which 'expands elements of discourse to include non-linguistic elements of non-discursive practices (actions), materialisations (objects) which relate to … the written and spoken word' (Gatling, Mills, & Lindsay, 2014, p. 3).

In-depth interviewing is an ideal method for relatively limited studies such as this one. Content analysis of the interview transcripts was identified as the appropriate method for analysing the data to obtain in-depth and rich material (Kohler-Riessman, 1993). The stories told by the interviewees were analysed to obtain data about whether older people felt that they received respect in their everyday lives. The analysis also provided insights into the relational aspects of the experiences of respect. It is hoped that this study will add to the richness and depth of the understanding of the issues surrounding respect for older people, and that it will help to enhance and improve their lives.

3.2 Summary of Methodology

3.2.1 Movies

Movies were chosen for analysis to determine whether older people are represented respectfully in popular culture, and thereby to obtain a macro-level view of respect for older people. Movies are a set of moving images combined with narrative, and a number of different methods related to the analysis of images could have been chosen to analyse the movies. However, critical discourse analysis with a dispositive analysis basis was chosen as the optimum way to analyse the movies within the context of this study because it enabled an analysis of the images, narrative and symbols, as well as shots and filming techniques. This study does not seek to analyse whether there are large numbers of stereotypical images pertaining to older people, although the stereotypes were noted and analysed. Instead, it aims to discover whether older people were portrayed as experiencing respect within the context of the movie/visual story. While respect could be related to whether there were stereotypical images of older people in the movies, this research was more interested in the relationships of the older characters in the movies, and whether respect and disrespect were important aspects of those relationships. Film was chosen as the medium because movies can tell in-depth stories in the space of around two hours. Further, characters are well developed in this timeframe, and character growth and transformation occurs during the film. Movies were also chosen to explore the representation of ageing in popular culture. Critical discourse analysis and dispositive analysis was chosen to analyse the relational aspects of respect as experienced by the characters in the movies within the context of their environments, as this could not be ascertained by simply reviewing and analysing the individual images from each scene. Critical discourse analysis analyses language, and

the dispositive analysis approach allows the discourse analysis to go beyond language to include non-linguistic elements (Caborn, 2007) of images, actions and objects as viewed in the movies' scenes. Further, using a dispositive approach to critical discourse analysis also introduced elements of a semiological approach. Caborn (2007, p. 117) states:

> This distinction between the meanings and the objects put me in mind of a semiological approach to the analysis of discourse. In its most simple form, this could mean adopting a semiological analysis grid which divides the discourse into the signifier and the signified, which together make up the sign or symbol itself … the three categories of texts, actions and objects become three categories of signifiers, and the meanings attributed in discourse … become the signified.

Gatling et al.'s (2014, p. 3) study of the depiction of middle age in film proposes that:

> Dispositive analysis expands elements of discourse to include non-linguistic elements of non-discursive practices (actions), materialisations (objects) which relate to … the written and spoken word.

The story of the movie as taken from the narrative and the moving images was presented first, and each movie was then analysed individually using the dispositive approach to critical discourse analysis. After the movies were analysed individually, a discussion of the analysis occurred by comparing and contrasting the movies. The movies were analysed in two separate groupings. The first group consisted of The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006). These movies are all comedies, with The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) billed as comedy drama, RED (2010) billed as comedy action and The Holiday (2006) billed as romantic

comedy. The comedy genre was chosen because it provides a safe and amusing platform from which to explore themes of older age that may be difficult for audiences to accept and watch. It is also a common genre used to vilify and deride common stereotypes of people, so the genre was chosen in order to investigate whether contemporary movies vilify and deride older age, or whether they deconstruct the stereotypes of older age. The second group of movies comprised two fantasy movies: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) and The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014). The genre of fantasy was chosen because fantasy is rich in themes relating to older age. Much of the discourse around older age and a large number of ageist stereotypes are represented in fantasy; for example, wise and benevolent older men are portrayed as wizards, and 'bad' older women are portrayed as 'witches'. Further, fantasy provides a safe platform from which to explore these themes because it is removed from societal norms and people's everyday lived experiences.

The interviews and movies both investigate the topic of respect and older people. The interviews were designed to determine whether older people feel respected at the micro level of their intimate relationships and their chosen social spheres, and at the meso level of society, such as shopping centres, churches and clubs. The movies were chosen for analysis as examples of popular culture to discover whether older people are portrayed as receiving recognition in their intimate spheres and at the meso and macro levels of society. A comparison was undertaken between the recognition accorded to older people in the movies and whether the respondents feel that they receive recognition. This comparison enhanced the understanding of recognition for older people.

3.2.2 Individual Interviews

This study uses an approach that subsumes the everyday experiences of respect under the theoretical rubric of social dynamics of disrespect, as proposed by Honneth (1990). Honneth's work is in critical social theory, but this study seeks to discover whether Honneth's approach can be applied to everyday interactions between older people and other people in the three social spheres (intimate, work and legal, which may also be regarded as the micro, meso and macro levels of society). This research investigates the personal perceptions, interpersonal interactions and the social contexts that frame them. The experiences discussed by the respondents are based around their core relationships; therefore, I was particularly sensitive to their own strategies in such interactions as related by them. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with fourteen individuals for approximately one hour each. The rich data obtained during these interviews provided a solid foundation from which to develop theories that are particularly robust and useful for further research (Charmaz, 2003). The small number of respondents can be justified because the study aims for depth rather than scope or representativeness (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006).

The interview questions were designed in 2011 and the interviews conducted in 2012. In 2013 the research was changed from media to films. Therefore, the questions for the interviews discuss media rather than films (which are part of the media) and the data collected about media was analysed and discussed in chapter five.

This study obtained stories from the respondents about respect and how they felt they were treated by friends, family, professional people and the public. If the respondents were unable to tell their own stories, they were asked open-ended interview-style questions. Each question was asked in the same order in each interview, and the

questions were carefully constructed as a heuristic tool to avoid biasing the answers they elicited. Interview questions were asked because the 'major task is to build upon and explore … participants' responses to … questions' (Seidman, 1998, p. 9). Further, the questions were intended to prompt stories from the respondents. Fortunately, most respondents had many stories to tell when they were prompted by the questions to think about their experiences and the meanings behind them. I aimed to explore how the respondents felt about their treatment by friends, family and their community, and qualitative interviewing closely fit this aim. Charmaz (2003, p. 312) asserts that:

> Qualitative interviewing provides an open-ended, in-depth exploration of an aspect of life about which the interviewee has substantial experience, often combined with considerable insight. The interview can elicit views of this person's subjective world. The interviewer sketches the outline of these views by delineating the topics and drafting the questions. Interviewing is a flexible and emergent technique; ideas and issues emerge during the interview, and the interviewer can then immediately pursue these leads.

The purpose of this study is to uncover 'the concrete experiences of people … and the meaning their experiences had' (Seidman, 1998, p. 10) in relation to respectful treatment and whether they experience respect or disrespect, and to thereby explore the 'meaning-making linkages' (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 52) behind the respondents' answers. This means that the interviews were less structured and more concerned with the stories the interviewees wanted to tell about respect and disrespect. I was particularly interested in the respondents' 'private interpretations of social reality' (Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell, & Alexander, 1995, p. 61), and encouraging interviewees to tell stories appeared to be the best way of eliciting this kind of

information. However, the respondents all wanted to be asked questions, as they found it easier to construct their stories within the context of being asked questions. Each respondent felt that the questions reminded them of stories they had to tell that would contribute to the research. Although specific questions may have the effect of inhibiting the flexibility (Minichiello et al., 1995, p. 65) of the interview process, this did not occur because the respondents believed that the questions enabled them to think and respond more clearly. The questions were open-ended, and although they appeared to be structured, they were used as conversational points with the interviewees. One respondent kept explaining that she did not have any 'bad stories' to tell, so 'her contribution would be useless' to the research. I continually reassured her that all stories and responses were useful to the research, and that I was not looking for any particular response or story. Chapters 4 and 5 will demonstrate how the meanings behind the respondents' answers were explored. One respondent picked up the list of questions and started the interview by saying 'Yes, yes, no, yes, no, yes, yes'. This respondent was asked to put down the list of questions and was then asked one question at a time. Stories were elicited from her by rephrasing each question. The interviews were therefore regarded as active, meaning-making occasions that led to the gathering of information that has epistemological value (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) and provided the tools to understand the meanings that the respondents placed on their experiences (Seidman, 1998). Interviewing may be the best avenue of inquiry when the researcher is interested in the 'subjective understanding' of the respondents, and it is 'most consistent with people's ability to make meaning through language' (Seidman, 1998, p. 7).

Fontana and Frey (2005) discuss interviewing for sociological research as having moved from a neutral position to an empathetic stance. Thus, the interviews were conducted with empathy towards the interviewees, and I formed a friendly relationship

with, and displayed an open demeanour to, each respondent, who felt that they were simply 'having a chat' with me and talked openly about any issues they had. For example, at the end of one of the interviews, the respondent asked if we were now going to commence the interview, and if it had been necessary to record the 'nice little chat we had just had'. I wanted to move beyond simply obtaining words and sentences from interviewees to find out what the respondents truly felt and believed about their experiences. To achieve this, it was deemed necessary to 'establish a climate of mutual disclosure' (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 12); therefore, I was willing to share my thoughts and experiences with the respondents when they asked me questions about myself. Holstein and Gubrium (1995, p. 12) state that disclosure from the interviewer 'occasions and legitimises the respondent's reciprocal revelations'. I expressed 'an abiding interest' in the feelings and thoughts of the respondents, and they expressed interest in what I was thinking and feeling (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 13). Thompson (1984) states that there are many different types of interviewing techniques, and that the interviewer should employ a technique that suits his or her personality and therefore elicits the best results. I therefore chose a 'friendly, informal, conversational approach' (Thompson, 1984, p. 165) because it suited me personally and because I believed that this method would elicit the best information from the respondents. Further, the interviews were conducted in places where the respondents felt comfortable; most of them wanted the interview to be conducted in their home. I had a friendly, get-to-know-you chat with the interviewees before the interviews began, which put them at ease. Further, even though I generally do not drink coffee or tea, I accepted a cup of tea from each respondent so they could feel comfortable about drinking their own cup of coffee or tea with me. This made it a relaxing and friendly

atmosphere, which enabled the respondents to talk openly and at ease about their perceptions of themselves and their relationships with family, friends and the public.

There was no 'model' subject (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 7) behind the respondents, as people aged sixty-five years and over were interviewed, as were both males and females with no inherent or implied characteristics. However, the respondents all came from similar backgrounds and demographics (see the appendix for demographic data), so although this may have appeared to create a 'model' subject, each respondent had his or her own unique experiences and stories to tell. Holstein and Gubrium (1995, p. 7) suggest that 'Projecting a subject behind the respondent confers a sense of epistemological agency on the respondent, which bears on our understanding of the relative validity of the information that is reported'; however, the epistemological value of the information provided by the respondents' varied experiences was deemed valuable enough to forgo the heuristic tool of a 'model' subject. It was not important to limit the respondents to people who shared certain aspects of older age, such as infirmity, frailty or vulnerability, but to discover what experiences of ageing had led to feelings of respect or disrespect from family, friends and the public. Most, but not all, of the respondents were independent, but all respondents felt that they were, or should be, allowed to make their own decisions. The respondents were not considered or treated as 'passive vessels' or 'repositories of facts' (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, pp. 7–8), but as human beings who were actively involved in their own lives and 'stories', and who were able to make meaning and sense of the events that occurred in their lives. There were no 'correct' or 'same' answers because each individual's experiences and the meanings they placed on their experiences were different. Further, as the interviews were qualitative and empirical, it was neither important nor necessary to obtain the 'same/correct/valid' answers from the respondents.

Thompson (1984, p. 165) states that interviewing a respondent successfully requires preparation 'through reading and in other ways, of background information'. I undertook extensive background reading in the form of a literature review in order to be fully aware of the potential problems and issues that older people may face. Thompson (1984) discusses traps for the unwary, which I was careful to avoid—for example, ensuring that the respondents were asked one question at a time. Previous experience had taught me that if more than one question was asked at a time, the interviewee would only answer the last question. Interviewing proved to be a valuable technique, and I obtained a great deal of rich, personal data about how the respondents felt about the respect they receive. The interviews produced a true narrative experience (Fontana & Frey, 2005), and the respondents were willing to both tell stories and answer questions.

The wording of questions is crucial to the reliability of interviews, and the reliability of answers depends on whether the respondents answer the same questions (Fowler, 2002). To ensure that the interview questions were reliable, the process was the same for each respondent. I showed the respondents the questions before the interview commenced and asked them if there was anything they did not understand. The respondents felt that they understood the questions, and any issues of misunderstanding were dealt with during the interview process. I made the questions as reliable as possible, and while it is important to ensure that the answers are reliable, the qualitative nature of the interviews and the research meant that reliability was not the issue it would have been for quantitative research. Therefore, although I took reliability and validity into consideration, they were not limiting factors in this research. The questions are presented in the appendix.

3.3 Sampling and Fieldwork Processes

3.3.1 Movies

The movies were chosen based on three criteria. The first criterion was currency; 2006 was chosen as the earliest date for the movies' release (there were no data on the actual dates the movies were being made) to ensure they were current with contemporary society. The second criterion was success at the box office; movies were considered successful if they made a profit (Barsam & Monahan, 2013) over their production costs. Success was considered an important factor, as it indicated how widely the movies were seen. The final criterion was that there were main characters present in the movie who were aged at least forty-five years or over, because forty-five years and over is considered old in Hollywood terms (Barsam & Monahan, 2013, p. 314).

The analysis of movies was qualitative in nature, and only five movies were chosen for analysis to limit the potentially large amounts of data. The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) was chosen because it explores the social dynamics of both respect and disrespect as its two major themes, which makes the film relevant to this thesis. RED (2010) was chosen because its main cast and protagonists are a group of older people who unsuccessfully try to reconcile themselves to retirement. The film also explores the theme of disrespect of older people, as well as invisibility and the stereotypes of older people as being 'weak' and 'bad'. The Holiday (2006) was chosen because one of the main protagonists is ninety years old and is central to the film's plot. Further, one of the main themes of the film is that being treated respectfully gives a person a positive sense of self and enables them to grow and mature into a better person. The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) was chosen because one of its major themes relate to older protagonists and whether they are respected. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) was

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chosen because the main protagonist is deeply respectful of older people and all people, whether they are considered 'societal norms' or 'others', and the respect shown enables the older characters in the movie to obtain a positive sense of self.

Minichiello et al. (1995, p. 257) propose that 'Codes label and reorganise the data according to topics which open the inquiry and permit the researcher to make sense of thousands of … words'. Therefore, coding was important to the analysis of the movies. To this end, I developed coding schemes from the literature on ageing (e.g., disrespect, respect, retirement, invisibility and active ageing) and used these schemes to analyse the movie data. Chapters 2 and 3 contain the full list of codes. Codes are 'retrieval and organising devices that cluster the relevant segment of the data relating to a particular theme or proposition' (Minichiello et al., 1995, p. 257). The codes for the movies were designed in this way because the movies were not simply about older people and older people's issues, and respect for older people was not a central theme of all the movies. I applied the coding scheme to analyse the movies and determine whether the older characters were treated and portrayed respectfully.

3.3.2 Interviews

Printed advertisements seeking respondents aged sixty-five years and above were placed with Asquith Probus Club (Probus is a worldwide organisation of clubs for active retirees), Berowra Probus Club, Huon Retirement Village in Turramurra and the Hornsby Fernwood Health Club. 'Probus is a worldwide organisation that originated in the U.K. in 1965. The first Probus Club in Australia was formed in 1976.' (Serpentine Valley, 2016, p. 1). I chose these places because I had contacts within these organisations who could vouch for my character and the bona fides of the research work, and because the clubs and the retirement village are for people over the age of 65,

and Hornsby Fernwood Health Club has many members over the age of sixty-five. Having someone to vouch for me was regarded as important for older people, who may be fearful of inviting a stranger into their home or of taking part in an interview with a stranger who could potentially harm them and this accounted for both the respondents' safety and my safety. A number of respondents were obtained through word-of-mouth from other respondents who had enjoyed talking to me and felt that the project was worthwhile. This approach was taken because the interviews were qualitative in nature; therefore, it was not necessary to find a random sample of the older population, as this was not seen as a viable possibility. The interviewing process occurred over several months, as it was difficult to find respondents who were willing to take part. Some people initially responded with interest, but later decided to withdraw. Of the fourteen interviewees, six were married and were interviewed individually. I was given the name and contact telephone number of the people who expressed interest in being interviewed. I rang each person and introduced myself and asked if we could make an appointment for the interview, I also asked if they were comfortable for me to interview them in their home or if they would like an alternative place selected. All the respondents, except one, preferred to be interviewed in their homes. The other respondent wanted to be interviewed at my home and I accommodated this desire. I recorded each interview onto my computer and listened to and transcribed the recording for analysis after the interviews took place.

The respondents who replied to the advertisements were a homogenous group of people not generally representative of the population aged over sixty-five years in Australia, as the advertisements were all in the same demographical area. However, the purpose of the research is to obtain rich stories rather than representative detail (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006), and this is reflected in the sampling method. Each respondent was

encouraged to tell stories and have a conversation with the interviewer, rather than simply answer pre-set questions. However, a list of twelve open-ended questions were supplied to spark off thoughts and conversation for respondents who were not sure what they had to contribute to the project. All respondents wanted to be asked these questions because they all initially felt that they might not have much to contribute.

The interviews were limited to one-off interviews that lasted a maximum of one hour. The time limit was to ensure that the respondents gained the maximum benefit from being part of the study while receiving minimal disruption to their lives. Qualitative data may be very complex and may require the researcher to take special care in their collection and interpretation (Miles & Huberman, 1994); therefore, during the interviewing process, I was careful to gain as much understanding as possible of what the respondents were saying, and how they felt, about their experiences.

3.3.2.2 Epistemological Issues of Interpretation of Transcriptions

Performing transcription work was physically painful and uncomfortable for me, as well as being a long and tedious process. A contract administrative worker was therefore paid to do most of the transcription work, but I found it difficult to get this worker to transcribe the speech as it really was. The contract administrative worker appeared to be determined to edit out any 'ums' or 'ahs' and anything that was uniquely attributable to the individuals who were interviewed. The administrative worker transcribed the speech according to the conventions of written prose, which Samuel (1971) suggests may make the transcript more readable, but also less engaging for the researcher. However, I persuaded her to transcribe the speech more literally by providing appropriate examples from the transcriptions. The interviews were

transcribed with the notion of analysing them for 'what is said, rather than how it is said' (Poland, 2003, p. 268), and it became apparent during the analysis that insisting on such a close transcription may have been due to my preconceived notions about what was appropriate for transcription work rather than what was necessary from the transcriptions themselves. However, the phenomenological nature of this study meant that as a qualitative interviewer, I was:

> interested in how meanings are produced and reproduced within particular social, cultural and relational contexts. They recognize the interview itself as one such context of interactive meaning-making. Therefore, interpreting qualitative data requires reflection on the entire research context. Reflexivity involves making the research process itself a focus of inquiry, laying open pre-conceptions and becoming aware of situational dynamics in which the interviewer and respondent are jointly involved in knowledge production. (Hsiung, 2010)

It is important to note that the question chosen for the research 'Older People and Respect: Do older people feel respected at the micro and meso levels of society and are they portrayed respectfully in popular culture?' was expressed with a desire to remove preconceived notions of older people being treated disrespectfully and being portrayed in stereotypical ways in movies. I approached the interviews with the older people from the perspective that they would have stories to tell of disrespectful behaviour from their community and even family members. However, as the interviews progressed, I noticed that most respondents were reporting that they generally felt respected and valued by their community and family. At first, I reflected that this must be a demographical issue caused by the lack of respondents from poorer socioeconomic areas. It did not occur to

me that Australian society views older people with respect. This will be discussed in more detail in the chapters 4 and 5. However, as I discussed the issue of disrespect with the respondents, I learned that they believed they received respect from their family, friends and community not because they had more money or wealth than other older people (because this was not always the case), but because they treated the people around them with respect. The older people believed that respect should be accorded to younger people, and that when they treated younger people with respect, the younger people then responded respectfully (see Chapter 4).

3.4 Analysis

3.4.1 Moving Images/Video

The movies were analysed using a dispositive approach to critical discourse analysis. The richness of the material was kept intact by approaching the movies as whole stories containing moving images, inferences from photography and shots, symbolic images (e.g., in stereotypes such as walkers or grey hair), and dialogue. Therefore, although I analysed the movies and broke them down into sections, I remained conscious of the movies as a whole.

It is important to note that symbolic messages in particular do not have just one meaning attached to them. Many different meanings (e.g., psychological, sociological or political) may be inferred from symbolic content; therefore, to state that *the* content and purpose of the message have been analysed may be presumptuous (Krippendorff, 1980). However, the intention of this phenomenological research is to investigate the sociological meanings behind the movie data collected, and the dispositive approach to critical discourse analysis aided this investigation. The empirical data collected from the

films included transcribed and verbal interactions, visual images and sound events, as well as moving images and non-verbal behaviour portrayed by the actors

3.4.2 Interviews/Transcriptions of Interviews

It is important to choose an appropriate method to analyse and display the qualitative data collected during the research process and content analysis of interviews was chosen.

Content analysis enables the qualitative data analysis to be valid and reliable while not losing its depth and richness:

> Thus, indeed, we err on the side of telling many kinds of stories, attached always to history, larger structures, and social forces, offered neither to glamorize nor to pathologize, but to re-view what has been, to re-imagine what could be in communities of poverty and the working class, and to re-visit, with critical speculation, lives, relations, and communities of privilege. (Fine, Weis, Weseen, & Wong, 2000, p. 129)

It is important to note that there is a parallel between class inequality and inequality in older age, as there is for young people, women (as outlined in gender research) and the LGBTI community. Walker (1981, p. 73) discusses this:

> An approach to ageing based on political economy will examine the relative social and economic status of different groups of elderly people as well as the relationship between the elderly and younger generations. Thus it is argued that poverty in old age is primarily a function of low economic and social status prior to retirement and the depressed social status of the retired, and secondarily, of the relatively low level of state benefits. Social policies which have failed to

recognize inequality in old age and the causes of low economic and social status have therefore failed to tackle the problem of poverty and low incomes. The starting point for policy-makers should be the labour market and the social relationship between age and the labour market.

This aspect of ageing is discussed in detail in Chapter 1. It is important to allow older people to have a voice in research into their concerns, and this study gives them a voice.

Coding data in qualitative analysis is a fluid process whereby the data and codes must be constantly revised (Bryman, 2004). Minichiello et al. (1995) argue that the researcher needs to develop theories that are grounded within the respondents' own experiences of their social reality, and that if this does not occur, the researcher 'runs the risk of constructing and imposing on that informant a fictional view of their reality' (Minichiello et al., 1995, p. 69). I intended to discover the respondents' views of, and the meanings they placed on, their experiences of respect and disrespect, rather than my own views and meanings concerning these issues.

The aim of the initial, or open, coding of the interviews was to 'open up the inquiry' to find leads towards 'further issues pertaining to conditions, strategies, interactions and consequences' (Strauss, 1987, pp. 28–29). I needed to quickly become immersed in the concepts in order to conceptualise the data obtained from the interviews. I aimed to produce provisional concepts that emerged from the data I acquired (Strauss, 1987), and I produced many codes that appeared to suit the data in the interviews and the information that the older people wanted to convey. However, after a few weeks of coding and investigating the codes as analytically as possible, I found that many of the original codes that had been produced were subsets of other codes, and thus I managed to reduce the number of codes.

Strauss (1987, p .27) asserts that 'The excellence of the research rests in large part on the excellence of the coding'; therefore, I undertook provisional labelling of the codes using sociological categories. I also discovered *in vivo* categories—that is, categories that arose directly from the concerns and issues raised by the respondents (Strauss, 1987)—as I worked on coding the respondents' interviews, and I chose to label these according to the concepts the older people were discussing. I used the common method of coding interview responses by conducting a qualitative review of the pool of interviews to develop a 'coding scheme based on what is represented in the pool' (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 18) of interviews. It was important to retain the meanings of the entire interviews and stories that the respondents told while also breaking down the stories to find the emerging issues that the respondents felt were important to their everyday lives. Further, it was deemed necessary for the coding to match the concepts that the older people were discussing, and thereby find the meanings of respect that were implicit in their stories; thus, the *in vivo* codes were an important aspect of the research. I also undertook selective coding, which 'pertains to coding systematically and concertedly for the core category' (Strauss, 1987, p. 33). When I undertook the selective coding, I was more focused on the analysis of the interviews, as I was trying to integrate a theory into the work I was performing (Strauss, 1987). During the coding process, I remained aware of the structural conditions—that is, the context, whether near or far from each respondent, and the interactions the interviewees were describing between various people or 'actors' in their lives—in order to achieve a balance between the larger structural conditions and the respondents' closer interactions (Strauss, 1987). An example of a structural condition for the respondents is the governmental style of relationship, such as visits to Centrelink or hospitals, while an example of an interaction

is the conversation reported between a respondent and a worker in a shopping mall or complex. This required some care in the coding process because:

> Grounded theorists do not think of structure as something 'up there' and as more or less fully determining of interactions. Nor do they assume that given structural conditions … must necessarily be relevant to the interactional/ processual phenomena under study. (Strauss, 1987, p. 80)

I analysed each interview individually several times to produce the codes, and the codes were then compared between each interview until I decided upon standard codes for the project. These standard codes were then checked against the individual interviews several times and then over all the interviews as a whole. After the validity of the codes was assured by thorough checking and analysis, analysis was conducted of the codes and the number of times each code occurred.

3.4.2.1 Assumptions

In 2009 I had worked for Uniting Care (a charitable organisation attached to the Uniting Church of Australia) to research and produce a literature review about older people and abuse. This literature review was published by Uniting Care. This work created my interest in researching recognition of older people but it shaped my attitudes about whether older people are treated respectfully in Australia. I made three assumptions at the beginning of the research. The first was that twenty years would make a significant difference in the lives of the respondents, and that they may have been experiencing respect when they were younger than sixty-five, but that twenty years later they would be feeling differently about their lives and the treatment they received. The second assumption was that the respondents would tell stories about disrespect and how they felt disrespected by the younger people in their families and the people they met at the

meso level of society. The third assumption was that the respondents would have experienced so much disrespect that they would have many stories to tell without needing to refer to my questions. All three assumptions were challenged during the first interview, when the respondent said that twenty years had not made a difference in his life, but that his life had been different thirty years ago, that he did not feel disrespected, and that he did not have any stories about disrespectful treatment.

3.4.2.2.1 Assumption 1

When I first began the interviews, I discovered that I needed to change one word in my original set of questions. The questions originally asked the respondents to compare how they felt about, and viewed, society twenty years ago with how they felt about, and viewed, society today. The first respondent explained that during a lifespan of more than seventy years, little had changed in his life in the past twenty years. For this respondent, possibly the most significant aspect of the time difference was the age of his children. The aspect of his life that had changed the most in the past thirty years was his children leaving home and starting their own lives and families. Twenty years ago, all his children had been away from home for at least ten years, but thirty years ago both of his daughters were still living at home with him and his wife. His children leaving home represented a bigger change in his life than retirement, because to him and the other respondents, retirement simply meant working at other things than their previous careers, whereas not having children at home provided more free time to work in a volunteer capacity and at the clubs and churches to which the respondents belonged. Children leaving home also provided a significant financial release for all the respondents.

3.4.2.2.2 Assumption 2

I was surprised to discover that none of the respondents felt disrespected by society or by grandchildren in particular. The respondents told some stories about disrespect, but the stories were generally regarded as a problem within the individual or individuals who were behaving poorly. At first, I suspected that some respondents were trying to 'save face' (i.e., preserve their dignity), but as the interviews progressed and all the respondents said that they felt they were not disrespected, I thought that there must be a design flaw in that the respondents were all from similar demographical backgrounds. The respondents suggested that poor people may have different experiences; however, as I analysed the interviews, I concluded that the respondents felt they were being recognised in the legal sphere, the work or achievement spheres, at the meso level of society, and within their intimate relationships, and that they therefore felt respected. Respect at the meso level was important to the respondents, as they believed this was a good representation of society as a whole. Recognition in the legal sphere was inbuilt in the Australian Government's *Anti-Discrimination Act* and laws, and recognition in the work or achievement sphere was supplied by their voluntary participation in active ageing, as well as from superannuation funds. The recognition they received at these levels gave them a positive sense of self and high self-esteem; therefore, when they experienced disrespect from an individual, they believed it did not reflect on themselves, but that it was simply the poor behaviour of that individual. Therefore, it was not a design flaw, but rather Honneth's theory of recognition in action, as the respondents felt that they were receiving recognition in all three social spheres: intimate or love, work or achievement, and legal or core institutions of the state.

3.4.2.2.3 Assumption 3

I assumed that the respondents would tell me stories rather than answer my questions; however, all the respondents felt that they had no stories to tell, and they wanted me to ask them questions. I believe that my assumption that there would be stories about disrespect significantly influenced this response. The respondents felt respected and therefore believed they had no stories to tell about disrespect; therefore, they felt more comfortable answering questions than telling stories. The questions were good starting points for a conversation between myself and the respondents, and they found the questions both helpful and enjoyable.

3.5 Limitations

The American Film Institute reports that its catalogue contains 60,000 full-length movies and 17,000 short movies produced between 1893 and 2011 (American Film Institute, 2016). However, for the purposes of this research, I chose movies dated no earlier than 2006. Extensive Internet research was undertaken to find movies that were about older people and their issues, and I watched many movies that were relevant (or not) to the research. It was a challenge to limit the number of films analysed but still obtain useful data, and it was difficult to find movies that presented issues that were relevant to older people. Since 2006, more movies have been produced that are about older people and their issues than were produced in the twentieth century. The Internet Movie Database (IMDb, 2015a) provides a list of 50 such movies, and Cohen-Shalev and Marcus (2007) list 40 films about older people that were produced between 1953 and 2006. Some movies produced before 2006 included older characters; however, these characters were often peripheral to the story and were, for example, the parent or in-law of the main protagonist (Cohen-Shalev & Marcus, 2007). It was also challenging

to find movies in this genre that were successful at the box office; however, again, movies about older people and their interests and issues are becoming more successful at the box office (see the appendix for information about the movies chosen). All the movies analysed in this thesis made a profit. Box Office Mojo (IMDb, 2015) provided information about the profit that each movie made.

The research question itself also posed a limitation. I believed that the link between the two questions was obvious, and that the movies provided popular cultural representations of respect for older people at the macro level of society. However, the link was not as clear as I believed it would be. I mitigated this problem by analysing the movies and finding common themes between the representations of the experiences of the older protagonists and the experiences of the respondents in this study.

In addition, there was a flaw in the design of the interview questions. I did not ask the respondents for their definition of respect, as I assumed there would be a common understanding of its definition. This was a problem while writing up the results of the interviews, and I overcame it by using a dictionary definition of respect, which represented a common understanding of respect, and comparing it with Honneth's (1990) definition of recognition.

Further, when the respondents discussed respect, they talked about relationships within their own age groups (friends) and with younger people (children and grandchildren). However, when they discussed disrespect, they talked about disrespectful treatment from younger people, as they felt that they were respected by their own age group. This was possibly due to a design flaw in the study, wherein the respondents all came from a similar demographical area and were financially secure. Most respondents were on part pensions from the Australian Government, and some were financially independent.

Only two respondents were entirely dependent on Australian Government pensions; however, they owned their own homes, which gave them some financial freedom that renters on age pensions do not experience.

3.6 Ethics

The five basic principles of ethical research are adhered to in this study: voluntary participation, beneficence, anonymity and confidentiality, informed consent, and an ethical approach to the analysis and interpretation of the data collected (National Institute of Health, 2008). Ethics clearance for the project was sought and obtained from the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee. The main ethical issue to be considered was the potential for respondents to become distressed if their stories were about difficult or distressing circumstances. This issue was discussed with the respondents beforehand, and the respondents wanted to simply stop discussing anything that distressed them. However, they did not expect that they would become distressed or need counselling.

The respondents were informed that they could withdraw from the project at any time if they so wished, and that their participation was voluntary. A few potential participants decided at the last minute that they did not want to proceed. The respondents viewed their participation as beneficial for themselves and others in their age group, and some respondents asked to receive a copy of the thesis when it was completed. Respondents' names have been changed in order to maintain their anonymity and confidentiality. Each respondent signed a consent form after reading it and confirming that they understood the process (see Appendix A for a copy of the consent form). Each respondent had full cognition, which was a prerequisite for participation; therefore, they

were able to give informed consent. The analysis and interpretation of the data were undertaken using an ethical approach.

3.7 Conclusion

This study of the social dynamics of respect is a qualitative project. Qualitative data were obtained from interviews with people aged sixty-five and over, and the data were analysed using content analysis. Qualitative data were also obtained for a dispositive approach to critical discourse analysis of recent movies that were both successful at the box office and included main characters over the age of 45. Forty-five was chosen because Hollywood suggests that older age starts at the age of forty-five (Barsam & Monahan, 2013, p. 314). The participants were interviewed using the same technique and questions, and they were encouraged to tell stories in order to obtain rich data. The meanings of people's words and expressions were thoroughly investigated to ensure that the resulting codes remained valid. Ethics clearance was obtained for the interviews, and strict adherence to ethical considerations was observed during the interview process.

Interviews and movies were chosen in order to investigate the topic of respect and older people. The interviews were designed to determine whether older people felt respected at the micro level of their intimate relationships and in their chosen social spheres, as well as at the meso level of society, such as in shopping centres, churches and clubs. The movies were chosen for analysis as examples of popular culture in order to produce a viable comparison between the portrayal and experiences of older people in popular culture and the everyday lived experiences of the respondents.

Open coding suggests that older people in Australia do not necessarily feel disrespected by society. The results of this study will be fully explored in chapters 4 and 5.

4. Chapters

4.1 Chapter 1: Rethinking the Discourse of Ageing: This chapter argues that active ageing disrespects older people's right to choose whether they want to rest and relax or whether they want to be engaged in work and exercise. Further, active ageing suggests that policy makers and researchers know what is best for older people rather than the older people themselves, thereby infantilising them. Although active ageing appears to be good for older people because it promotes healthy outcomes through exercise, a healthy lifestyle and work, it fails to recognise their autonomy and agency, and it shames and coerces them into exercising and working when this may not be what they desire.

Superannuation, as part of salary and wage packages (Workplace Info, 2015), and pension policies recognise older people in the work sphere for the work they have already performed. Further, the respondents in this study reported being recognised and respected in their intimate or love spheres. The discourse on older age—particularly in OECD countries—is centred on ageism, with some researchers (e.g., Wilkinson & Ferraro, 2004; Minichiello & Coulson, 2005) asserting that ageism is an important paradigm in Western culture and that Western discourse may be ageist in nature. However, there is a gap in recent research into ageist paradigms and discourse, and the findings of this study do not support this view about ageism in Western society.

This study explores respect and how it is experienced in the everyday lives of individuals aged sixty-five years and over. Chapter 1 investigates theories about ageing from gerontology and Social Philosophy, and of respect and disrespect. This research project is about older people and whether they feel respected; therefore, theories on ageing are critiqued, with particular attention paid to the respect or disrespect afforded

to older people by these theories. While Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition underpins my definition of respect, other definitions of respect and disrespect from the literature are reviewed and critiqued using Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition, and 'older age' is also discussed. Ageism is also discussed because it affects the respect received by older people. Social welfare and older age are discussed, and it is argued that an aversion to pensions is not based on ageism, but on a general aversion to social welfare for those who are regarded as 'others'.

Western discourse suggests that personhood is based on work (Blatterer, 2007), which thereby excludes the very young, disabled and older people from having personhood. This may lead to disrespect towards people from these structured categories. However, it has also been suggested in the literature that young Western people may not be ageist and disrespectful of older people (Sung et al., 2010).

4.2 Chapter 2: Comedy Films: This chapter shows that The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) portray active ageing, and that RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) openly espouse this paradigm as the only appropriate way to age successfully, although The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) portrays active ageing as one way among many to age successfully. It is argued that although active ageing is presented as benign and positive for older people, the discourse suggests that older people who choose to rest and relax, or who have health-related difficulties, are not ageing successfully and are therefore failures. The Holiday (2006) portrays the older protagonist as having caused his own health problems by not engaging in exercise. It is argued that the protagonist is infantilised by the movie and the portrayal of active ageing as the only successful way to age.

Chapter 2 explores the relationships between the older protagonists themselves, and between the older protagonists and the younger characters, to ascertain whether the older protagonists are treated respectfully within their intimate spheres and by the core institutions of the state, and whether they receive recognition in the work/achievement sphere. This will form a means of comparison between the everyday lived experiences of the respondents in this study with the lived experiences of the protagonists in the movies.

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) are analysed individually and then compared and contrasted, as these movies depict various forms of respect and disrespect for the older protagonists. The older protagonists receive respect from their own age groups and the intimate spheres they have created within these age groups, and this allows them to obtain or keep a positive sense of self, which is instrumental in the growth and transformation that occurs throughout the films. However, they are not treated respectfully by the younger protagonists in either RED (2010) or The Holiday (2006). In The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), the protagonists experience disrespect by the core institutions of the state in Britain, but not in India (Honneth, 2003). In RED (2010), the protagonists experience disrespect by the core institutions of the state as represented by the CIA (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). In The Holiday (2006), the older protagonist experiences respect from the Academy of Film, which represents a core institution in the US. The Holiday (2006) and RED (2010) show that older people may be treated disrespectfully by younger people, but that this is acceptable as long as they are held in affectionate regard. Honneth (2007, p. 71) contradicts this idea when he states that 'The normative core of … notions of justice is always constituted by expectations of respect for one's own dignity, honor or integrity'. Since individuals regard social justice as being treated respectfully by people

within their own social contexts, it is important to accord older people respect and dignity. Honneth (1990) states that when disrespect occurs on an interpersonal level, a person's positive sense of self is impaired, and this impairment can lead to a breakdown in personality. Therefore, disrespectful treatment of older people is not acceptable, regardless of whether that person is also regarded with affection. In contrast, The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) portrays the older protagonists as receiving respect and affection from the younger protagonist and minor younger characters.

4.3 Chapter 3: Fantasy Films: This chapter argues that The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) portrays and supports the active ageing paradigm. The movie portrays older people who are not engaged in work as being 'unworthy' of respect. According to Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition, recognition is not about the individual being 'worthy' of recognition, but that recognition of a person should be normative. Active ageing is therefore ageist, as it refuses to recognise older people who choose to rest and relax. In contrast, The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) suggests that older people can be positively engaged in whatever ways they desire. This is a much more positive view of ageing, as it does not suggest that 'successful' ageing depends on particular behaviours, or that those who do not engage in those behaviours are 'unsuccessful'.

Chapter 3 explores the fantasy genre because fantasy is rich in themes relating to older age. Much of the discourse around older age and a large number of ageist stereotypes are represented in fantasy; for example, wise and benevolent older men are portrayed as wizards, and 'bad' older women are portrayed as witches. Fantasy provides a safe platform from which to explore these themes because it is removed from societal norms and people's everyday lived experiences.

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) is a fantasy film with comedy elements that is aimed at all age groups. It introduces the themes of ageing, active ageing and respecting older people, and this respect enables older people to keep a positive sense of self. The movie also presents a minor theme of the invisibility of older people. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) is a fantasy and comedy film that investigates older age and respect. It shows that older people are able to maintain a positive sense of self when they receive respect. The movie also explores disrespect, including abuse, towards older people, as well as the invisibility experienced by older people and others. The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) proposes that active ageing, especially being engaged in some form of work, is the only successful way to age. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) suggests that positive ageing involves engaging and being interested in life, other people and what is happening in society, and that this brings joy and respect into the lives of older people who actively seek to be positively engaged. The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) deconstructs stereotypes of older people in depth and develops the characters by displaying their relationships within their intimate spheres and how the respect of these spheres keeps their positive sense of self intact. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) conveys in some depth the concept that older people and people with disabilities suffer intensely from invisibility, which is a lack of recognition and thus a form of disrespect.

4.4 Chapter 4: Homogenisation of Older Age and Respect for Older People: The respondents in this study categorised themselves as being in mid-life because they take part in active ageing. This chapter argues that the respondents have thereby bought into active ageing discourse and treat active ageing as the only 'successful' way to age.

Placing people into socially constructed age groupings such as 'older age', 'third age' and 'fourth age', or 'younger old' and 'older old' is problematised by the respondents in this study, who all believed (including a 92-year-old respondent) that they were not and could not be considered 'old'.

I critically analysed and coded interviews with fourteen respondents. Chapter 4 discusses the resulting themes of respect, respect in intimate relationships, mutual respect and respect in the past, while Chapter 5 discusses disrespect, infantilisation, invisibility and active ageing. The interviewees reported various problems, including dependence, ill health, age-related disease and disability; however, all respondents reported feeling respected. This may be due to the respect received in the legal (core institutions of the state), work (receiving superannuation and part pensions) and intimate spheres, which enables the respondents to retain a positive sense of self (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Further research is recommended to establish whether the results apply to the general population of older people.

The fourteen interviews investigated whether respect for older people occurs in their intimate relationships and at the meso level of society.

4.5 Chapter 5: Disrespect and Active Ageing: This chapter argues that all the respondents have accepted active ageing discourse and policy as the 'successful' way to age, and that people who rest and relax, or who suffer from ill health and disability, are therefore 'failures'. Respondents who suffered from ill health or disability felt that they were blamed for their poor health, and that they had to prove to me how active they were and the work they were doing. The respondents also believed that older people who suffer from ill health and mobility problems are not recognised or respected. It is therefore argued that active ageing is a form of symbolic violence against older people.

Chapter 5 therefore explores the themes of disrespect, invisibility, infantilisation, institutional disrespect and active ageing.

Although the respondents in this study reported that they experienced respect from their intimate relationships, they also told stories of disrespect, invisibility, infantilisation and institutional disrespect. Invisibility is portrayed in three of the movies (RED, 2010; The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey, 2012; The Grand Budapest Hotel, 2014) analysed in this thesis (see Chapters 2 and 3). The respondents reported a lack of recognition not from their intimate relationships (although this formed part of it), but from the public and institutions. The respondents' experiences are related to the experiences of the protagonists and characters in the movies.

The respondents also discussed active ageing as an important theme. They all felt, in varying degrees, that they were participating in active ageing and were therefore ageing 'successfully'. However, respondents suffering from health problems felt that they were blamed for their problems.

5. Conclusion

This thesis contributes to the literature about respect and older people and argues that active ageing infantilises older people rather than respects them. The analysis of the interviews showed that all respondents accepted active ageing discourse and policy as the 'successful' way to age, and that people who rest and relax, or who suffer from ill health or disability, are therefore 'failures'. The respondents who suffered from ill health or disability felt that they were blamed for their poor health, and that they had to discuss with me how active they were and the work they were doing. The respondents also believed that older people who suffer from ill health or mobility problems were not being recognised or respected.

Most of the respondents were involved in some type of volunteer work, or they were members of clubs or churches. They believed that they contributed to society through their volunteer work and that, as a result, they may receive respect within their intimate spheres and from the meso level of society. They appeared to accept the idea that if they stayed active, fit and healthy, they could still have the same status and be regarded in the same way as those who were in mid-life. Further, they were 'Linking successful ageing to health, independence and productivity' without understanding that this has 'discriminatory effects on those who do not meet these criteria' (van Dyk, 2014, p. 96). Although older people accept active ageing policies and believe that those who suffer from ill health have not been responsible adults, this does not mean that active ageing policy is positive for older people, or that those who suffer from age-related illness or disability are failures or responsible for their ill health. Further, active ageing policy denies older people the right to enjoy their retirement through rest and leisure, and the respondents used the same kind of discourse about their own lives, not resting or relaxing but working hard.

Although active ageing appears to be positive for older people, it suggests that policy makers and researchers know what is best for older people, thereby infantilising them. Further, it is argued that older people who choose to rest and relax instead of work and exercise are considered 'unsuccessful' or 'failures', as the discourse suggests that 'successful' ageing is about working and exercising. All the participants in this study strongly believed in active ageing. Even those who suffered from health-related difficulties reported being involved in active ageing, although they felt that they were blamed for their health problems. The healthy respondents believed they were ageing more 'successfully' than those who had health-related difficulties, and because they felt healthy, they felt that they were in mid-life and could not be regarded as older people. It

is therefore argued that active ageing is a form of symbolic violence that prevents positive self-recognition by older people.

Chapter 1:
Rethinking the Discourse of Older Age

1. Introduction

This chapter argues that active ageing fails to recognise older people's right to choose whether they want to rest and relax or whether they want to be engaged in work and exercise. Active ageing thereby denies older people's agency and their power to choose the lifestyle they want to lead, resulting in disrespect and a lack of recognition. Further, active ageing suggests that policy makers and researchers know what is best for older people better than the older people themselves, thereby infantilising them. Although active ageing appears to be good for older people because it promotes healthy outcomes through exercise, a healthy lifestyle and work, it fails to recognise their autonomy and agency, and it shames and coerces them into exercising and working when this may not be what they desire. Further, older people with health problems who responded to this study felt that they were blamed for their poor health.

Section two discusses Honneth's theory or recognition and determines that mutual intersubjective recognition (Honneth, 1995, p. 92) is how an individual develops a positive sense of self. Recognition occurs in three spheres: love (intimate relationships), legal (core institutions of the state) and achievement or work. Each sphere has distinct potential for moral development in the individual, and a distinct way in which the individual relates to self. The subjective autonomy of the individual increases with each stage of mutual regard (Honneth, 1995, p. 94); therefore, the individual obtains a higher sense of self if he or she receives recognition in all three spheres. Honneth (1995, p. 112) proposes that 'the respect for a human being as a person' can be traced 'back to a type of "recognition respect", because it primarily involves cognitively recognizing the

fact that, with regard to the other, one is dealing with a being possessed of personal qualities' (Honneth, 1995, p. 112). Thus, according to Honneth's theory of recognition, respect is 'recognising' the other person as a human being. Honneth (1990) relates respect to visibility and disrespect to invisibility. Recognition does not mean a person must 'earn respect', but that the individual is simply recognised as an individual and is therefore respected. Social injustice is perceived as not receiving recognition from the intimate sphere, the legal sphere or the work sphere; for example, low pay for what is perceived to be a 'feminine' job is social injustice.

This study explores recognition and how it is experienced in the everyday lives of individuals aged sixty-five years. This chapter explores the history of ageing research in section three and Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition is used to review and critique definitions of respect and disrespect for older people in the literature on ageing, gerontology and Social Philosophy in section 4. Ideas about older age, biology and retirement is critically analysed in section five and definitions of respect and disrespect in the literature is explored in section six. Section seven explores poverty in older age and social welfare and older age are discussed. It is argued that an aversion to pensions is not based on ageism, but on a general aversion to social welfare among those who are regarded as 'others'. Sociology, age and their relationship to the cinema are explored in section eight. The discourse about popular culture and age are critically explored in sections nine and ten. It is argued that western discourse suggests that personhood is based on work (Blatterer, 2007), thereby excluding the very young, disabled and older people from having personhood. This may lead to disrespect towards people from these structured categories. However, it has also been suggested that young Western people may not be ageist and disrespectful of older people (Sung et al., 2010). In section eleven

ageism is discussed because it is a form of misrecognition and therefore affects the respect that older people receive.

2. Honneth's Theory of Recognition

2.1 Introduction

This section discusses Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition. It argues that respect means being recognised and 'visible' to society, and that individuals do not have to 'earn respect', but should be recognised as individuals. Honneth (1990) discusses lack of recognition as a form of social injustice. Further, this chapter argues that active ageing policy and discourse fails to recognise the autonomy and agency of older people because it suggests that policy makers and researchers know what is best for older people, which is a form of infantilisation and disrespect. Further, active ageing discourse implies that not taking part in active ageing is 'unsuccessful' and therefore 'failing'.

2.2 Honneth: A Social Philosopher

Honneth is a social philosopher whose work deals 'with the conceptual and normative questions of recognition' (Maia, 2014, p. 5). Maia (2014, p. 5) describes him as a 'thinker who works with philosophical literature on recognition'. Honneth states that 'I am convinced that the terms of recognition must represent the unified framework for such a project', where the 'project' is to find 'the normative objectives of critical social theory' (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 113). Thus, Honneth sees his work as being involved in formulating critical social theory, especially in regards to recognition.

2.3 What is Recognition?

This thesis connects Honneth's philosophical work on recognition with sociological investigation. Therefore, I did not regard a common-sense or dictionary definition of respect as sufficient to underpin this work. Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition states that an individual feels respect when he or she receives recognition. Mutual intersubjective recognition (Honneth, 1995, p. 92) is how an individual develops a positive sense of self. Honneth (2014, p. 125) discusses mutual recognition and states that 'the status granted to us enables us to expect from others a kind of behaviour that enables us to fulfil our own aims'. Mutual recognition does not mean that we can do as we please, as our actions need to be mutually coordinated with those of other members of society. We need to judge how reconcilable our own actions are with the interests and intentions of everyone who will be affected by our actions. That is, we need to formulate our own will and intentions so they do not violate the will and intentions of others (Honneth, 2014, p. 107). According to Honneth (1992, p. 188):

> The language of everyday life is still invested with a knowledge—which we take for granted—that we owe our integrity, in a subliminal way, to the receipt or approval or recognition from other persons.

As Honneth (1990) is discussing human beings and not just young people or a certain class of people, this therefore applies to older people as much as it does to the rest of society. Honneth's (1990) theory states that a positive sense of self is acquired by intersubjective means; therefore, insult and degradation impair a person's positive understanding of self.

Further, Honneth (1990) states that insult and degradation is injurious to the person and violates the sense of, and belief in, self. Therefore, experiences of disrespect and insult

present a risk of injury that can cause a person's entire identity to collapse (Honneth, 1992, p. 189). Older people who were treated respectfully when they were young, but who experience disrespect as older citizens, are as vulnerable to the collapse of identity as others.

Honneth (1992, p. 188) explores disrespect and lack of recognition as a means to understand recognition:

> This differentiation of three basic forms of disrespect will, in a subsequent step, yield indirect insights into the totality of experiences of recognition on which a person depends for the safeguarding of his integrity.

Honneth (1990) describes disrespect as the denial of approval or lack of recognition of another person. He notes that 'The experience of social degradation and humiliation jeopardises the identity of human beings to the same degree as the suffering of illnesses jeopardises their physical well-being' (Honneth, 1992, p. 192). Further, experiences of personal disrespect provide a moral driving force in the process of societal development (Honneth, 1990, p. 33). Honneth (2007, p. 71) states that 'The normative core of … notions of justice is always constituted by expectations of respect for one's own dignity, honor or integrity'. Therefore, since individuals regard social justice as being treated respectfully by people within their own social contexts, it is important to treat older people with respect and dignity.

As previously mentioned, recognition occurs in three spheres: love (intimate relationships), legal (core institutions of the state) and achievement or work. Each sphere has distinct potential for moral development in the individual, and a distinct way in which the individual relates to self. The subjective autonomy of the individual increases with each stage of mutual regard (Honneth, 1995, p. 94); therefore, the

individual obtains a higher sense of self if he or she receives recognition in all three spheres. The three spheres of recognition are discussed later in this section. Honneth (1995, p. 112) proposes that 'respect for a human being as a person' can be traced 'back to a type of "recognition respect", because it primarily involves cognitively recognizing the fact that, with regard to the other, one is dealing with a being possessed of personal qualities' (Honneth, 1995, p. 112). Thus, according to Honneth's theory of recognition, respect is 'recognising' the other person as a human being. Honneth (1990) relates respect to visibility and disrespect to invisibility. Thus, recognition does not mean a person must 'earn respect', but that the individual is simply recognised as an individual.

Honneth (1990, pp. 188–189) describes disrespect as the denial of approval or lack of recognition of another person. He states that:

> what is needed is a basic conceptual shift to the normative premises of a theory of recognition that locates the core of all experiences of injustice in the withdrawal of social recognition, in the phenomena of humiliation and disrespect. (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 134)

The denial or withdrawal of recognition is the core of social injustice experiences; therefore, disrespectful treatment of a person or social category of people, such as older people, is socially unjust.

2.4 Social Injustice

Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) suggests that social injustice is perceived as lack of recognition from the intimate, legal and work spheres; for example, low pay for what is perceived to be a 'feminine' job is social injustice. Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 132) discusses disrespect and the lack of recognition as a form of social injustice:

the initial premise that the experience of a withdrawal of social recognition—of degradation and disrespect—must be at the center of a meaningful concept of socially caused suffering and injustice.

Therefore, ageist attitudes (against older people) may be regarded as the disrespectful treatment of older people through withholding social recognition. Thus, ageism is a form of misrecognition of older people and therefore constitutes social injustice.

Disrespect can also be understood in the form of physical abuse that takes away the person's autonomous control over their body, which suggests that disrespect is a necessary condition for abuse. Denying a person's autonomous control of their own body cripples confidence in oneself and causes a psychological gap that gives rise to negative emotions. If an action is considered socially acceptable but is blocked by another person, it can lead to negative emotions of moral indignation, offense or contempt (Honneth, 1990).

2.5 Three Spheres of Recognition

Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, pp. 138–141) discusses three spheres of recognition: love (intimate relationships), law (equality of all people before the law, which is recognised by the core institutions of the capitalist society) and achievement (work):

> [intimate relationships] marked by practices of mutual affection and concern, they are able to understand themselves as individuals with their own needs; in legal relations, which unfold according to the model of mutually granted equal rights (and duties), they learn to understand themselves as legal persons owed the same autonomy as all other members of society; and finally in the loose-knit social relations—in which, dominated by a one-sided interpretation of the

achievement principle, there is competition for professional status—they in principle learn to understand themselves as subjects possessing abilities and talents that are valuable for society. (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 142)

This study relates the intimate sphere to the micro level of society, the meso level of society relates to the work sphere and the macro level of society relates to the law sphere (core institutions of the state).

The older respondents in this study discussed feeling respected within their intimate relationships (see Chapter 4). They also talked about mutual respect, which is an intimate relationship that Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 139) describes as:

> The recognition that individuals reciprocally bring to this kind of relationship is loving care for the other's well-being in the light of his or her individual needs.

When equality for all citizens is assured by the law, then older people are not suffering from ageism within the core institutions of the country. Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 139) states that, in the time before capitalism:

> the legal recognition of the individual—his or her recognised status as a member of society protected by certain rights—was directly connected to the social esteem he or she enjoyed by reason of origin, age, or function. The scope of the rights legitimately at a person's disposal arose in a sense directly from the 'honor' or status conferred on him or her by all other members of society within the framework of the established prestige order.

In pre-feudal societies, older people were treated with honour and dignity (or respect) because they were regarded as the repositories of wisdom. In feudal times, recognition and respect were granted to those who held positions of power; in particular, the

aristocracy and older people who already held power were treated with respect. However, this form of honour broke up under capitalism:

> The normative structural transformation that went along with this institutionalisation of the idea of legal equality should not be underestimated, since it led to the establishment of two completely different spheres of recognition, revolutionising the moral order or society: the individual could now—certainly not in actual practice, but at least according to the normative idea—know that he or she was respected as a legal person with the same rights as all other members of society, while still owing his or her social esteem to a hierarchical scale of values—which had however, also been set on a new foundation. (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 140)

Honneth (2014, p. 261) notes that under democracy:

> All adult (and usually only male) members of society should now be capable of recognising each other as equally entitled citizens within the nation state, because the formation of a democratic will accorded the same weight to one citizen as it did to another.

In Australia, the *Age Discrimination Act* was passed in 2004 and is part of Australia's anti-discrimination policy (AHRC, 2015). As a result, older people in Australia are recognised in the legal sphere both as citizens of the democratic state and as citizens that must be recognised (Honneth, 2014; Fraser & Honneth, 2003). However, active ageing policy, which has been implemented primarily for fiscal reasons (e.g., keeping health care costs down and keeping older people employed in order to reduce pensions) fails to recognise the agency and autonomy of older people, as it suggests that policy makers and researchers know what is best for older people, and that older people cannot

make appropriate health- and work-related decisions for themselves. Therefore, although older people are recognised by the core institutions of the Australian Government, active ageing policy fails to recognise them.

The third sphere that Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) discusses is that of individual achievement, which 'emerged as a leading cultural idea under the influence of the religious valorisation of paid work' (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 140). Thus, Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) defines the third sphere of individual achievement as work. This sphere is distinctive in that its normative reference point is a middle-class male, and the normative reference point for a working person is usually mid-life:

> Of course, the latter kind of social relation—which represented a third sphere of recognition alongside love and the new legal principle in the developing capitalist society—was hierarchically organised in an unambiguously ideological way from the start. For the extent to which something counts as 'achievement', as a cooperative contribution, is defined against a value standard whose normative reference point is the economic activity of the independent, middle-class, male bourgeois. What is distinguished as 'work', with a specific, quantifiable use for society, hence amounts to the result of a group-specific determination of value—to which whole sectors of other activities, themselves equally necessary for reproduction (e.g., household work), fall victim. Moreover, this altered principle of social order at the same time represents a moment of material violence insofar as the one-sided, ideological valuing of certain achievements can determine how much of which resources individuals legitimately have at their disposal. (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 141)

Therefore, while an individual who works as an engineer, which is typically a male-dominated profession, is regarded as upper middle class but an individual who works in a caring capacity which is regarded as female-dominated is not regarded as upper middle class. The salaries afforded to male-dominated professions are usually higher than those afforded to female-dominated professions (HealthTimes, 2016; Taykon Pty Ltd, 2012).

The *Age Discrimination Act 2004* made it illegal to discriminate against someone in the workplace due to their age (AHRC, 2015). In combination with the recognition of older people through pensions and superannuation (Workplace Info, 2015), this means that older people in Australia are recognised in the work or achievement sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003).

2.6 Active Ageing and the Sphere of Work

Older people aged sixty-five and over are usually unable to participate in the work sphere due to retirement, although they are recognised for their previous work and achievements through pensions and superannuation (Workplace Info, 2015). However, many older people undertake volunteer work (see sections 4 and 11) because they believe that, due to active ageing discourse (see Chapter 5), they must continue to work after retirement in order to receive recognition for their achievements. Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, pp. 141–142) discusses the intermeshing of payment and respect:

> Between the new status hierarchy—the gradation of social esteem according to values of industrial capitalism—and the unequal distribution of material resources there is, to this extent, more than a merely external relation of 'super-structure' and 'basis', of 'ideology' and objective reality. The hegemonic, thoroughly one-sided valuation of achievement rather represents an institutional

framework in which the criteria or principles for distributing resources in bourgeois-capitalist society can meet with normative agreement. This additional consideration gives rise to what Richard Munch has rightly called the intermeshing of payment and respect in the capitalist economic sphere.

Active ageing discourse from policy makers and researchers proposes that older people can remain healthy and enjoy older age by engaging in healthy lifestyle practices such as exercise and working. Although this appears to be a good policy, it suggests that older people do not know what is best for themselves if they choose an alternative way of living such as rest and relaxation. This infantilises older people and fails to recognise their autonomy and agency. Active ageing discourse discusses active ageing as 'successful' ageing, thereby proposing that older people who do not engage in active ageing are 'failures'. Active ageing suggests that recognition can only be granted if older people behave in 'appropriate' ways, and it fails to recognise older people who do not engage with the policy and discourse. Therefore, active ageing is regarded as a lack of recognition and thus a form of disrespect.

Self-esteem expands as an individual experiences recognition in more than one sphere:

> Accordingly, the practical self-relation of human beings—the capacity, made possible by recognition, to reflexively assure themselves of their own competences and rights—is not something given once and for all; like subjective recognition expectations, this ability expands with the number of spheres that are differentiated in the course of social development for socially recognising specific components of the personality. (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 138)

Therefore, people need more than one form of recognition to experience a positive sense of self, and any exclusion from social recognition due to recognition accorded for

active ageing and work may have a detrimental effect on older people. Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 138) states that 'the distinctively human dependence on intersubjective recognition is always shaped by the particular manner in which the mutual granting of recognition is institutionalised within a society'.

Dictating to older people that they must continue to work in order to receive recognition and respect is ageist in nature. However, the problem is not volunteer work per se; rather, the problem is that the ageist, sexist, othering nature of capitalist societies that marks social recognition as being due to paid work excludes a number of structural groups (e.g., young people, women undertaking unpaid work in the home, carers, people with disabilities and health problems, and older people). Therefore, active ageing discourse is a problem, as it suggests that older people who want to rest and relax rather than take part in exercise and work are not ageing 'successfully'.

The active ageing paradigm dictates that older people should be engaged in some form of work in order to achieve social recognition, even after they have retired and received recognition for their achievements through pensions and/or superannuation (Workplace Info, 2015). This is ageist and is thus a form of social injustice that 'is experienced the moment it can no longer be rationally understood why an institutional rule should count on agreement in accordance with generally accepted reasons' (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 130).

Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 135) discusses social injustice as the withholding of recognition, which is a form of disrespect:

> It therefore seems more plausible to me that experiences of injustice be
> conceived along a continuum of forms of withheld recognition—of disrespect—
> whose differences are determined by which qualities or capacities those affected

take to be unjustifiably unrecognised or not respected. Such an approach also allows us to consider that differences in the experience of injustice can be determined not only with regard to the object, but also by the form of missing recognition.

Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 175) concludes that: 'it is the three principles of love, equality and merit that together determine what should now be understood by the idea of social justice'. Thus, active ageing fails to recognise older people who do not engage in the practice of active ageing and is therefore a form of social injustice.

2.7 Conclusion

Active ageing discourse appears to be positive because it recommends a healthy lifestyle, exercise and work for 'successful' ageing; however, this implies that older people who do not engage in active ageing are 'unsuccessful' or 'failures'. The discourse suggests that policy makers and researchers know what is best for older people rather than the older people themselves, thereby infantilising them and failing to recognise their autonomy and agency. Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition shows that a lack of recognition is disrespectful; therefore, active ageing disrespects older people and is a form of social injustice.

3. Active Ageing in Policy and Research

3.1 Introduction

A comprehensive literature review of policy documents and research into active ageing was undertaken. The definition of active ageing according to the WHO (2002) is noted.

However, the respondents to this study used the term active ageing to mean participation in work and/ or physical activities because this is the limited definition used by Australian policy framework.

Australian policy documents were investigated to ascertain the extent to which active ageing policy is written within the framework of the WHO (2002) definition and explanation of active ageing and I note that most Australian policy is limited to work and/ or physical activity because it has been written within an economics framework that regards older age as a burden to the state.

Active ageing literature is critiqued and most of the research is limited to economics and medical research which has been conformed to government policy framework (Boudiny, 2012). Sociologists have critiqued this limited understanding of active ageing.

3.2 Definition of Active Ageing

The WHO (2002, p. 12) defines active ageing as "Active ageing is the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age." The WHO (2002) published a document "Active Ageing: A Policy Framework" which provides their definition of active ageing and ensures that it is understood that active ageing does not merely refer to work and/ or physical activity:

> The word "active" refers to continuing participation in social, economic, cultural, spiritual and civic affairs, not just the ability to be physically active or to participate in the labour force. Older people who retire from work and those who are ill or live with disabilities can remain active contributors to their

families, peers, communities and nations. Active ageing aims to extend healthy

life expectancy and quality of life for all people as they age, including those

who are frail, disabled and in need of care. (WHO, 2002, p. 12)

Despite this broad and inclusive definition of active ageing, Australian government

policy has limited active ageing framework to economic considerations that continue to

create inequalities for older people, especially those who experience ill health and

disability (Boudiny, 2012; Timonen, 2016).

3.3 Australian Active Ageing Policy

 "The Active Ageing: A Policy Framework" is a document created by the WHO and

published in 2002. This is the framework for policies as set by governments of

countries for their ageing populations and "is intended to inform discussion and the

formulation of action plans that promote healthy and active ageing" (WHO, 2002, p. 2).

Australian policy documents refer to participation in social, economic, cultural, spiritual

and civic affairs (except the state of Victoria (Council on the ageing, 2008) but no

provision (except in Queensland (Communities, Queensland Government, 2016)) is

made for older people to take part in any activities other than physical fitness or work

(either voluntary or paid) (Community Services ACT Government, 2015; Communities,

Qld Government, 2016; Consumer Affairs, 2015; COTA WA, 2016; Council on the

Ageing, 2008; Government of SA; 2014; Northern Territory Government, 2007; NSW

Government 2011; State of Tasmania, 2012; State of Victoria, 2008).

The driving force behind active ageing policy in Australia is to "reduce the burden of an

ageing population on the State's budget" (Government of SA, 2014, p. 6). Enhancing

health and reducing chronic illnesses and extending paid work opportunities for older

people are important in these policies because they are regarded as the cause of economic burdens to the governments. Boudiny (2012, p. 1079) suggests 'national governments of many industrialised countries tend to place economic aspects at the centre of their active ageing policies.' This is supported in other articles (for example: Clarke & Warren, 2007; Perek-Bialas, Ruzik & Vidovicova, 2006; Timonen, 2016) and is reflected in all the Australian policy documents e.g. State of Tasmania (2012, p. 9) "Participating in the workforce has a direct impact on the economy, and with the workforce ageing, there are significant economic implications". Also, Communities, Queensland Government (2016. p. 19) states:

> The economic contribution of older workers is enormous. A 2012 report estimated that an increase of three percentage points in participation among workers aged 55 and over would result in a $33 billion boost to the Australian Gross Domestic Product.

Thus, the policy document that explores active ageing beyond the limited framework of work and physical activity also frames the policy within the boundary of economics. Further, The State of Tasmania (2012, p. 10) states: "The third and final report was released in December 2011. Realising the economic potential of senior Australians: turning grey into gold".

Walker (2006) argues that governments are narrowly focusing active ageing policy on employment and trying to make older people work past the current retirement age due to what is regarded as an economic imperative. Mendes (2013) takes this argument further and suggests that ageing is portrayed in the media in a way that promotes governmental discourse around healthy, productive (older people working) and successful ageing. This framing of active ageing proposes that older people who are

not healthy and working are not ageing successfully (Timonen, 2016). Australian policy documents continue to uphold inequalities for older Australians who experience ill health (Boudiny, 2012; Timonen, 2016). For example, the Government of Western Australia has limited its "active ageing" policy to health issues and physical activity:

> Living Longer Living Stronger has been independently evaluated, and is supported by international research as an effective means of controlling many conditions associated with ageing. Participants receive individualised programs for their medical circumstances, then participate in a fun group setting. Living Longer Living Stronger operates in sixty gyms and clinics throughout Western Australia. (COTA WA, 2016)

While the Northern Territory Government (2007, pp. 9-11) discusses health and on page 12 of the document discusses work:

In the next five years the Northern Territory Government proposes to:

• Promote opportunities for senior Territorians to continue in the workforce by working with the private sector to educate employers about the needs and realities of employing older workers.

• Assist mature age people to return to work, upgrade their skills or try a new trade or occupation.

• Promote flexible work practices in the public sector to assist people to balance their family responsibilities and other demands on their time.

• Implement special arrangements to permit "positive" discrimination in favour of aged persons seeking employment with the Northern Territory Government.

> • Continue to run financial planning seminars that public servants of any age can attend. (Northern Territory Government, 2007 p. 12)

Unlike, the other states of Australia, the State of Victoria is very vague about active ageing and its implementation and fails to address any of the concepts of active ageing. Victoria leaves the implementation of active ageing policy to local governments (Victoria, 2008). The Council on the Ageing (Victoria, 2008, p. 2) states:

> Victoria's commitment to addressing disadvantage and creating opportunities has been outlined in *A Fairer Victoria*, and provides a context for ensuring older people are afforded good quality of life.
>
> Other significant developments include:
>
> > • the establishment of Seniors Rights Victoria to help prevent the abuse of older people, and safeguard their rights, dignity, and independence;
> >
> > • the development and implementation of an 'active service model' approach for delivery of community care services;
> >
> > • The COTA/MAV Positive Ageing Strategy, which was funded to develop and implement municipal healthy ageing plans and positive ageing strategies.

These are simply rights that all citizens in Australia expect, and are not directly addressing the issues (except health) of ageing or active ageing as outlined by the WHO (2002, p.12). "Active ageing is the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age." The reference to addressing disadvantages and outlining opportunities in "A Fairer Victoria"

is misleading. This document mentions older people once (State of Victoria, 2008, p. 3): "seniors are being helped to remain independent", the rest of the document is about the entire population of Victoria.

Active ageing policy in Australia is narrowly focussed on older people continuing to work and being physically active so they can live healthy and productive lives. Further, this policy is suggesting that any older people who do not work, are not physically active, and/ or suffer from ill health or disability are not ageing successfully.

3.4 Active Ageing and Research

Although the WHO's framework for active ageing policy (WHO, 2002, p. 12) defines 'The word "active" refers to continuing participation in social, economic, cultural, spiritual and civic affairs, not just the ability to be physically active or to participate in the labour force.' a search for research about active ageing finds the majority of articles refer to active ageing and the economy, and Moulaert and Biggs (2012, p. 28) propose that this research is conducted 'in order to make retirement actuarily neutral and more flexible, and to ensure 'jobs for older workers' … [with] little place for stereotypes against older workers.'. Boudiny (2012, p. 1079) states: 'the concept of active ageing is rooted in population ageing and its consequences for public finances'. There are articles about active ageing, medical issues and physical activity and Boudiny (2012, p. 1079) discusses this as the result of governmental concerns about rising health care costs as well as rising pension costs. While there are articles about active ageing and work (for example, Boudiny, 2012; Walker, 2006; Walker, 2009; Wilkinson & Ferraro, 2004) beyond the sphere of economics, there are no articles on spiritual or civic affairs and one article by Oglak & Hussein (2016) that refers to cultural issues (amongst Muslim migrants in the UK). Moulaert and Biggs (2012, p. 27) suggest:

At the beginning of its international journey, active ageing is thus driven by international organizations and states, especially the OECD and the USA (expressing power through policy discourse), while … gerontologists (representing the production of knowledge), broadly supported that proposed direction.

Thus, the economic nature of Australia's active ageing policy that is attempting to remove the economic 'burden' of older people from the government and the healthcare system, is reflected in other industrialised nations around the world. Further, The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2004, p. 39) argues that 'seldom is the focus on what older people themselves desire, and more often on "what you think we need"'.

Kim Boudiny (2012, p. 1080) proposes that active ageing research is narrowly focussed on what governments desire and that older people who are not working in paid employment or who suffer from ill health and physical disability are excluded from policy and research. Thus, older people who are not willing or able to work due to physical disability suffer from devaluation and inequality. Further, Boudiny (2012, p. 1086) argues:

In light of our critical discussion, the important point is that precisely this component of disability/physical functioning plays a major role in the unattainability of the ideal for many older adults. A review by Depp and Jeste (2009) shows that the mean proportion of successful agers amongst studies with this component in their definitions is 27.2 per cent, while studies excluding this component achieve 63.8 per cent successful agers. Ranzijn (2010: 717) expresses the issue aptly as this finding 'calls into question the utility of a

concept which implies that two-thirds of older Americans somehow "fail" at ageing'.

Timonen (2016, p. 36) suggests that active ageing is a social construct that is used by policy makers and researchers to achieve the aim of reducing the cost that ageing populations represent to governments. Older people who do not fit the social construct as it is proposed by the policy makers are deemed to be 'failures'. The results of this study also suggest this finding. Research needs to specifically look at active ageing and match the original intention of the WHO (2002) so it is beneficial to older people as well as governments.

3.5 Conclusion

Although the WHO (2002) defines active ageing as including social, economic, cultural, spiritual and civic affairs, not just as work or being physically active, Australian active ageing policies are driven by the desire to relieve the financial 'burden' of older people. Australian policies, therefore, focus on work and health and continue to exclude older people who experience ill health and disability.

Research into active ageing is largely economics and medical and is confined to match governmental framework and policies.

Sociologists critique this research and suggest that research about active ageing needs to broaden, be inclusive and investigate the needs of older people not just the economic imperatives of governments.

Further, sociologists critique active ageing policies and research and suggest what this study has found, that older people who experience ill health and disability are deemed to be 'failures'.

4. History of Ageing Research

Sung et al. (2010, p. 128) state that 'The issue of respect for the elderly has been gaining increased attention from gerontologists'. Other researchers have also noted increased research into respect and older people (Palmore & Maeda, 1985; Streib,1987; Ingersoll-Dayton & Saengtienchai, 1999; Sung, 2004). However, when the research first began, it focused on abuse of older people rather than respect. Verbal and physical abuse of older people is arguably a separate concept from disrespect, although the latter may be regarded as a pre-condition for abuse (Doe et al., 2009). Honneth (1992, p. 192) states that 'The experience of social degradation and humiliation jeopardises the identity of human beings to the same degree as the suffering of illnesses jeopardises their physical well-being'; therefore, abuse is a lack of recognition, which is a form of disrespect. British gerontologists first identified abusive behaviour towards older people in 1975. At that time, it was labelled 'granny battering' (Baker, 1975; Burston, 1975); which was disrespectful, ageist and sexist, as it diminished the problem by making it appear as though it only affected older women with children and grandchildren.

British reports in the 1970s focused on 'elder abuse', which led to extensive research into 'elder abuse' in the United States (US) in the late 1970s and 1980s. Although ageism and disrespect formed part of the discourse surrounding abuse, respect for older people was regarded as irrelevant to the research. Several nations, including Australia, Canada, China, Norway and Sweden, began conducting research into the abuse of older people in the 1980s and reported their findings to the United Nations (UN). Other countries, such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, India, Israel, Japan, South Africa and some European countries, did not report such research until the 1990s (WHO/IPNEA, 2002). The UN declared 1999 the International Year of the Elderly. At this time, issues

surrounding the maltreatment of older persons were broached as a problem of international concern. The WHO commissioned a study into the abuse and neglect of older people in 2002, with disrespect and ageism viewed as part of the problem; however, the report failed to investigate respect for older people as a topic of interest. The participants identified the following key categories of abuse:

- structural and societal abuse

- neglect and abandonment

- disrespect and ageist attitudes

- psychological, emotional and verbal abuse

- physical abuse

- legal and financial abuse (WHO/IPNEA, 2002).

While respect has not been completely ignored as a topic of interest for researchers in ageing, replacing research into respect with research into disrespect does not answer all the questions that arise about the respectful treatment of older people because there is a difference between recognising people and failing to recognise them. Further, a large proportion of European research into ageing is now centred on active ageing and age management (Walker, 2009).

Despite research into, and acknowledgement of, the issue, the abuse of older people continues to present a problem for many countries, including Australia (Kurrle & Naughtin, 2008; Kurrle et al., 1997; Sadler, 1992). Issues around egregious abuse, such as violence and financial abuse, command the attention of social science research into the maltreatment of older people, whereas the more subtle, everyday experiences of disrespect have received less attention (Hockey & James, 1999). For example, the notion that the onset of older age constitutes a return to infantile dependence and

immaturity, as part of the ongoing use of the term 'life cycle', continues to resonate in social imagination and, arguably, in Western discourse (Blatterer, 2007; Hockey & James, 1999; Powell, 2001; Walker, 2009). This discourse demeans and belittles older people, and although it has been suggested that such discourse is in place to make older bodies acceptable (Gilleard & Higgs, 2005, 2007; Hockey & James, 1993), it causes a great deal of disrespectful attention and discrimination against older people, as well as over-protectiveness and infantilisation. Further, the discourse of infantilisation actively rejects the agency of older people and discusses their issues in a disrespectful manner (Gilleard & Higgs, 2005, 2007; Powell & Longino, 2001; Rowland, 1984; Walker, 2009). Although these discourses may appear to those who engage in them as non-abusive, it is misrecognition of older people and is therefore disrespectful.

5. Theories of Ageing and Older Age

Although research into abuse of older people from the 1970s was extremely important in highlighting this issue, the language used in writing up the research and in formulating theories about ageing was occasionally inappropriate.

The term 'older', as applied to ageing people, has differing connotations between cultures and between historical periods within Western culture (Blaikie, 1999). Further, it implies a homogeneity that does not exist within the group of people aged sixty-five and over. Wenger (2003) and Minichiello and Coulson (2005) discuss the use of the terms 'elderly', 'older' and 'ageing' as being ageist and promoting ageist ideas. Wenger (2003) suggests that 'older' is not entirely satisfactory, as everyone—whether a young child or a person over the age of 65—is older than someone else. Wenger (2003) and Minichiello and Coulson (2005) suggest that the language needs to be reinvented to deal with this issue, but they do not propose any alternatives. For lack of a better term,

this study uses the word 'older' to discuss people aged sixty-five and over. Further, Wenger (2003, p. 111) proposes:

> In a climate of growing consciousness of discrimination on the basis of ascribed characteristics and the emergence of political correctness, 'the elderly' came to be perceived as a stigmatizing category. … Why should being older than others be stigmatizing, unless being old is somehow a disadvantage?

While the terms 'older' and 'ageing' can be viewed negatively, they also have positive connotations; for example, a 4-year-old child wants to be 'older' than four and is excited to be turning 'five'. Being regarded and spoken about as being 'older' can merely imply the biological concept that one person has been living longer than another person. The suggestion that every concept, term and idea used in research into ageing is either 'ageist' or 'negative' could imply that researching older age is an 'ageist' or 'negative' undertaking, which is not the intention of most research into older age.

Wenger (2003) notes that it is important to understand that, even while discussing people over the age of sixty-five as being older, the group encompasses more than one generation and is not a homogeneous group where 'one-size-fits-all' (Wenger, 2003, p. 111). Further, many concerns of this group may not be age-related, but rather factors that apply across age groups. For example, ill health, disability, financial difficulties, discrimination and abusive treatment are not problems that are solely confined to people over the age of 65. Further, older people are as much agents within their own contexts as are people under the age of 65. Whether people over the age of sixty-five are capable of exercising power and control over their situation to rise above stereotypical definitions of 'older' and 'elderly' depends on their feelings about themselves and their experiences. Although age-grading presents problems (especially in homogenisation)

for the socially constructed group of people over the age of 65, it has been instituted largely for bureaucratic purposes. It is not the age-grading per se that causes difficulties, but rather the ageist viewpoint that suggests there is a problem when people reach the age of 65. Walker (1981, pp. 74–75) states that 'the stereotype of the elderly as a homogeneous group with special needs exerts a powerful influence on public attitudes and policies towards this group'.

Ageing may expose individuals to stigma; therefore, older people may devalue themselves and experience devaluation in relationships with the non-aged. Research has shown that people of all ages suffer from 'institutionalised age-grading' at various stages of life (Calasanti & King, 2007; Russell, 1981, p. 75). Russell (1981) suggests that, in informal contexts, people tend to choose friends from among their own age group. Age segregation is regarded as a 'voluntary' shutting out of those who might discredit one's self (Fontana, cited in Russell, 1981, p. 77). However, in current societal circumstances, age segregation (e.g., in the form of retirement villages) may have more to do with downsizing accommodation due to age-related needs rather than the need for care. That is, voluntary age segregation into retirement villages does not occur because older people are frail, vulnerable and in need of care, but because older people living in these villages find it more convenient, as did some of the respondents in this research.

Blaikie (1999) proposes that socioeconomic factors influence the childhood health and health behaviours of individuals and therefore directly affect individuals' longevity. Although there is more than just a physical dimension to ageing, the view that growing old is simply a period dominated by physical and mental decline, or the 'biomedical' model of ageing (Phillipson, 1998), was a dominant approach to ageing in the mid-twentieth century. This model was replaced by a 'broad political economy approach'

(Phillipson, 1998, p. 17) in the late 1970s. Walker (1981, p. 73) describes the political economy approach as:

> An approach to ageing based on political economy will examine the relative social and economic status of different groups of elderly people as well as the relationship between the elderly and younger generations. Thus it is argued that poverty in old age is primarily a function of low economic and social status prior to retirement and the depressed social status of the retired, and secondarily, of the relatively low level of state benefits. Social policies which have failed to recognize inequality in old age and the causes of low economic and social status have therefore failed to tackle the problem of poverty and low incomes. The starting point for policy-makers should be the labour market and the social relationship between age and the labour market.

Postmodernism appears to have deconstructed the notion of 'the political economy of old age' (Powell, 2001, p. 121). However, as political economists acknowledge that not all the older population exists in poverty and dependence, this is perhaps an assumption from Powell rather than a realistic deconstruction. Class and power have a significant effect on how older people are perceived and treated, and whether they are expected to retire from the workforce at the biological age of 67. For example, at the age of 84, the immensely powerful Rupert Murdoch is still the Managing Director of News Limited. Australian Government discourse and advertising has attempted to dispel the belief that older people are no longer capable of working by showing advertisements on television that suggest that employing older people is beneficial to companies. This promotes active ageing policy and is therefore viewed as benign, but the policy is largely being implemented because the age of pension eligibility is gradually being increased to 67

(Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2014), and it is a fiscal policy rather than a social policy. However, this thesis does not view active ageing policy as benign, as it suggests that older people who want to rest and relax are not ageing 'successfully', and it is based on the view that policy makers and researchers know what is best for older people rather than the older people themselves, thereby infantilising them and failing to recognise them as autonomous agents who can make their own decisions.

Symbolic interactionism is based on the premise that people relate to the world around them based on the meanings they imbue into the objects around them. Blaikie (1999) proposes that these meanings arise out of interactions between individuals. Therefore, symbolic interactionism focuses on subjective meanings of human behaviour and social processes rather than on society as a whole. Further, it conceptualises ageing as a dynamic process that is responsive to the structural and normative contexts of society, as well as to individual capacities and perceptions (Russell, 1981). Therefore, the construction of behaviour and activity depends on the interpretation and negotiated interactions between individuals and society (Russell, 1981). Age-related issues such as retirement may also affect how individuals perceive themselves and their relationship with the social environment. This new perception of self and the social environment may have a detrimental effect on the individual. However, this is an individual process, and many older people are happy to retire and have more time for activities other than work; therefore, retirement has little to no effect on their self-perception or self-esteem.

Symbolic interactionism suggests that ageing outcomes reflect a reciprocal relationship (Honneth's concept of mutual recognition) between the individual and the social environment, wherein the individual both contributes to, and receives from, his or her

social environment. Symbolic interactionist theory emphasises symbols, negotiated reality and the social construction of society, which in turn leads to an interest in the roles people play. Goffman (1967) uses a theatre analogy to describe the roles that people undertake in their interactions with others. Goffman (1967) proposes that human social behaviour is scripted, and that people are role-taking actors. Role-taking may therefore be regarded as a necessary means of interaction, as it permits individuals to understand another person's perspective (Goffman, 1967), which in turn allows for mutual recognition. Thus, individuals see what their actions might mean to people they interact with. Although societal stereotypes suggest that ageing individuals may not feel able to take another's perspective and may not feel able to care about how their behaviour affects others, this is not necessarily what happens, as empathy is not an age-related quality. Constructing a group of people over the age of sixty-five and labelling that group as 'older' does not affect the empathy or behaviour of the individuals in that particular group. Nelson (2004, p. ix) discusses stereotyping and prejudice and states that they 'arise from this automatic social perception … age prejudice is one of the most socially condoned, institutionalised forms of prejudice in the world'.

Symbolic interactionism emphasises the improvisational quality of roles, with human social behaviour seen as poorly scripted and humans as role-making improvisers (Blumer, 1969). This therefore places role-making as a key mechanism of interaction. Blumer (1969) proposes that all situations and roles in which people find themselves are inherently ambiguous; therefore, people are required to create their roles before they can act. This directly affects the roles that older people are required to undertake in Western society. If the group of 'older people' is regarded as frail, ill and vulnerable, then the roles in which they find themselves may not match their own self-perception, which is a failure to recognise older people. Therefore, the group must create roles for

themselves that have not been envisaged by other members of society, and they must exercise their own agency to do so. For example, as noted in Chapter 4 of this thesis, some of the respondents volunteered as members of Easy Care Gardening Berowra to help older people, while another was a volunteer working to catalogue Aboriginal languages in Australia, and some volunteered at Kids' Games Berowra. In Western society, many symbols are used to indicate older age, including grey or white hair, wrinkles, walking sticks, and human forms that are hunched over and holding walking sticks or walking frames, but none of these are signs of vitality, autonomy or the power of older people to influence their own destinies and outcomes. However, as will be outlined in Chapter 4, many older people are full of vitality, want to remain autonomous and independent, and want to make their own choices.

Powell and Longino (2001) observe that gerontological theories often reflect the values of their creators, and that the social norms and 'culturally dominant views of what should be the appropriate way to analyse social phenomena' (Powell & Longino, 2001, p. 201) strongly influence these theories. Theories that focus on the social problem of old age and/or the social problems that older people experience 'may have supported the ageism of which many are arguing against' (Powell, 2001, p. 122). For example, Cumming and Henry's (1961) disengagement theory suggests that there is a functional necessity for older people to progressively lose social roles and relationships. It posits that death breaks the necessary equilibrium between society and individuals, as death is considered socially disruptive unless older people have already disengaged from society and relationships before they pass. According to this theory, 'successful' ageing requires reduced activity and a decrease in effective involvement with society (Russell, 1981). The theory proposes that older people are not worthy of respect or consideration, that they hold no value for society as a whole, and that if they are ageing 'successfully'

under this theory, they are being denied relationships with younger people, including family relationships. Disengagement theory suggests that older people are a burden to society and promotes ageism and prejudice against older people. Further, it assumes that all older people withdraw from society, either because they are ignored due to their age or because they have voluntarily withdrawn due to disrespect and other poor treatment. However, many older people in the Australian context are actively engaged in volunteer work, which represents a useful contribution to society. Further, many respondents in this study also attend, and help out in, their church, and they are also members of various clubs that support social contributions and help people less fortunate than themselves, as outlined in Chapter 4. Powell (2001, p. 120) asserts that disengagement theory 'underplays the role cultural and economic structures have in creating the intentional consequence of withdrawal', which supports the view that older people have withdrawn from society and creates new reasons for their withdrawal. Further, Powell (2001, p. 120) argues that the theory engages in 'sociological reductionism' by providing one facile definition of older age, and it engages in 'functional teleology' by limiting the explanation about older age simply to its 'effects or death'. Disengagement theory underemphasises and undervalues the meanings and interpretations that individuals place upon their relationships (Powell, 2001). It also undervalues the agency and autonomy of older people and creates a model for disrespecting older people and denying them the intersubjective means of gaining a positive sense of self or mutual recognition.

Russell (1981) discusses personality theory (which is a psychological approach) and suggests that it denies the necessity for sociologically oriented explanations of 'successful' ageing. It takes a lifecycle approach and views adjustment to old age as the result of the individual personality. Ageing is conceptualised as a developmental

process, the outcome of which is reflected in individual coping styles (Neugarten, Havighurst, & Tobin, 1968). Personality theory does not consider a life course approach; rather, it structures older people into a second childhood, with all the concomitant meanings of a lack of personhood, an inability to make decisions and an inability to care for oneself. Therefore, this theory fails to account for the fit, able and socially, politically and productively active older people in society. The coping strategies that older people develop throughout their life have value in that those who are able to accept and develop themselves in changing circumstances may have the characteristics needed to cope well with age-related difficulties. However, discussing 'adjustments' to older age suggests that it is not a continuation of life, but an abrupt change to something that is fundamentally different. It also suggests that people who find age-related experiences difficult are 'failures' because they are not 'adjusting' appropriately, which signifies a lack of recognition of older people.

Havighurst's (1963) activity theory is the antithesis of disengagement theory and other theories that suggest that older people cannot actively participate in society. Activity theory assumes that 'successful' old age is when an individual is actively engaged in behaviours that compensate for the loss of previously held social roles. This means that older people should have a high degree of social integration and involvement in social networks in order to experience life satisfaction. Integration is an extensively developed research tradition in social psychology and US gerontology, wherein measures of integration are based on the frequency of social contact—that is, participation in social life and the maintenance of social contacts within an institutionalised framework of formal or informal social positions or roles (Russell, 1981). Therefore, activity theory accounts for fit, able and active elders as well as the frail, ill and vulnerable. However, according to Powell (2001, p. 120), 'Activity Theory neglects issues of power,

inequality and conflict between age groups'. Powell is thereby proposing that other age groups are in conflict with older people, and that younger people have more power than older people, which leads to inequality. While this may be true for some younger and older people, it suggests that society is not about cooperation between societal members, and that older people relinquish their power and agency because they are 'older', whereas they are capable of retaining their power and agency. Fehr and Gintis (2007, p. 45) propose that cooperation is part of society, and their research:

> suggests an alternative view about a basic predisposition of humans: strong reciprocity. Strong reciprocity is the behavioural predisposition to cooperate conditionally on others' cooperation and to punish violations of cooperative norms even at a net cost to the punisher. We show that a substantial proportion of experimental subjects typically exhibits strongly reciprocal behaviour. In addition, the evidence and our theoretical approach suggest that the interaction between strongly reciprocal and self-regarding actors drives the emergent patterns of social cooperation and social exchange.

Although the theory of social conflict suggests that older and younger people will experience conflict over power and resources, the respondents in this study discussed mutual respect and cooperation with young people (see Chapter 4). Further, Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition states that mutual recognition is important between actors. It is also important to note that individuals experience ageing differently according to their context, positive or negative feelings about self, and their roles within their family and in society. Activity theory shows respect towards older people and proposes that they maintain their social position and contacts, which is better for their welfare and quality of life than disengagement theory. However, the suggestion that there is a

'successful' way to age means that people who choose a different path are regarded as 'failures'. A theory that gives older people the freedom to choose to be engaged in life in the way they believe is best will enable them to exercise their own agency and make suitable choices.

McArdle and Yeracaris (1981) conduct content analysis of the Human Relations Area Files, which is an international collection of cross-cultural documents of culture, society and behaviour. They argue that the disengagement and activity theories do not demonstrate the 'social factors that affect the relationship between respect for the elderly and socially valued activities' (McArdle & Yeracaris, 1981, p. 327). Content analysis was identified as an appropriate method of analysing the interviews in this study. They note that disengagement theory does not account for the evidence that 'disengaged older people tend to be more unhappy, lonelier and sicker and to die sooner than more active people' (McArdle & Yeracaris, 1981, p. 309). However, this fails to explicate the link between disrespect and disengagement, and whether there is a link between unhappiness, loneliness, illness and early deaths. McArdle and Yeracaris (1981) suggest that in societies that value youth over age and experience, respect for older people is influenced by the kinds of socially acceptable activities they engage in, but that the disengagement and activity theories fail to consider the respect that older people may or may not receive. Blatterer (2007, p. 74) proposes that:

> At the core of the expansion of youth lies a selective and contradictory societal sanctioning of its socially constructed qualities. While on the one hand youth as a way of life is promulgated as desirable in today's flexible world … The ideal is to be adult and youthful but not adolescent.

It has been suggested that the media in Australia pays little attention to the population aged sixty-five and over because the culture is youth-oriented. The AHRC (2013, p. 9) finds that:

> **Finding:** Older Australians are underrepresented and often poorly portrayed in the media.
>
> 14.2% of the population are aged 65 years and over. However, people aged 65+ featured in only 4.7% of the advertising content.
>
> People aged 65+ were mentioned in only 6.6% of the editorial media content.
>
> People aged 55+ were referred to in only 11.5% of the editorial media content.
>
> Many older Australians feel that the media plays a significant role in contributing to a sense of invisibility of older people through limited, homogenous portrayals of older people.
>
> 61% of the Australian community feel that the portrayal of older people in the media is 'unfair'.
>
> Only 19% of Australians feel that the media portrays older people in diverse ways.
>
> Only 16% of Australians feel that there are enough older role models portrayed in the media.

Only 21% believe that there are generally as many positive stories in the media about ageing as there are negative stories.

> *'If you look at the percentage of people, the age bracket in a particular show, I think Australian-made television has a very low average age of perform[ers] compared to something coming out of Europe'.* (65+ years)

> *'Even like presenters and stuff on TV have an expiry date where they are no longer useful'.* (18–25 years)

In youth-oriented societies (such as Australia, as claimed by Furze et al., 2012, p. 412), it is difficult for older people to retain respect, and suggesting that respect may be offered when socially acceptable activities are undertaken, promotes rather than reduces ageism and discrimination. It is also important to understand that over-valuing youth does not necessarily mean disrespecting older people, but the AHRC (2013, p. 9) finds that Australian views of older people are negative, and thereby disrespectful:

> **Finding:** The media influences negative perceptions of older Australians.

> Older Australians feel that the media has a significant role to play in how older people are portrayed. For example, as:

> lonely
> victims
> unhealthy
> as sources of amusement.

Older people in the media are most often portrayed as frail, weak, victims or in poor health.

The most common words Australians use to describe the portrayal of older people in the media are *forgetful, slow, frail, vulnerable, burden, grump* and *sick.*

The media influences specific stereotypes: Over 70% of Australians feel that stories they have seen or read in the media influence their perception that older people are *victims*.

Around 60% feel that stories they have seen or read reinforce their perception that older people are *lonely or isolated*.

62% feel that stories they have seen or read influence their perception that older people are *bad drivers.*

Around 60% feel that stories they have seen or read in the media influence their perception that older people are *more likely to be sick.*

Although these theories of ageing do not intentionally disrespect older people, proposing theories based around 'successful' ageing is misrecognition because the 'taken-for-granted' notions of success suggest that people who age differently from the theory's concept of 'successful' must be 'failures'. Theories of ageing should avoid the concepts of 'successful' ageing and 'successful adjustment' to ageing. Further, van Dyk (2014) suggests that theories that promote or discuss achievement, competitiveness and productivity may be problematic for mid-life as well as older age, and that the distinction or binary between mid-life and older age should be challenged and

deconstructed, as should the distinction or binary between young children and teenagers. Again, although these theories do not intentionally disrespect people, they unintentionally cause disrespect. Discourse that creates a paradigm wherein old age is regarded as 'age', while the paradigm for mid-life is agelessness, fails to recognise that the 70-year-old marathon runner may have more in common with the 50-year-old manager than with the 90-year-old dementing person (van Dyk, 2014). There is a close link between emphasising the difference or 'otherness' of a group of people and inequality (van Dyk, 2014), and the discourse that associates older age with difference creates an old/young binary that is ageist in essence. Thus, the 're-valuation of "old age" turns out to be futile as long as the dichotomous and hierarchical construction of the poles "young-old" is not problematized at the same time' (van Dyk, 2014). van Dyk (2014, p. 100) does not deny the 'existential and corporeal dimension of ageing', but she proposes that removing hegemonial standards and the othering of older people by the homogenisation of ageing will allow for theories that are neither ageist nor othering of older people; this is discussed from the respondents' point of view in Chapter 4. Although this disregards the structural and institutional need for age-grading, the increase in longevity makes the '65 and over' age-grading too broad. Since the 2011 Census, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has replaced the constructed group of 'over 65' with a number of smaller age ranges that are denominated by 10-year groupings (ABS, 2014f). The number of older people in the '65 and over' group is now too large to make this one meaningful group for statistical purposes (ABS, 2014f).

Townsend (1981) suggests that the study of age is based on a theoretical framework whereby older age is conceptualised as a societal structuring dimension that deliberately structures older people into dependency and poverty. Thus, older people are viewed as a definable societal group that is given a particularly low societal status. Research using

Townsend's theory of structured dependency investigates inequalities in income, employment, health and many other areas that had hitherto been unnoticed, and thereby places older people alongside disabled, women and ethnic minority groups that suffer from deprivation, disrespect and prejudice (Bytheway, 1995). The problems of older age had been viewed very simply as older individuals not 'adjusting' to retirement properly and therefore not regarded as an appropriate area for research. However, Townsend (1981) debunked this ageist view and opened the way for non-ageist research. Although this approach does not consider the physical aspects of ageing, it is necessary to reveal the inequalities. Townsend (1981) states that older people's special needs were ignored until the mid-1970s, and that policy and research failed to accommodate the real needs of older people (Townsend, 1981). Townsend concludes that it was in the interests of those who wielded power in society to keep older people dependent, but fails to note that many older people are not dependent:

> Such 'structured' dependency is a consequence of twentieth-century thought and action, and especially of the management of modern economies and the distribution of power and status in such economies (Townsend, 1981, p. 23).

It is important to discuss the power and status of older people; however, allowing them to remain outside of the possession of older people reinforces the concept of older age being a time of dependency and lack of agency. In contrast, if older people are regarded as agents situated within their own contexts, they can recognise their agency, make plans for their future and take responsibility for themselves. This will lead to less ageism and discrimination and more respectful attitudes towards older people. However, as noted in Chapter 4 of this thesis, the respondents believed that, as a result of the structural and cultural opportunities for older people from lower income streams

and differing demographics, not all older people have recourse to build autonomous lives.

Historically, ageing theory has been dominated by psychological, physical and biological theories and the social aspects of gerontology have largely been ignored. However, postmodern perspectives on ageing regard age as full of possibilities that are not dominated by medical problems and older people are not viewed as lacking in monetary resources (Powell & Longino, 2001). Individuals can 'change their ageing identities and hide their ageing bodies in virtual ways as they become, amongst other things, silver surfers' on the Internet (Powell & Longino, 2001, p. 205). In addition, due to the use of cosmetics (Featherstone, 1982, p. 170) and cosmetic procedures to modify appearances, older people are an important part of the 'beauty' market and the medical profession (Powell & Longino, 2001). However, given that older people are actively encouraged to hide ageing bodies behind cosmetic masks, cosmetic surgery and Internet identities that show them to be youthful, Featherstone (1982, pp. 170–171) suggests that ageism and age discrimination are still important aspects of current society and current paradigms of ageing. A respectful view of ageing would release older people from these masks and allow them to make decisions about themselves based on their feelings and desires rather than marketing views of ageing and ageing bodies. However, not all marketing companies and large, profit-driven companies regard older people as a profitable market despite the affluence of many older people; as a result, they exclude older people from their products (e.g., insurance, which is discussed in Chapter 5).

Market capitalism is an important feature of postmodernist discourse, and 'older consumers and the silver economy' (Walker, 2009, p. 80) are becoming more important to companies that want to sell their products to a more affluent group of people who

want to preserve their younger identities (Featherstone, 1982, p. 173) and are not economically constrained by bringing up dependent children. Research has found that older people have wealth and should not be excluded from markets and consumer-driven discourse:

> In addition, older people constitute a sizable consumer group with age-related needs and a significant aggregate purchasing power. Over-55 year olds already control around a third of the nation's wealth and almost a quarter of all disposable income. This combination of assets and income make them a financially powerful group. (Consumer Affairs Victoria, 2015)

However, expecting older people to buy into the youth-obsessed, ageist attitudes that are displayed throughout the marketing industry means that this market is not regarded realistically. Further, this ageism fails to account for older people who are happy with themselves and their situations, and who want to enhance this rather than appear to be younger than they are. This may entail complete ease with, or indifference to, culturally represented ageism. It also fails to consider older people who are dependent solely on age pensions for their income, and who live in relative poverty and cannot take part in consumerism and the 'silver economy'. Therefore, the market capitalism paradigm is undifferentiated in its attempt to combat ageism. Further, services traditionally afforded to 'deserving' older populations are marketed as consumer products and care packages in postmodern societies (Walker, 2009), thereby suggesting that older people who cannot afford to pay for these services are not 'deserving'. The idea that older people must 'deserve' these services suggests that to be 'older' is equivalent to not being 'deserving', and that older people must do something to show that they can still be 'youthful' and thereby prove that they are 'deserving'. This is misrecognition of older

people. Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition suggests that recognition is not about the individual being 'deserving' of recognition, but that recognition of a person should be normative.

Discourse surrounding ageing bodies 'masking' the identity of older people suggests a tension between external appearance and the subjective sense of self and personal identity (Featherstone & Hepworth, 1988, p. 379; Powell & Longino, 2001). Powell and Longino (2001) propose that older people can move beyond repairing their ageing bodies by constructing a healthy lifestyle; however, this suggests that there is something inherently 'wrong' with an ageing body, and that ageing is the equivalent of being 'unhealthy'. Older people in Western countries can maintain a youthful outlook and appearance through 'diet and exercise techniques' (Featherstone, 1982, p. 170; Powell & Longino, 2001, p. 205). However, this simply promotes the idea that older people should take part in active ageing, and it suggests that marketers know what is best for older people, which infantilises them and fails to recognise them as autonomous people. Therefore, discourse that suggests that older people need to maintain a youthful outlook and appearance, and that promotes 'successful' ageing, disregards the fact that ageing has physical repercussions and is therefore disrespectful towards older people. However, the creation of youthful ageing identities has become important to the postmodern discourse of leisure. Thus:

> Postmodernism then not only opens up possibilities for understanding and theorizing awareness of the body and self-prudence, but also provides creative contextual frameworks for pointing out the positive images and representations of leisure and aging in advanced capitalist societies. (Powell & Longino, 2001, p. 205)

This reduces the ageing body to a cultural construction and ignores the premise that 'masking' the identity suggests an underlying reality that is quite different from what is seen (Featherstone & Hepworth, 1988, p. 379). Promoting respect and recognition will enable people to choose their own destinies and become more empowered to make choices.

Phillipson (1998) proposes that postmodern older age is fragmented by insecurity because the conditions for achieving a secure sense of self become challenging in later life; therefore, the anchorage of identity in older age, which is important for making sense of the world, does not exist in the same way that it did for previous generations. However, Cruikshank (2008, p. 149) argues that:

> Given the trend away from identity politics in sexuality studies, it seems curious that the identity 'old' has not undergone similar transformation in age studies. The social construction of ageing is widely acknowledged, but expansive and revisionist thought on 'women' and 'gay' finds few parallels with 'old' as an identity.

It is perhaps the intrinsic fear of growing old that researchers do not recognise in themselves that has kept research into older age locked in the old paradigm of 'identity', which enables researchers to separate themselves from their older respondents. An identity that narrows a person down to attributes only relating to 'older' may be used to discriminate against the person, whereas research into concepts of 'older' or 'women' or 'gay' should help prevent discrimination and tear down the barriers that lock people into one small set of attributes. Research around older people and 'identity' 'is not just enabling and meaningful but exclusive and repressive at the

same time: Any identity marks its downside and produces abjects that are unintelligible according to hegemonial identity standards' (van Dyk, 2014, p. 100).

The concept of 'older' was discussed and found to be an appropriate way to refer to people over the age of sixty-five although it is not the best way to refer to people and language could be changed to reduce ageism. Age grading was found to homogenise and therefore create stereotypes of older people even though it is largely used for bureaucratic purposes.

Although the 'biomedical' model of ageing (Phillipson, 1998) was the dominant approach to ageing in the mid-twentieth century it was later replaced by an approach that used political economy which investigated inequalities and poverty in older age. Powell (2001) critiques this approach but his critique was found to be based on a false assumption that political economy fails to recognise that older people do not always live in poverty.

Symbolic interactionism discusses reciprocal relationships (Honneth's concept of mutual recognition) between older and younger people and suggests that older people can create roles for themselves that do not match the roles that other societal groups expect.

Disengagement and personality theories were investigated and they fail to recognise the agency and autonomy of older people. Disengagement theory deliberately fails to recognise older people and regards them as a burden to society while personality theory appears to take a neutral stance but uses a life cycle approach which infantilises older people. McArdle and Yeracaris (1981) critique disengagement theory and find that it fails to explicate the link between disrespect, disengagement and other social problems experienced in older age.

Activity theory argues that 'successful' ageing is about individuals actively engaging in behaviours that compensates for the loss of previously held social roles but Powell (2001) suggests that it fails to investigate concepts of power, inequality and conflict. However, Powell (2001) assumes that different age groups must be in conflict with one another and that this leads to power and inequality issues, whereas Fehr and Gintis (2007) propose that various social groups cooperate with one another in order to share resources.

It was proposed that the concept that ageing must be 'successful' suggests that people who do not age according to the proposed theory are 'unsuccessful' or 'failures'. This is lack of recognition of older people.

Youth-orientation was briefly critiqued and over-valuing youth does not necessarily mean disrespecting older people. However, the AHRC (2013) found that Australian views of older people fail to recognise or respect them. Market capitalism was briefly explored and was shown to expect older people to be youth obsessed and therefore undifferentiated in its attempt to combat ageism. Market capitalism also uses discourse about 'identity' and older people obtaining 'youthful identities'. Although identity is prominent in earlier research about older age, research around older people and 'identity' 'is not just enabling and meaningful but exclusive and repressive at the same time: Any identity marks its downside and produces abjects that are unintelligible according to hegemonial identity standards' (van Dyk, 2014, p. 100).

Although active ageing discourse and policy is important in contemporary older age research, this thesis argues that active ageing suggests that policy makers and researchers know what is best for older people, which fails to recognise the autonomy of older people. Further, the suggestion that exercise and work are 'successful', and that rest and relaxation are therefore 'unsuccessful', represents a lack of recognition.

6. Thinking About Older Age

Older age has biological, social and societal implications. In the past, ageing was regarded as a negative occurrence that needed to be cured (Featherstone & Hepworth, 1988, p. 379); however, research into biological ageing supports the notion that people have a finite number of years to live. Minichiello and Coulson (2005, p. xii) discuss the finite age of people as being around 85 years, plus or minus seven years. According to Hayflick (1975), the cells in the human body have a finite number of divisions and will cease to divide and multiply at around 95 years, plus or minus two years. Garilov and Garilova (1991) agree that the human lifespan is fixed at around 95 years, plus or minus two years, but they strongly disagree with Hayflick's (1975) reasoning. Gavrilov and Gavrilova (1991) suggest that the age an individual can reach results from 'a cascade of dependent failures which occurs when one of the organism's systems randomly fails' (Gavrilov & Gavrilova, 1991, pp. 246–247). Oeppen and Vaupel (2002) argue that life expectancy has no foreseeable limit, that life expectancy has steadily increased by three months per year for the past 160 years, and that there is no reason to expect this regular increase in longevity to cease. Current research into the ageing of cells has led to the development of methods that are designed to prolong the lifespan of cells by 'reviving and maintaining cellular activities' (Yudoh & Karasawa, 2008, p. 214). Thus, if cells in the human body experience an increase in their lifespan, humans should experience a concomitant increase in their lifespan. Minichiello and Coulson (2005) propose that disease cures and preventions have added a few more years of life expectancy in Western countries. Although accidents, illness and disease are likely to be the cause of deaths occurring before the age of 82 years, some older people live disease-free lives

past 100 years of age. However, lifestyle changes brought about by industrialisation contribute to lower life expectancy rates when poverty is part of the life circumstance:

> Urban poverty is the most important predictor of environmental health risks when its definition includes other forms of deprivation such as physical assets, political influence, access to basic services and access to social capital. (McMichael, 2000, p. 1119)

Therefore, although medical science is increasing longevity in humans, an individual's actual lifespan will always be dependent on environmental, health, and societal and demographic issues. While medical science continues to search for a 'cure' for ageing, it is important to remember that all living things on this planet age and die (Featherstone & Hepworth, 1988, p. 375). Minichiello and Coulson (2005, p. 30) state that 'From the moment the spark of life quickens, the organism moves inexorably towards death. When we use the clock to measure this we call it "ageing"'.

Due to the increase in longevity and the decrease in infant mortality and early deaths due to disease, many people in Western countries live well beyond the age of 65. However, despite the increase in longevity, Western society is so obsessed with youthful attractiveness that there is a stigma attached to ageing. Blatterer (2007, p. 74) discusses youth as 'a way of life [which] is promulgated as desirable in today's flexible world', and he argues that 'adulthood can no longer retain its status as final destination; it is replaced by youth as a value' (Blatterer, 2007, p. 75):

> While a stranger is present before us, evidence can arise of his possessing an attribute that makes him different from others in the category of persons available for him to be, and of a less desirable kind—in the extreme, a person who is quite thoroughly bad, or dangerous, or weak. He is thus reduced in our

minds from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one. Such an attribute is a stigma, especially when its discrediting effect is very extensive; sometimes it is also called a failing, a shortcoming, a handicap. It constitutes a special discrepancy between virtual and actual social identity. (Goffman, 1963, pp. 2–3)

Further, people who do not have the features that are expected of youthful attractiveness are often bullied and experience the same kind of discrimination as ageing people (e.g., young people who are overweight) (Featherstone, 1982, p. 185). Western society does not respect people who do not fit the 'normal' description of young, slim, healthy, vital and good looking (Featherstone, 1982, pp. 184–185), despite the fact that this is not really the 'norm':

> We age from the moment we are born. But somehow western societies want to put a stop to the ageing process at about the time a person reaches the age of 21 or so. Why? So that they can retain and preserve the physical appearance and attractiveness associated with those so heavily featured by fashion, advertising and youth-preserving technologies and lifestyle industries. Perhaps our problem is not so much with ageing, but with our lust for youthfulness. (Minichiello & Coulson, 2005, p. xi)

Despite the fact that all living things age (Featherstone & Hepworth, 1988), identifying animals, plants or people by age is less than useful: 'We may be able to say that a person has lived for 50, 60 or 70 years but it tells us little else about them. It says nothing about their skills, their health, their interests, their wealth' (Minichiello & Coulson, 2005, p. 30). However, Western society appears to believe that if a person has lived for a long time, they must be 'unacceptable' in some way and therefore not

'deserving' of respect or respectful treatment, which contradicts the continuing search for cures for terminal illnesses. Expecting people to be 'deserving' of respect also contradicts Honneth's theory of recognition, which proposes that 'the respect for a human being as a person' can be traced 'back to a type of "recognition respect", because it primarily involves cognitively recognizing the fact that, with regard to the other, one is dealing with a being possessed of personal qualities' (Honneth, 1995, p. 112). Thus, according to Honneth's theory of recognition, respect is 'recognising' the other person as a human being—not about being 'deserving' of respect. Blatterer (2007, p. 74) argues:

> At the core of the expansion of youth lies a selective and contradictory societal sanctioning of its socially constructed qualities. While on the one hand youth as a way of life is promulgated as desirable in today's flexible world … The ideal is to be adult and youthful but not adolescent.

The constant search in Western society for 'youthfulness' and a 'youthful appearance' is also contradictory in nature, as it belies the fact that people who do not have a mental illness want to live for as long as possible, and therefore must experience ageing and all of the bodily issues that accompany it.

Society defines old age by categorising older people into socially constructed groups— for example, grandparent, senior, experienced person, pensioner. These terms are not as neutral as they appear to be, because they express something about ageing and society disapproves of ageing. Studies have suggested that categorising age into constructed groups gives age groups both ideological meaning in society and operational use for policy purposes (Bytheway, 1995; Calasanti, 2010; Calasanti & King, 2007). However, constructed age groups do not account for the many characteristics that do not belong to

an 'age group', such as maturity in young people and immaturity in older people, and wisdom in young people and playfulness in older people. Constructed age groups appear to be a means of discriminating against other people; for example, someone under the age of 18 years is 'too young to vote', while someone over the age of 67 years is 'too old to work' (Ehrenreich, 2005). Blatterer (2007, p. 81) suggests that:

> Our 'love with youth' is not confined to the 'youthful icons of popular culture' (Creedon, 1995, p. 1). The ideology of youth is, for example, readily connected to the imperative of flexibility in the labour market, where it underwrites the supply of human resources who are open to change and thus apt to be malleable to structural fluctuations—sifting out in the process those over-forties who are deemed 'too old'.

Societal age groupings may be constructed around work, and older age is often defined as the age of retirement:

> Retirement, the permanent withdrawal from the labour force, and the change in role from 'worker' to 'retiree', has become the passage into, and definitive characteristic of, old age. An expected, and often required, age of retirement has usually been synonymous with the age at which full pension eligibility has been set by the state. This has become the final age by which workers are expected to quit the workforce and as such has become the symbolic age marker of old age. (Minichiello & Coulson, 2005, p. 120)

Although retirement is considered an ageing or biological issue, it is actually a socially constructed phenomenon that Townsend (1981) defines as a euphemism for unemployment. Early retirement was ratified by society as the 'rights of workers when they have "earned a rest"' (Townsend, 1981, p. 10) and was directly associated with the

notion that 'old people' have the 'right' to 'peace and dignity', thus ignoring the desire of active older people to continue to earn an income (Townsend, 1981). However, perhaps Townsend (1981) ignores older people who would like to rest in peace and with dignity. The prevalent expectation in the active ageing paradigm is that successful ageing depends on older people continuing to work; however, this discriminates against older people who choose or need to rest due to health-related issues. Townsend (1981, pp. 10–11) suggests that: 'The satisfaction which is expressed by some retired people is more what they think is expected of them, and more an assertion of hope, than a true representation of what they feel'. However, giving older people a choice to retire or continue to work is perhaps a more positive position to take. Retirement age is determined by workplace issues, employment policies, public policies—especially those that determine pension and welfare issues—employer misconceptions about age, and societal attitudes and expectations (Minichiello & Coulson, 2005), while biological age and ageing present different concepts and issues. Older workers suffer from discrimination related to beliefs 'regarding lower productivity due to assumed lack of adaptability, limited capacity to learn new tasks and new technologies, and blocking the career prospects of the next generation of workers' (Minichiello & Coulson, 2005, p. 127). Phillipson (1998, p. 60) notes that retirement is 'a phase which is still subordinate in … status to that of paid employment'. Thus, older people are expected to retire into obscurity, and sometimes into penury, and they are no longer expected to express opinions about, or contribute to, society. Further, they experience a loss of lifestyle without objecting simply because they are 'older' and 'deserve' to retire (Phillipson, 1998). However, this argument is also guilty of homogenising older people by expecting that all older people want to remain in the workforce rather than retiring and resting. Further, older people do not always retire at 67 or slightly older simply because

that is the societal norm and is expected of them. Emphasising retirement as a societal expectation for older people problematises age. Allowing older people to make their own choice to rest or continue to work is more positive and respectful.

Social context often determines the definition of 'older'. In developed countries, an 'elder' is identified as someone who has retired and is usually over the age of sixty-five years (ABS, 2014a; Kite & Wagner, 2004; Kurrle et al., 1992), whereas other developed countries define a person as being 'older' from as young as 60 years of age (Doe et al., 2009). The structural age grouping of 'older people' as those aged sixty-five years and over is used for bureaucratic purposes; for example, 14.2% of Australia's population is aged sixty-five years and over (ABS, 2014a). This information enables the Australian Government to determine the numbers of people who are retired or close to retiring and may therefore require services such as home care, community transport and Meal on Wheels, or some other form of help or advice. A person's social context can change his or her age 'classification' for bureaucratic purposes; for example, indigenous women in Australia are classified as 'older' from the age of forty-five years due to their lower life expectancy compared to the life expectancy of non-indigenous women (McFerran, 2008). Although the lower life expectancy of indigenous people in Australia is a difficult and complex situation that needs to be addressed, to be classified as an 'elder' among Australian Aboriginal people provides status and respect that does not apply to older people in the non-indigenous Australian population.

However, in other contexts, grey hair and wrinkles may denote 'older age', or for people aged sixty-five years and over, 'older people' may be seen as those who are aged in their late seventies and over. The respondents in this study who were in their late

sixties and early seventies believed that 'older people' were aged 80 years and over (see Chapter 4).

Gilleard and Higgs (2005) discuss the concept of a 'third age', which occurs after paid employment, when child bearing and rearing have ended, and before people have begun to decline into ill health and frailty. This third age is a newer construct in age groupings. It is suggested that cultural developments occurring in the late twentieth century caused a dislocation of this group of people from the then current constructions of the life course (Gilleard & Higgs, 2005). Rowland (1984, p. 82) discusses ageing in Australia in terms of 'young-old' and 'old-old' from research conducted in the 1980s. This particular construction of older age is discussed in the US as young-old, old and oldest-old (Pirkl, 2009). However, although changing terminology may change ageist attitudes towards older people (Wilkinson & Ferraro, 2004, p. 341), this still leaves the fourth age, which is defined as being in decline through ill health and frailty (Gilleard & Higgs, 2005), wherein the pattern of language is 'focused on … the debilitative effects of ageing' (Wilkinson & Ferraro, 2004, p. 341). Therefore, because 'One of the most persuasive ways that ageism exists and persists in our society is through language' (Wilkinson & Ferraro, 2004, p. 341), older people could still experience ageism and ageist attitudes. People in the third age, or the 'young-old', sometimes take up charitable work helping 'old people' (Gilleard & Higgs, 2005). Identifying a person as 'older' or 'old' does not tell us anything about that person's physical, emotional or psychological abilities. Chronological age merely marks the passing of time, and:

> unlike 'typical' 2-year-old behaviour or physical development, there is really no
> 'typical' 72-year-old behaviour or physical condition. Despite this, many groups

in society use the measure of 'time' as a marker of 'type', as if it were the only

way to identify people. (Minichiello & Coulson, 2005, p. 31)

Therefore, although making decisions for or about people on the basis that they are

'older' or 'old' can lead to discrimination, ageism and poor decision making, it is also

helpful for governance purposes to place people into constructed age groupings.

7. Definition of Respect for Older People

Honneth (1990) proposes that a lack of recognition is disrespectful and that recognition

of an individual is therefore respectful towards that person. However, this thesis argues

from Honneth's (1990, 1995; Fraser & Honneth, 2003) perspective, as the respondents

had a less institutionalised view of respect, and it was a more personal concept for

them. The dictionary defines respect as 'esteem for or a sense of the worth or excellence

of a person, a personal quality or ability, or something considered as a manifestation of

a personal quality or ability' or as 'the condition of being esteemed or honoured'

(Dictionary.com, 2015). When an individual is treated with esteem or as being worthy

or excellent, that individual feels that he or she is being recognised (Honneth, 1990).

For example, the respondents in this study felt that they were respected when the people

they associated with treated them with esteem and honour and had regard for their

dignity.

According to Sung et al. (2010, p. 128), respect for older people is a general concept,

and it is therefore difficult to generate empirical data and provide clear guidance for

practice and research into respect for older people. Therefore, they suggest that

empirical evidence is more difficult to find, arguments are more difficult to construct

around what they assume to be a very general concept, and there are fewer studies about

respect for older people than there are about disrespect and egregious forms of

maltreatment of older people (Sung et al., 2010). Disrespect and egregious forms of abuse and maltreatment of older people are more 'sensational' and shocking to the general population, so they gain more media attention. Abuse and maltreatment of older citizens is more easily defined, and therefore recognised, than respect or disrespect. Therefore, it is easier to organise a study about these behaviours than about treating people with esteem and honour and having a regard for their dignity. However, Honneth (1995, p. 112) proposes that 'the respect for a human being as a person' can be traced 'back to a type of 'recognition respect', because it primarily involves cognitively recognizing the fact that, with regard to the other, one is dealing with a being possessed of personal qualities'. Thus, according to Honneth's theory of recognition, respect is 'recognising' the other person as a human being. Honneth (1990) relates respect to visibility and disrespect to invisibility. Thus, recognition does not mean a person must 'earn respect', but that the individual is simply recognised as an individual and is thereby respected.

Various studies (Dillon, 1992; Downie & Telfer, 1970; Silverman & Maxwell, 1978; Sung, 2001, 2004; Sung et al., 2010) provide definitions for 'elder' respect that centre on paying attention to the person. The studies use both qualitative and quantitative research methods and include a literature review (Sung, 2001), surveys of college students (Sung, 2004), surveys of, and interviews with, college students (Sung et al., 2010) and content analysis of ethnographies (Silverman & Maxwell, 1978).

Although these varying methods have produced some results discussing respect for older people, there is a general lack of research into this necessary and significant topic, and very little where the opinions of older people themselves are investigated. Therefore, the current study conducts qualitative research into respect for older people

from their perspective, and it analyses movies to determine whether older people are portrayed respectfully in popular culture.

It has been suggested that respect means taking a person seriously by paying careful attention to that person and having sympathetic consideration of the person's needs and wants (Dillon, 1992; Downie & Telfer, 1970; Sung et al., 2010). Gibbard (1992) states that respect is more than merely paying attention; it also requires actions and behaviours that are deserved by the recipient. However, to suggest that respect must be 'deserved' by the recipient denies older people their rights and status within society, and thereby fails to recognise them. As citizens and human beings, older people should be accorded respect automatically, not shown respect only if they 'deserve' it, and Honneth (1995) discusses respect as recognition and not about 'deserving'. Further, if older people are only accorded respect if they are 'deserving', how does society define 'deserving', and why should youth be accorded respect if 'youthful' behaviour is not also 'deserving'? The UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights does not suggest or infer that people must be 'deserving' of respect or dignity; rather, it states that it is a person's inalienable right. The declaration begins its preamble with:

> Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. (UN, 2015)

According to a behavioural experiment undertaken by Kunda and Schwartz (1983), actions and behaviours that 'show respect' are intended to convey a sense of altruistic and benevolent regard for older people. Silverman and Maxwell (1978) conduct content analysis of previously collected ethnographic material and propose that respect for older people is an open behavioural expression that can be both observed and recorded,

whereas Sennett (2003, p. 59) states that the 'the acts which convey respect—the acts of acknowledging others—are demanding and *obscure*'.

The following types of respect towards older people have been identified in research: service and care respect (e.g., housekeeping, personal care), victual respect (e.g., serving food and drink of the elder's choice), gift respect (providing gifts), linguistic respect (using respectful language), presentational respect (being courteous in appearance), spatial respect (providing elders with honourable seats), celebrative respect (celebrating birthdays), acquiescent respect (complying with elders' words), consulting respect (seeking advice), salutatory respect (greeting elders), public respect and ancestor respect (worshipping ancestors) (Ingersoll-Dayton & Saengtienchai, 1999; Mehta, cited in Sung et al., 2010; Palmore & Maeda, 1985; Silverman & Maxwell, 1978). Ingersoll-Dayton and Saengtienchai (1999) undertook qualitative research and analysed data from 79 focus groups conducted in the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand. These studies find that respect for older people has similar forms across cultures, but Ingersoll-Dayton and Saengtienchai's (1999) research concentrate on Asian cultures and do not include Western countries. Further, the studies do not provide examples of interactions between the older person and the younger person providing respectful behaviours, and they do not explain desires that both parties had from the interactions (Sung et al., 2010). However, this identification of respectful behaviours was undertaken to form a basis for empirical research into respect for older people. Researching the recognition of older people places the concept firmly in sociological theory and removes the doubts and ponderings produced by previous research.

Different cultures perceive actions and behaviours differently; therefore, respectful behaviour may arguably be regarded as a culturally based concept (Holmes & Holmes,

cited in Sung, 2004; Sokolvsky, cited in Sung, 2004), and cultural change may be regarded as a phenomenon that significantly affects the respect accorded to older people (Sung, 2004). In 2006, Yi and Lin (2009) investigated intergenerational relationships between adult children and older parents in Taiwan using a social change survey. They concluded that although significant social change was occurring, respondents who had good relationships continued to portray respectful behaviour towards their older parents. However, Yi and Lin (2009) cautioned that further research needs to be conducted as Taiwan becomes more Westernised. Therefore, although cultures perceive behaviours very differently, respectful behaviour towards older people is a behavioural phenomenon that requires a person to be 'recognised' in the three different spheres of love (intimate relationships), legal (core institutions of the state) and achievement or work (Fraser & Honneth, 2003).

Perspectives on the care and treatment of older people appear to be different between Asian and Western cultures (Holmes & Holmes, cited in Sung, 2004; Liu & Kendig, cited in Sung, 2004). For example, ancestor worship is not a value that Australians deem important, whereas this form of respect is regarded as significant in cultures that highly esteem Confucian ethics. Thus, while behaviours and values denoting respect for older people may take differing expressions in different countries, they are usually not completely absent. Sung (2004) conducts a cross-cultural study of college students in the US and Korea and finds that students in both countries wanted to show respect towards older people.

Sung (2004) researches the treatment of older people and comments that their status needs to be raised, particularly in Western societies and cultures. Gerontologists hope that respect for older persons will lead to older people being cared for with propriety

and humanity, and that they will therefore be more fully integrated with both family and society (Sung, 2004). However, this comment fails to consider the 'young-old' or 'third agers' who are still positively engaged in society. It also suggests that older people do not have any agency or choice, but are simply passively waiting for recognition and respect from younger people. Although older people are situated within the context of their social settings and society as a whole, they also have their own agency and can make choices on whether to simply accept disrespectful treatment or demand respectful behaviour from those associating with them. While it is important to note that some older people find themselves in vulnerable situations, not all older people experience this vulnerability.

Therefore, although studies into respect for older people have treated respect as an 'esoteric' term, this thesis uses Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition to define respect as recognition. Honneth (1995, p. 112) proposes that 'the respect for a human being as a person' can be traced 'back to a type of "recognition respect", because it primarily involves cognitively recognizing the fact that, with regard to the other, one is dealing with a being possessed of personal qualities'. Thus, according to Honneth's theory of recognition, respect is 'recognising' the other person as a human being.

8. Social Welfare and Older Age

The myth that older people are 'a financial burden, the increasing numbers of whom are threatening to create unsustainable demands and expectations regarding benefits and services' (Phillipson, 1998, p. 85) remains intact and societally unchallenged in the twenty-first century. Further, tax payers are becoming 'increasingly resistant to paying taxes for benefits which they themselves are unlikely to receive' (Phillipson, 1998, p. 65).

Australian citizens regard tax cuts as a right provided by the government at election time because the relationship between the taxes that people pay and the services they expect from the government is often opaque and unclear (McLelland & Scutella, 2010). The expectation of tax cuts contradicts the Australian method of financing age pensions through the taxation system. However, for the majority of Australian workers, tax is regarded as a burden that has to be endured, but one that is minimised where possible through tax deductions in end-of-financial-year tax returns (McLelland & Scutella, 2010). Thus, older people who depend on the age pension for their income (some older people have independent incomes in the form of investments and superannuation, and are therefore not eligible for the age pension), as well as the other members of society who depend on social welfare, are left in the precarious position of depending on the disinterested majority. While poverty, particularly among older people, exists in liberal welfare countries such as Australia, the US and the UK, it is also distant from the average middle-class voter; therefore, these voters are not inclined to support any form of welfare against poverty, whether in the form of age pensions, disability pensions, single parent allowances or unemployment benefits (McLelland & Scutella, 2010). Chomik (2014, p. 3) states:

> The incomes of older Australians tend to be lower and less heterogeneous than those of the overall population. Around 53 percent of those aged sixty-five and over have personal incomes concentrated between $200 and $400 per week, consistent with the reliance on an Age Pension. Only 22 percent of all Australians over 15 have the same range of personal income. The most common range for an older person's household income (unadjusted for household size) is $400–$600, compared to $1,500–$2,000 for all Australians.

In liberal welfare states, a number of popular media forums, such as tabloid newspapers, talk-back radio, current affairs television programs and popular television shows aired in family timeslots, are more likely to have an anti-welfare perspective than one that is sympathetic (McLelland, 2010). These forums tend to promote weak social solidarity and anti-welfare sentiments in the form of attaching a stigma to receiving welfare benefit—even for older people who are sometimes regarded as 'worthy' of receiving benefits—and they promote tax resistance among the middle and upper echelons of those societies (Wilson, 2006).

It has been suggested that public opinion of social welfare, and therefore age pensions, is influenced by the government and wealthy elites, and government social policies are not influenced by the public (Shapiro & Jacobs, 2010). Shapiro and Jacobs (2010) suggest that political leaders have an incentive to shape public opinion in favour of their preferred policies rather than engage the public in ways that respond to the leaders' wishes. They maintain that politicians fashion their social policies to conform to their party's and supporters' ideology and welfare objectives, and that they then use public opinion polls to create presentations of already-decided policies that will bring public opinion around to supporting them (Shapiro & Jacobs, 2010). Thus, while governments—for example, the Australian Government—support small pensions for older people, the older people depending on these pensions will be forced to live in poverty. In Australia, the poverty line is defined as 'Poverty line (50% of median income)—for a single adult was $400 per week, for a couple with two children it was $841 per week' (Australian Council of Social Services [ACOSS], 2015). Further, 'The most common range for an older person's household income (unadjusted for household size) is $400–$600, compared to $1,500–$2,000 for all Australians' (Chomik, 2014, p. 3).

Quadagno (2010) suggests that poverty-based benefits, which only apply to marginalised people, unify the middle and upper classes into a class coalition against the poor, resulting in tax revolts and a backlash against the welfare state. However, Esping-Andersen (2000, p. 160) argues against Quadagno's assertion: 'It is generally believed that welfare state backlash movements, tax revolts and roll-backs are ignited when social expenditure burdens become too heavy. Paradoxically, the opposite is true'. Esping-Andersen (2000) asserts that, since the 1980s, anti-welfare-state sentiments have been weakest wherever welfare spending has been greater, and that when there is less welfare spending, anti-welfare sentiments are much stronger. Thus, public opinion about the age pension may be shaped by welfare spending in areas other than the age pension. Therefore, attitudes towards age pensions may not simply be due to ageism and ageist attitudes.

Social research demonstrates that older people are viewed at the very least as a financial and health care problem (McCann & Giles, 2004; Minichiello et al., 2005), but also as a workforce problem (Cuddy & Fiske, 2004). The AHRC (2013, p. 8) finds that one in ten business respondents would not recruit people over the age of 50. Further, more than half of business decision makers have negative stereotypical views of older people and would choose to make older people redundant rather than younger people (AHRC, 2013, p. 8). In addition, they would not promote older people over younger people, and they would waste time employing older people because they believe that older people cannot learn new things, adapt to change or have the same technical skills as younger people:

> 'Getting older means you are more likely to lose your job'. (35–54 years)
>
> (AHRC, 2013, p.8)

'Many people don't disclose their age in the workplace, because they know that others may make presumptions about what that person might be thinking or doing … there are others who modify their age'. (65+ years). (AHRC, 2013, p. 8)

Employers try to remove older people from the workforce because they do not regard them as capable, adaptable or efficient; rather, they see them as difficult to train, and they have to pay larger sums for their knowledge and expertise (Rosenman, 2005). However, as the baby boomer generation continues to reach retirement age, retiring them from the workforce will place an ever-increasing financial burden on the welfare system. Social policy in Australia is gradually increasing the retirement age to counteract this problem; however, educating employers to accept older workers as valuable assets to the workforce must accompany such policies. Although this increase in the retirement age appears to suggest that ageism in the workforce is declining, the shift in social policy is a fiscal decision that is attempting to prevent people from obtaining social welfare in the form of age pensions for as long as possible.

Throughout the twentieth century, Western society regarded old age 'as a social problem and this perspective is exemplified through the narratives used by policy makers, mass media, and social gerontologists' (Powell, 2001, p. 118), thereby failing to understand that all organisms either age or die, and that ageing is preferable to dying young in most circumstances. Further, Western ideology places great significance on having primarily 'independent' adults wielding social, economic and political power (Blaikie, 1999; Calasanti & King, 2007; Hockey & James, 1993; Powell, 2001), but it fails to recognise that it replaces the concept of 'younger' with 'independent'. Although this appears to contradict the discourse on young people being dependent for longer,

people are ambivalent and can therefore hold two contradictory ideas about other people at the same time. Although symbolic childhood, infantilisation, and thus dependence and marginalisation, is an important paradigm that leaves this power in the hands of adults aged approximately 40–60 years old (Calasanti & King, 2007; Hockey & James, 1993; Powell, 2001), it fails to comprehend the agency of older people and is therefore a form of misrecognition. Further, these paradigms and discourses fail to consider that older media magnates such as Rupert Murdoch (born 11 March 1931) and Kerry Stokes (born 13 September 1940) wield immense power in Australia, and also in Western society generally, whereas older people from less privileged and powerful backgrounds retire at the age of 67. Further, all retired older adults are not necessarily dependent on state welfare. Chomik (2014, p. 3) describes older people in work:

> Unsurprisingly, the average older Australian is not in the labour force. Of the 12 percent who are still working, the majority are just over 65. Indeed, the Census-based labour force participation rate in 2011 for each consecutive five-year age group is around half that of the one preceding it—from 52 percent for 60–64 year olds to 26 percent for 65–69 year olds, 11 percent for 70–74 year olds, and so on. Those that remain in work after sixty-five are most likely to be employed in the 'Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing' industry (13%), though, like the rest of the population, a large proportion is also in the Healthcare and Social Assistance' industry (12%).

However, the active ageing paradigm argues that older people do not want to retire. While many older people continue to work in a voluntary capacity after retirement, many of them also enjoy retiring from work so they can rest, spend more time with

family and friends, and pursue hobbies and sporting activities. Chapter 5 of this thesis discusses the older respondents' attitudes towards active ageing.

9. Sociology and the Cinema

Mass media represents the world 'in terms of a philosophy that sees history as an absurd series of disasters which can neither be understood nor influenced' (Bourdieu, 1998a, p. 8). Therefore, mass media frames its content in delusional terms of constant disastrous occurrences and violent crimes that could leave consumers of that content with irrational anxieties about safety at home or within their neighbourhood (Bourdieu, 1998a). However, mass media consumers do not see the world as 'an absurd series of disasters' (Bourdieu, 1998a, p. 8), and they do not hold the view that everything that occurs in the mass media has a direct relevance to their own situation. Instead, they exercise their agency and use the content they consume in ways that enhance their beliefs, attitudes and views about society; as a result, they do not create irrational anxiety or mental illness that can be caused by regarding 'history as an absurd series of disasters which can neither be understood nor influenced' (Bourdieu, 1998a, p. 8).

Three of the movies chosen for analysis in this study are comedies; therefore, they portray the protagonists as experiencing disasters in order to entertain and engage the audience and gain their empathy. The two fantasy films chosen for analysis also portray the protagonists as experiencing a series of disasters; again, the stories are portrayed this way to promote entertainment. However, all five movies portray the protagonists as overcoming the disasters and influencing and controlling their own lives and destinies. Audiences are encouraged to believe that older people can exercise agency and control, and thereby influence their own lives.

Walsh (1989, pp. 74–75) discusses the sociology of film as being:

uniquely suited to the analysis of cultural undercurrents. Within the popular universe of myth and symbol, dissident and alterative voices can more easily find expression, cloaked safely in narrative disguise. Taken together with other sociological methods, such as interviewing … the interpretation of popular film offers a more complex and multidimensional analysis of a given historical period.

This research project analyses contemporary movies in order to add a multidimensional component to the research. This provides data on respect for older people in popular culture. Further, interviews are conducted with older people to obtain rich data regarding whether they feel respected by society. The data from movies is analysed and compared with data from interviews to obtain an overall analytical view of societal recognition of older people.

Depending on how they are written, the purpose of the film's story and the general context of the film itself, movies may create a capacity within the audience to understand some aspects of society or the general social context that may structure the actions and choices of the protagonists. When the protagonists and their represented contexts are outside of the audiences' own experiences, this may help to create empathy and understanding within the audience for a person or group of people that are generally considered 'others'. Prendergast (1986, p. 243) explains that:

Like sociology, film exposes the viewer to social worlds beyond the orbit of personal experience. By inviting the viewer to suspend disbelief, the film accomplishes on an empathic level what sociology accomplishes through historical and cross-cultural comparison.

Walsh (1989, p. 74) discusses popular culture from a sociological viewpoint and concludes that popular culture is not a monolith, but 'a lived process in which dominant and subordinate values and ideologies compete, coexist, incorporate one another'. Therefore, popular culture (and movies in particular) has been chosen as a means to understand how society regards its older members, and whether they are treated respectfully.

Lechte (2011) discusses cinema from the point of view of Sartre's notion of the image. Although perceiving an image should immobilise it and thereby 'freeze time', a cinema image is not immobilised by perception. Therefore, according to Deleuze and Bergson (cited in Lechte, 2011, p. 367), 'natural perception' is removed from the cinema image, and 'time cannot be contained in natural perception' (Lechte, 2011, p. 367). A cinema image is not naturally 'opaque' or automatically perceived, but 'dynamic, subjective, in time and does justice to movement' (Lechte, 2011, p. 367). Further, cinema images are set apart and are different from other types of images (Lechte, 2011). Lechte (2011, p. 367) concludes that analysing cinema requires a different form of analysis than has been usual in media analysis, and that: 'the cinema image, like other image forms, is a way of directly experiencing *a* world'.

Therefore, although cinema and films may be regarded as a group of images put together to form a story, this thesis takes the view that movies are not simply a series of moving images; rather, the story and the images are worked together into a separate and distinct art form and therefore cannot be analysed in the same way as an image. Prendergast (1986, p. 243) proposes that:

film is among other things, a work of art, the product of creative intention. Inasmuch as the artist's vision is informed by myth, ideology, or personal biography, interpretation opens up into multiple dimensions.

However, Prendergast (1986, p. 243) suggests that the analysis of a movie is a hermeneutical task because it 'involves interpretations of subjective and objective contexts of meaning'. Although this study acknowledges that movies have both subjective and objective meanings, they are not solely textual, but use moving images (Featherstone, 1982, p. 179) to portray meanings that cannot be inferred from dialogue alone. Prendergast (1986, p. 244) notes that 'A good film is richer than any single context'. This study will use a dispositive analysis approach to analyse the movies from a critical discourse analysis standpoint, as explained and justified in the Introduction.

Cinema is regarded as the 'seventh art' form and is unique as a twentieth-century form of art. Therefore, it provides an opportunity to study it within a contemporary context (Cohen-Shalev & Marcus, 2007). As a form of art, it has not been a popular research topic among sociologists; therefore, there is little literature about cinema and age:

> Few filmmakers have taken up the challenge of a thorough screen study of the phenomenon of old age, and still fewer social scientists have responded to the demand of an aging society for a serious treatment of its aged via the communication venues so central to its cultural identity. (Cohen-Shalev & Marcus, 2007, p. 88)

Therefore, it has been difficult to find literature specifically about age and cinema or age and popular culture. Blaikie (1999) writes about ageing and popular culture, but for most authors, ageing is either a small note or it is not regarded at all in the large arena of popular culture.

10. Age and the Cinema

According to May (cited in Walsh, 1989, p. 72), 'From its birth, American cinema has been strongly identified with the cult of youth'; therefore, ageism has played an important role in cinema, especially in Hollywood movies, which exaggerate the attributes of ageing (Featherstone, 1982, p. 179) and deride older people to amuse audiences. However, the films chosen for this study are not ageist; instead, they actively deconstruct ageist stereotypes (see Chapters 2 and 3). Therefore, the findings of this research do not support the ageist paradigm. Depending on the genre of the movie, films are created to amuse, terrify and horrify audiences, so plots and storylines contain problems and crises that exaggerate everyday life experience in order to succeed at the box office (Bourdieu, 1998a; Gatling et al., 2014). Therefore, popular culture as expressed in film may promote ageism. However, as agents who are capable of making their own decisions, young people who watch movies that stereotype older people do not have to hold these stereotypes to be true, and older people do not usually see themselves in the stereotypes that are portrayed.

Gatling et al. (2014) research comedy movies and middle age stereotyping to determine whether 'the discourse of middle age feeds into the discourse of "old age", which is largely negative and emphasises declining abilities, deteriorating health and reduced opportunities and status'. However, the results of the current study do not agree with the findings of Gatling et al. (2014, p. 12), who conclude that 'The defining purpose of a comedy film is to make us laugh, and exaggeration of issues relating to ageing and fear of ageing, including the liberal use of stereotyping, are key features'. They believe that comedy films can be complex and can subversively work to keep ageing and ageist stereotypes alive. Entertainment—in particular, comedic entertainment—is usually

based on the exaggeration of issues and crises; therefore, Gatling et al. (2014) find that stereotyping of older people is a normal part of film entertainment. However, this study does not support those findings. Gatling et al. (2014, p. 3) analyse films 'using the dispositive analysis approach of Critical Discourse Analysis'; therefore, the current study uses the same method to analyse the chosen movies.

Unfortunately, some of the research into film, popular culture and age promotes ageist attitudes. For example, Cohen-Shalev and Marcus (2007, p. 93) write:

> There is an additional factor that may contribute negatively to the creative longevity of filmmakers. Making films demands considerable stamina, physical as well as mental. Long days of shooting in remote locations, handling a large crew, and working with the conflicting demands of various contributing parties turn the making of film into an imposing challenge. People past their physical prime may not be able any longer to bear these conditions, and thus a number of film directors retire relatively early. Yet, and not unexpectedly, there are those who, in spite of the efforts demanded, and sometimes against their own best interest, continue into advanced age.

Cohen-Shalev and Marcus (2007) assume that older people are no longer physically able to do demanding work, which is the basis for many ageist stereotypes. The respondents in the current study also strongly opposed this assumption. Cohen-Shalev and Marcus (2007) also assume that older people who continue to work in films do not know what is best for them; thus, they infantilise older people who continue to work in filmmaking. However, they conclude that:

> A widely popular form of art, one that is immersed in societal tides and responsive to every trend, mainstream cinema has harnessed its considerable

persuasive forces in the war against a sobering awareness of the fact of ageing. Old age needs humanization and the cinema can, and must, play a major part in this process. While few in number and marginal in popularity, compelling and truthful cinematic depictions of old age encourage such humanizing experiences, and render them immeasurably fulfilling. (Cohen-Shalev & Marcus, 2007, p. 94)

Therefore, although the authors make ageist assumptions, they also try to overcome ageist stereotyping through their research, and perhaps they are unaware of their ageist assumptions. Researchers into age and ageing issues need to be reflexive and aware of their own ageist assumptions and the stereotypes they hold to be true. This will lead gerontological research into areas that break down ageism and ageist stereotyping. Although Cohen-Shalev and Marcus (2007) do not discuss the method they use to analyse their chosen films, the discourse they create about those films includes the way they are shot and speech and non-verbal cues, which suggests critical discourse analysis.

Cohen-Shalev and Marcus (2007) suggest that few movies (they list 40 movies released between 1952 and 2006 in their paper) portray older characters, and that even those movies rarely investigate themes around ageing and age. The older characters in these movies are usually incidental to the action and storyline or are support characters for the main protagonists, who are younger people. Therefore, these movies support the stereotype of older people as no longer actively engaging in life, and as merely being the support for the younger generations. However, the current research study examines films made in 2006 and later that have older people as the main protagonists who are

actively engaged in their own lives; therefore, this research does not support the discourse that movies are ageist.

11. Discourse about Popular Culture and Age

Sawchuk (1995) extensively analyses advertising and marketing strategies and concludes that marketing discourses reinforce and promote ageism and negative stereotypes of older age. Ageing in the 1990s and early 2000s was viewed as anathema at the popular cultural level (Hockey & James, 1993; Sawchuk, 1995; Minichiello et al., 2005; Gilleard & Higgs, 2005). Minichiello et al. (2005, pp. 7–8) analyse various advertisements:

> Consider the following advertisements: the anti-ageing cream label of Estee Lauder, Christian Dior's 'age-defence renewal serum', the slogan of Kelloggs— 'the food that fights ageing', and Marie Claire magazine (no. 71, July 2001) which featured an 'anti-ageing special' with the title, 'The A-Z of anti-ageing', and carried the message 'how to win the war against [lines and wrinkles]'. Or consider the message contained in Erica Beasley's (2003) book, *Ten Minute Anti-Ageing*, with the accompanying statement 'want to beat the ageing process and turn back the clock? Take just ten minutes out of your day to recapture vitality and youth!'

However, not all advertising is ageist in nature; a health promotion message may attempt to promote good health and fitness in later life if it 'contains no "anti-ageing" vocabulary and uses the concept of fitness as being healthy for the body, regardless of age' (Minichiello et al., 2005, p. 8). However, this promotes active ageing discourse, which suggests that researchers and policy makers know what is best for older people, thereby infantilising them and failing to recognise them. In 2014, the Unilever company

Dove created an advertising campaign that recognised that beauty is not the stereotypical teenager that other companies promote:

> Instead of following the traditional mantra of beauty-marketing campaigns that promote an unattainable standard of attractiveness as the norm, Dove's campaign has taken a stand against an issue that affects the lives of millions of women, young and old: self-perception in the face of advertisements that don't reflect the reality of women's appearances. Dove is saying that it's okay to be normal, and that you're not lesser-than for not being what certain advertisers consider to be perfect. Dove's efforts have been eye-opening for many (and profitable for Dove—generating double digit growth in 2005). (Dove, 2014)

Hockey and James (1993) cite many examples of popular media, including cartoons, letters to editors, newspapers, advertisements, magazines, television and photographs, that depict older people as children or associate older people with childhood. Moreover, they suggest that not only are older people infantilised in Western popular media, but that Western discourse either depicts older people as 'good girls and boys' or demonises them as 'dirty old men' or 'crones, dragons, hags, bags and, … witches' (Hockey & James, 1993, pp. 23–24, 26; Palmore, 1999, p. 5; Sontag, 1972). However, it is possible that this discourse has changed in the twenty-first century and that there is a lack of up-to-date literature; therefore, I recommend further research.

Infantilising older people was a societal problem and older adults were thereby disrespected, in diverse social practices and ideologies, including health care and home situations, and through state legislation in political and economic spheres (Blaikie, 1999; Hockey & James, 1993; Kuhling & Keohane, 2009). Clark and Spafford (cited in Fine, 2007) note that older people in need of care are regarded as dependent and are

therefore unable to exercise choice and control over their own lives; however, they need a carer to be responsible to them rather than for them, which would allow them to be independent. There is a powerful conceptual relationship between physical bodies and social identity in Western discourse (Calasanti, 2010; Hockey & James, 1993; Sontag, 1972). For example, older people in nursing homes in the 1990s who were classified as frail were referred to as 'little people' and addressed by their first names, whereas non-frail older people were accorded more respect and addressed as Mr or Mrs (Hockey & James, 1993, p. 78). As a result of the Western obsession with youthfulness, older bodies may be viewed as unwanted, ugly and unsightly (Calasanti & King, 2007; Gilleard & Higgs, 2005; Hockey & James, 1993; Palmore, 1999; Powell & Longino, 2001; Sontag, 1972). Therefore, dependent, whether the dependency is due to infirmity and disability or ageing, are given the metaphorical status of childhood to combat the repugnance that carers may develop towards people who appear to be different from the beauty 'norm', as expressed in the mass media (Blaikie, 1999; Butler, 1969; Calasanti & King, 2007; Hockey & James, 1993; Powell & Longino, 2001). Therefore, the illusion of dependency, combined with infirmity and disability rather than age, may form the basis of infantilisation and arguably some other forms of misrecognition of older people.

Blatterer (2007) proposes that Western discourse links personhood with adulthood. It is postulated that Western discourse has established that adolescents need 'pathways' to adulthood that are intrinsically associated with work and consumption (Blatterer, 2007; Calasanti & King, 2007). However, work and consumption do not automatically turn adolescents under the age of 18 years into adults. Further, if the pathway to adulthood is intrinsically associated with work and consumption (Blatterer, 2007; Calasanti & King, 2007), then people with physical disabilities who are unable to work but are still able to

make decisions and take responsibility for themselves are automatically excluded from adulthood. This exclusion may also be applied to older people (Powell, 2001) who are not regarded as having personhood and so are not considered adults.

Wilkinson and Ferraro (2004) propose that the language used to define older people influences prejudice and bias against them. This bias and prejudice may be experienced as disrespect or, even worse, as abuse and maltreatment: 'Negative images held toward a group of people can result in negative behaviours enacted against members of that group' (Wilkinson & Ferraro, 2004, p. 346). However, being defined as 'older' does not always mean being dismissed, marginalised or treated with prejudice and disrespect. The treatment of older people depends on how societies and individuals perceive them. While people who experience dependency may have parallel social experiences and structural positions, the way that the classificatory process impinges on their lives can differ significantly. Some people manage to maintain their social and economic status despite increasing dependency. Some find their social status augmented rather than diminished—for example, campaigners for pensioners' rights in Denmark, Germany, the United Kingdom (UK), Italy and Holland in the 1990s (Walker, 2009). Thus, while society attempts to marginalise older people in real and symbolic terms by equating them with dependent children, the older people themselves subvert this marginalisation (Hockey & James, 1993; Powell, 2001; Walker, 2009) and continue to exercise agency and choice. Further, the current research study finds no empirical evidence to support the marginalisation of older people; therefore, further research is recommended.

There are increasing numbers of fit, active and healthy older people, and Hockey and James (1993) assert that distinctions need to be made between those who are frail and unhealthy, and those who are fit and active. However, the authors suggest that if these

distinctions are to be based on bodily imagery, it could lead to further ageism and prejudice. Hockey and James (1993) argue that the distinctions made between the third age and the fourth age, or 'young-old' and 'old-old', are classificatory structures that arguably do not display ageism and prejudice. However, these classifications disassociate the older 'old' people from their agency and ability to make independent decisions and choices; therefore, they are a form of misrecognition. Further, discourse that creates a paradigm that suggests that frailty and ill health is a classification for age fails to recognise people aged ninety and over who still run in marathons or actively participate in other sports and activities; therefore, it is also a lack of recognition.

12. Ageism: A Form of Misrecognition

Butler (1969) coined the term ageism to refer to a disrespectful and negative attitude towards older people that leads to prejudice, oppression, discrimination, rejection and stereotyping (Biggs, 1993; Palmore, 1999; Wilkinson & Ferraro, 2004). Ageism is a form of misrecognition that occurs when there is a failure to recognise a person or a group of people due to their age.

Ageism is based on values that have been held in Western countries for many centuries (Bytheway, 1995). Minichiello et al. (2005) discuss ancient Greek authors, including Euripides, Aristotle, Pythagoras, Hippocrates and Plato, who all wrote about ageing as being offensive and undesirable. Conversely, Cicero, an ancient Roman philosopher, wrote an essay 'Concerning Old Age' (44 BC), wherein he attempted to dispel the fallacies, myths and stereotypes of ageing that were endemic in Roman society, such as 'they find life wearisome', 'they move away from active work', 'they are deficient in sensual pleasures' and 'they are worried about the nearness of death' (Minichiello et al., 2005, p. 2). However, despite Cicero's work and the work of twentieth-century

philosophers and sociologists such as Robert Butler and Simone de Beauvoir, ageist ideas still appear to be as firmly entrenched in Western thinking and in media representation at the beginning of the twenty-first century. This study suggests that the discourse may be changing now, and I may have found more evidence of ageism if the study had been conducted ten years ago.

Ageism may be expressed as a failure to perceive older people, even though they are physically present: 'Cultural history offers numerous examples of situations in which the dominant express their social superiority by not perceiving those they dominate' (Honneth & Margalit, 2001, p. 112). Older people may find that invisibility is a common form of experiencing ageist attitudes (Palmore, 2001). According to the AHRC (2013), many older Australians report invisibility: as a feeling of being overlooked and ignored, especially in areas of service where they are not regarded as valuable; in product placement, where they are not seen as a viable market despite their financial capacity; in relationships, wherein they feel they are a burden on friends and family; and also in popular culture, where there is a lack of representation:

> I walk into a nice dress store, I don't get served—they see me and they think that I can't possibly be interested in something fashionable and that I am probably killing time waiting for my grandkids. (55–64 years) (AHRC, 2013, p.5)

> I had a friend who was looking to buy a new car … with cash. She walked into the dealer and was basically told that she 'probably wouldn't be interested in these types of cars' and that she should look at some of the other businesses down the road. (65+ years) (AHRC, 2013, p. 5)

The AHRC (2013, p. 5) reports that older Australians have a strong and negative reaction to feeling invisible to the wider community. Further, they feel a sense of shame, anger or sadness that affects their feeling of self-worth and how they define their experience of ageing. The respondents in this study reported experiences of invisibility—for example, from politicians and the media—and one respondent felt that she was treated as invisible by members of her own family (see Chapter 4).

Bytheway (1995) proposes that ageism is an ideology that serves the interests of the dominant groups in society. This suggests that when a person is over the age of 65, he or she is no longer part of the 'dominant group'; therefore, this proposition is arguably ageist. Further, Bytheway (1995) discusses ageism as keeping older people away from gainful employment, thereby increasing the employment levels of the 18–40-year-old age group (Bytheway, 1995). However, this fails to recognise that many older people perform voluntary work that is essential to maintaining services to minority and vulnerable groups, including children. Active ageing discourse suggests that all older people should continue to work in some form in order to be worthy of respect, but this suggests that older people who enjoy their retirement and leisure activities are not worthy of recognition. Honneth (1995, p. 112) proposes that 'the respect for a human being as a person' can be traced 'back to a type of "recognition respect", because it primarily involves cognitively recognizing the fact that, with regard to the other, one is dealing with a being possessed of personal qualities' (Honneth, 1995, p. 112). Thus, according to Honneth's theory of recognition, respect is 'recognising' the other person as a human being and has nothing to do with being 'worthy'.

Further, it has been suggested that ageism is manifested in the actions of corporate bodies and their representatives (Butler, 1969; Bytheway, 1995; Walker, 2009). This

results in views about normal ageing people who are older than other normal ageing people, which are not consistent with views about younger normal people (Bytheway, 1995; Walker, 2009). However, companies can also have ageist views about young people, as they may consider lack of experience an issue. Further, companies do not want to pay experienced people higher salaries simply because of their experience. Therefore, companies arguably hold a narrow view of what is an acceptable age in the workplace, and although this view is sometimes based on stereotypes of older people being inflexible and unable to learn new concepts, it is also highly profit-driven. Older age is homogenised and reified by corporations, as is younger age; therefore, potential for social improvement for older people is discounted (Powell, 2001). However, views about, and respect for, ordinary ageing people, and ordinary people generally, are also learned from peers, family, the media and private institutions. Moreover, this view discounts the voice that older people exercise in their choices about life and lifestyles, as well as the possibility of self-stereotyping.

There are many ways that older people do not display weakness, unattractiveness, increased leisure time without responsibility or lack of productivity (Powell & Longino, 2001; Walker, 2009). However, Biggs (1993, pp. 23–25, 33–34, 81–82) concludes that when engaging in dialogue with people who belong to the power groups, or simply with younger members of society, older people are required to adopt a diminished persona, as those actors who belong to the dominant groups will not regard older people with esteem. Biggs (1993) asserts that older people are therefore marginalised, disrespected, diminished and regarded as unacceptable because communication between older actors and 'normal' actors causes discomfort between both groups of role-takers. However, in this conclusion, Biggs (1993) fails to account for young-old or third-age older people who do not feel marginalised, diminished or unacceptable. Further, it fails to account

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for older members of the over-65 age group who do not experience disrespect, marginalisation or diminishment. The respondents in this study did not feel disrespected, diminished or marginalised (see Chapter 4).

Walker (2009) and Biggs (1993) suggest that ageism also excludes older people from politics and decisions that affect social policy. However, if an older person has held a prominent political position for many years, he or she may continue to influence social policy after the age of 65. For example, at the age of 78, Bob Hawke (born 9 December 1929) actively campaigned in the 2007 Federal Election.

Bytheway (1995) suggests that there are some serious consequences to ageist attitudes, and that these consequences are not confined to ageism as experienced by older people alone, but to all forms of ageism:

(a) Ageism generates and reinforces a fear and denigration of the ageing process, and stereotyping presumptions regarding competence and the need for protection.

(b) In particular, ageism legitimates the use of chronological age to mark out classes of people who are systematically denied resources and opportunities that others enjoy, and who suffer the consequences of such denigration, ranging from well-meaning patronage to unambiguous vilification. (Bytheway, 1995, p. 14)

Ageing is both a natural and inevitable process. Although Bytheway's (1995) stated consequences appear to only affect older people, they also shape and reflect the attitudes that people will have towards themselves as they grow older, and will therefore significantly affect their own self-esteem. Furze et al. (2012, p. 418) propose

that 'our culture celebrates youth and denies death' and that this makes us unprepared for death. Rexbye and Povlsen (2007, p. 77) suggest that 'We cannot detach the body in decline from the meanings we attach to old age'. Therefore, our own personal fears and anxieties about dying, ill health, decline, frailty, vulnerability and disability, which arise when we interact with older people, can cause that interaction to be unpleasant.

Western society has been described as youth-oriented almost to the degree of 'youth worship' (Furze et al., 2012; McArdle & Yeracaris, 1981; May, 1980), although young people are not always held in esteem by Western societies. Attaining the age of sixty-five years or over is regarded as an undesirable attribute, although it simply means that a person has lived longer than other people and, as such, it has no other intrinsic meanings or values. Therefore, a person who is perceived to be sixty-five years or older may experience increasing numbers of difficult situations due to society's negative response to their perceived age.

Younger people appear to fear ageing and death, and this may lead to them dismissing and marginalising older people as they attempt to avoid these fears:

> the frail elderly are a reminder of the failure of our own omnipotence, the failure of control over our environment. Further, the elderly are a reminder of mortality, a symbol of the loss of potency, libido, passion and desire, for each of these losses is also within ourselves. We struggle with these qualities in ourselves and don't wish to be reminded of them. (Minichiello et al., 2005, pp. 27–28)

However, this assumes that health naturally declines and that older people are therefore asexual beings, which is an untrue assumption (Featherstone & Hepworth, 1988, p. 374). Kessel (2001) quotes: 'Brogan states "there is a general societal belief that old people are, or should be, asexual and a false assumption exists that physical

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attractiveness depends on youth and beauty"' (Brogan, cited in Kessel, 2001, p. 121). Some of the respondents in this study who were over 80 years of age, including the oldest respondent (92 years old), experienced good health and did not feel frail and vulnerable; instead, they helped younger people who experienced health issues. Further, Phillipson (1998) proposes that older people may suffer from marginalisation, as younger generations are purported to have little to no interest in relating to, supporting or providing for them in any way. Again, this assumes that all older people need to be supported and provided for, thereby promoting ageist, discriminatory discourse. This assumption fails to recognise the young people who do relate to, and support, older people, particularly in family situations. The ABS reports that of the 2,700,000 carers in 2012, 75,000 (0.03%) were younger than 15 years old (ABS, 2014e). The argument also fails to account for the many older people who work and contribute to society, and who are active, fit and healthy. This suggests the possibility that society is changing; in the twentieth century and at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the research suggested that young people dismissed and marginalised older people. However, today, older people appear to be more integrated into society, and younger people are not as disrespectful or dismissive as previously believed. This is supported by the respondents in this research, who believe they are respected and well treated by the younger members of their family, as well as by the young people they meet in shopping centres, on public transport and in various organisations where the older respondents hold memberships and undertake volunteer work.

Ageism assumes that the relationships between older people and younger members of society are marked by forms of dependency (Biggs, 1993, pp. 85–86; Wilkinson & Ferraro, 2004). Biggs (1993, p. 85) proposes that 'Elders are also placed in a passive

relationship to social policy, whilst it is assumed that relations are marked by some form of dependency'. Fine (2007, p. 92) cites Morris:

> By taking the need for care for granted and by assuming the dependency of older and disabled people, feminist researchers and carers as a pressure group have not only failed to address the interests of older and disabled people but they have unwittingly, colluded with both the creation of dependency and the state's reluctance to tackle the social and economic factors which disable people.

However, many older people in Australia remain in their own homes, and governmental policies encourage them to remain independent. It is a form of misrecognition to assume that to be older than someone else constitutes a form of dependence (Biggs, 1993, pp. 85–86).

Biggs (1993) and Walker (2009) assert that older age is a social construction upon which people build stereotypes of older people and then use those stereotypes to discriminate against them and disrespect them based on their perceived biological age. However, older age is a biological occurrence as well as a social construction. Therefore, ageism is a form of discrimination based on biological fact, interpretation and negative feelings about that fact, and interpretation and negative feelings about the social construction (Butler, 1969). Bytheway (1995) defines ageism as a set of beliefs based on biological variations among people, and relating to the ageing process in particular.

Minichiello et al. (2005) argue that 'frail, elderly' people may be constructed as 'abject', and that human beings reject the 'abject' in themselves in order to be more socially acceptable. This leads to the rejection of older people who remind others of

their own abjectivity and mortality. Therefore, older people are regarded as 'others' who bear no resemblance to 'us', but it is that all-too-real resemblance that leads to rejection. Further, society overgeneralises, or 'essentialises', about older people, thus ignoring the diversity that older people experience, and it 'superannuates' them or assumes they belong in the past rather than in contemporary society (Minichiello et al., 2005). The AHRC (2013, p. 7) finds that more than half of Australia's population agree with negative stereotypes about older people such as loneliness, victims of crime, forgetfulness and failing to listen to younger people. The people who hold these negative stereotypes include young people, university graduates, higher-income earners (more than $100,000 per household), full-time employees, culturally and linguistically diverse community members, capital city dwellers, and males. People in the 18–24 age bracket were found to be especially negative about older people, seeing them as sick, unable to learn new and complex tasks, not being sexually active, and not caring about their appearance. In particular, younger business decision makers held negative views of older people, and social media was found to portray older people negatively.

Older people are othered and alienated from society by these negative and stereotypical views. This alienation leads to misrecognition of older people. Further, 'Social distance is one of the major problems facing older people. In many societies, the term 'seniors' is used to describe older people' (Minichiello & Coulson, 2005, p. 29) and although this label is supposed to remove negative stereotypes, it continues to uphold them.

At the end of the twentieth century, ageism formed an important paradigm in Western society and culture, and discourse was centred on the binaries of young/old, mid-life/ older age, older/sexually inactive, young/sexually active, institutional/home care, retiree/worker, fit and able/frail (Hockey & James, 1993; Palmore, 1999; Powell, 2001;

Powell & Longino, 2001; Walker, 2009; Wilkinson & Ferraro, 2004; Minichiello & Coulson, 2005; van Dyk, 2014). This discourse explains why ageist attitudes group all older people into one category. It fails to understand the third and fourth ages, the young-old and older old, or the young-old, old and oldest-old. Further, it contributes towards treating older people as if they are part of one homogeneous group, whereas they are a much more diverse group than, for example, children under the age of three (Gilleard & Higgs, 2005, 2007; Higgs, Leontowitsch, Stevenson, & Jones, 2009; Minichiello et al., 2005; Powell & Longino, 2001; Rowland, 1984; Walker, 2009). Further, such discourse is insidious and underpins the mistaken stereotypes and fallacies surrounding older age. By changing the discourse on older age, a gradual change in the societal view may follow (Minichiello et al., 2005). This study suggests that such a change may be happening now.

Social science research is challenging the foundations of ageist thinking (Minichiello et al., 2005), and writers such as Simone de Beauvoir highlight the social, economic and psychological bases of ageist attitudes (de Beauvoir, 1972, p. 7):

> When their economic status is decided upon, society appears to think that they belong to an entirely different species: for if all that is needed to feel that one has done one's duty by them is to grant them a wretched pittance, then they have neither the same needs nor the same feelings as other [people].

In Australia, the *Age Discrimination Act 2004* is part of Australia's anti-discrimination policy (AHRC, 2015); therefore, older people in Australia have been recognised in the legal sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) since 2004. The *Age Discrimination Act 2004* makes it illegal to discriminate against someone in the workplace due to his or her age (AHRC, 2015), and coupled with the recognition of older people through pensions and

superannuation (Workplace Info, 2015), this means that older people in Australia are recognised in the work or achievement sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). However, Australian Government policies for older people have focused on reducing the costs to the government of the ageing population rather than proactively seeking to enhance the lives of older people.

Therefore, although older people in Australia experience recognition from the core institutions of the state due to anti-discrimination laws, Australian policies are not always helpful or benign towards older people. In particular, active ageing policies are designed to reduce the costs to the government of the ageing population rather than to benefit older people.

13. Conclusion

There is little to no research about respect and older people, and there is a lack of up-to-date research into ageist paradigms and discourse. This thesis contributes to the literature about respect and older people and argues that active ageing is not respectful of older people, but that it infantilises them. This thesis will not address the gap in the literature about ageism. However, ageism, disrespect for older people, and abusive and violent behaviours perpetrated against older people continue to plague societies, even in the twenty-first century, although it is not as widespread as I expected. Minichiello et al. (2005, p. 1) suggest that:

> Without a doubt the 21st Century will see a revolution in terms of the
> relationship between older people and other age groups and the way society
> views the status and position of older people. Why is this? Older people are

devalued and discriminated against. They will not tolerate this treatment for much longer, especially given that they are growing in numbers and have the potential to be an influential activist group.

In Australia, the *Age Discrimination Act 2004* is part of Australia's anti-discrimination policy (AHRC, 2015); therefore, older people in Australia have been recognised in the legal sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) since 2004. The *Age Discrimination Act 2004* makes it illegal to discriminate against someone in the workplace due to his or her age (AHRC, 2015), and coupled with the recognition of older people through pensions and superannuation (Workplace Info, 2015), this means that older people in Australia are recognised in the work or achievement sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 175) concludes that: 'it is the three principles of love, equality and merit that together determine what should now be understood by the idea of social justice'. Therefore, older people in Australia experience social justice if they experience recognition in their love sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) because they receive recognition in the work and legal spheres. As this recognition has only been occurring since 2004, when the *Age Discrimination Act 2004* was passed (AHRC, 2015), more research needs to be undertaken to determine whether older people feel respected in contemporary Australian society. This thesis aims to fill that gap in the research.

The discourse about active ageing is 'attaining widespread influence in official, professional and popular discourses' (Minichiello et al., 2005, p. 25), and the WHO is attempting to emphasise enjoyment in ageing and the prevention of disease and ability rather than emphasising disability (Minichiello et al., 2005). However, discourse needs to be about positive ageing rather than active ageing, because positive ageing does not

discriminate against older people who choose to rest and relax, or who need to rest and relax due to health issues, whereas active ageing does.

Older people are vital and productive members of society. For example, they form a large component of society's volunteer workers, with 31% of people aged sixty-five and over participating in volunteer work (Volunteering Australia, 2015). Volunteer work is valuable because it makes 'charitable acts' possible and therefore enables 'charity' to continue, thus removing some of the burden from tax and the 'welfare state'. However, this is still in the sphere of achievement or work, and older people should be allowed to rest and relax if that is their choice. Suggesting that policy makers and researchers know what is best for older people infantilises them and fails to recognise their autonomy and agency, as well as their ability to make appropriate choices for themselves. This represents a lack of recognition of older people.

Western discourse suggests that personhood is based on work, thereby excluding the very young, the disabled and older people from having personhood. This may lead to disrespect of older people. However, it has also been suggested that young Western people may not be as ageist and disrespectful of older people as first assumed (Sung et al., 2010).

Active ageing discourse is regarded as a form of symbolic violence, which is 'the subtle imposition of systems of meaning that legitimize and thus solidify structures of inequality' (Wacquant, 2006, p. 4) because older people believe that they need to work in order to receive respect. Symbolic violence is exercised on an agent with their complicity (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2007). However, active ageing denies the rights of older people who choose to rest and enjoy a non-working retirement. If respectful

relationships are only derived from work, people who are unable or unwilling to work would not be deemed worthy of respect.

Chapter 2: Comedy Films

1. Introduction

This chapter argues that although active ageing is presented as benevolent and affirmative for older people, active ageing discourse suggests that older people who choose to relax and enjoy non-work-related activities, or who have health-related difficulties, are not ageing successfully and are thereby failures. This chapter analyses three comedy films—The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006)—that include older protagonists who are important to the story, and that explore issues that are important to older people. The comedy genre was chosen because it provides a safe and entertaining platform from which to explore themes of older age that may be difficult for the viewers to accept and watch in a non-comedic environment. This genre also habitually vilifies and derides stereotypes of people; therefore, it was chosen in order to investigate whether contemporary movies vilify and deride older age, or whether they deconstruct the stereotypes of older age.

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) portray active ageing, and RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) openly espouse the active ageing paradigm as the only appropriate way to age successfully, whereas The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) portrays active ageing as one way among many to age successfully. The Holiday (2006) portrays the older protagonist as having caused his own health problems by not engaging in exercise. This chapter argues that the movie infantilises the protagonist with its portrayal of active ageing as the only successful way to age.

This chapter explores the relationships between the older protagonists themselves, and between the older protagonists and the younger characters, to ascertain whether the older protagonists are treated respectfully. It also discusses whether the protagonists are recognised by the core institutions of the state, and whether they receive recognition in the work/achievement sphere. Infantilisation is explored in The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) and The Holiday (2006), and all three movies deconstruct ageing stereotypes. A comparison is undertaken between the everyday lived experiences of the respondents in this study with the lived experiences of the protagonists in the movies.

As discussed in the Introduction, the movies are analysed using a dispositive approach to critical discourse analysis. This allows for an analysis of the linguistic features of the film and the narrative, as well as non-linguistic features such as symbols, film shots and unspoken interactions between protagonists, which will provide greater depth to the analysis than other methods would.

This study is aimed at 'understanding context and on studying data that provide insight into the "bigger picture", rather than a microanalysis of individual [movies]' (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p. 9). Therefore, in this chapter, The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) are analysed individually and compared and contrasted because they depict various forms of respect and disrespect for the older protagonists. It is important to explore the similarities and differences between the film protagonists' experiences of respect and the respondents' reports of respectful treatment; therefore, this chapter includes references to the analysis of the interviews. The older protagonists receive respect from their own age groups and the intimate spheres they have created within their own age groups. This allows them to obtain or keep a positive sense of self, which is instrumental in the growth and transformation

that occurs throughout the films, as they are not treated respectfully by the younger protagonists in either RED (2010) or The Holiday (2006). In The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), the protagonists experience a lack of recognition from the core institutions of the state in the UK, but not in India (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). In RED (2010), the protagonists are not recognised by the core institutions of the state as represented by the CIA (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). In the Holiday (2006), the older protagonist is recognised by the Academy of Film, which represents a core institution in the US. The Holiday (2006) and RED (2010) show that older people may be treated disrespectfully by younger people, but that this is acceptable as long as they are held in affectionate regard. In contrast, Honneth (2007, p. 71) states: 'The normative core of … notions of justice is always constituted by expectations of respect for one's own dignity, honor or integrity'. Since individuals regard social justice as being treated respectfully by the people within their own social contexts, it is important to accord older people respect and dignity by, for example, not treating them as children or speaking to them as if they can no longer achieve anything. Honneth (1990) states that a person's positive sense of self is impaired when disrespect occurs on an interpersonal level, and this impairment can lead to a breakdown in personality. Therefore, any disrespectful treatment of older people is not acceptable, regardless of whether the older person is also regarded with affection. RED (2010) shows the main younger protagonist calling the main older protagonist 'Grandpa' despite the physical and mental successes he has achieved. The Holiday (2006) shows two of the main younger protagonists treating the older protagonist like a child and discussing the older protagonist disrespectfully. In contrast, The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) portrays the older protagonists as receiving respect and affection from the younger protagonist and minor younger characters.

2. The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012)

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) was based on a novel called 'These Foolish Things' by Deborah Moggach, and the screenplay was written by Oliver Parker. The box office takings and information about the cast and their ages are outlined in the appendix. The main cast were all aged 60 years or over, with one protagonist aged 22. The movie was aimed at an older audience. Fox Searchlight describes the film as:

> The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel follows a group of British retirees who decide to 'outsource' their retirement to less expensive and seemingly exotic India. Enticed by advertisements for the newly restored Marigold Hotel and bolstered with visions of a life of leisure, they arrive to find the palace a shell of its former self. Though the new environment is less luxurious than imagined, they are forever transformed by their shared experiences, discovering that life and love can begin again when you let go of the past. (Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 2015a)

The film is not afraid to show that older people have wrinkled skin and other age-related blemishes. There are close-up shots of all the older protagonists, and the audience is aware that they are, and look, older. However, the main protagonist, Evelyn, who the audience relates to with the most empathy and understanding, is shown with soft light shots. Although the actor who plays Evelyn is the same age as the actor who plays Muriel, the soft light shots make her appear much younger than Muriel, which arguably shows that the producer has some ageist tendencies.

Screenshot 2.1 Maggi Smith as Muriel (IMdB, 2015)

Screenshot 2.2 Judi Dench as Evelyn (IMdB, 2015) looks younger than Maggi Smith as Muriel in the film.

Themes that are relevant to older age are explored in the film, including sexuality, relationships between older people (both friendship and romantic interest) and relationships between older people and younger people. The important intergenerational relationships are portrayed as very complex, while the lesser intergenerational relationships are portrayed as gentle, kind and respectful. This briefly alludes to the

stereotyping of 'good' older people as wise, benevolent and kind. This stereotype is deconstructed, and the film shows that people who are benevolent, kind and wise behave this way, while older people who are not benevolent, kind or wise do not behave like this, but that despite their bad behaviour, they are not 'bad' people.

Other themes explored in this movie include active ageing and work, social norms and fitting into society. Work and active ageing are portrayed as one positive way to age when it is the choice of the older person, but they are not shown to be the only positive way to age. The movie thereby suggests that being positively engaged with life in whatever way suits older people is a beneficial way to age. This is discussed further in Section 7 of Chapter 5. Although the literature on ageing fails to recognise being positively engaged with life as a viable alternative to active ageing, being positively engaged is not a discourse about success or failure, whereas active ageing suggests that older people who suffer from ill health have aged unsuccessfully. Further, active ageing promotes the ageist paradigm that older people are not allowed to rest and relax, and that those who choose to rest and relax, or who suffer from ill health, are failures because they do not work or have failed to look after themselves properly. Thus, it blames older people who suffer from health-related issues for these problems. This movie does not critique active ageing, but it suggests that it is one positive way of ageing among many.

Although the theme of respect versus disrespect for older people predominantly represents respect and disrespect between older people and younger people, the movie also shows that the relationships between the older people themselves are not always respectful or successful. For example, the relationship between Jean and Douglas Ainslie is portrayed with Jean treating Douglas with disdain and disrespect. For

example, when Douglas expresses a different viewpoint from her own, Jean angrily says to him, 'If I want your opinion I'll give it to you'. At the end of the movie, the relationship is terminated by Jean, who has been depicted as an antagonist. At the beginning of the film, Douglas does not receive respect from his intimate sphere or his private or public spheres. He is a genuinely honourable man who displays integrity in his relationships, including with his wife, but he lacks self-confidence. The denigration of his character and disrespectful, bordering on abusive, treatment by his wife has damaged his sense and understanding of self. Douglas grows as a character throughout the movie because he begins to receive respect from the people who have become part of his intimate sphere at the Best Exotic Marigold Hotel; therefore, he gains a positive sense and understanding of self through these respectful relationships.

The movie is situated within the post-colonial context of India, and it suggests that Indian culture treats older people respectfully, whereas British culture and other Western countries treat older people with disrespect and disdain. Sonny, the main younger protagonist, says 'I have a dream to outsource old age. And it's not just the British. There are many other countries where they don't like old people too'. This disrespect is depicted at the beginning of the movie, wherein six of the seven main older protagonists experience varying degrees of disrespect from their intimate relationships. Moreover, these six protagonists experience disrespect in the British core institutions of the state (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). One of the older protagonists, Muriel, 'others' people who are from different racial backgrounds to herself (white, Caucasian). Muriel displays blatant prejudice and disrespect in all her interactions with people of different backgrounds to herself.

Muriel is disabled and frail due to a hip problem, and she needs a hip replacement. She has to use a wheelchair; therefore, she represents the stereotypical 'old' person who is frail, ill and disabled. Muriel is also the stereotypical cantankerous, frail, ill older person and is therefore supposed to be regarded as 'a bad old woman' or potentially a 'witch'. However, Muriel is treated respectfully by Sonny and the other older protagonists at the Best Exotic Marigold Hotel, and in the Indian hospital and outpatient system, which is a core institution of the Indian state (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). As the story progresses, Muriel learns that people from other racial backgrounds have similar struggles to her own and are therefore not that different from herself. Muriel learns to replace her fear and contempt for people of 'other' backgrounds with compassion and empathy. She tells her story to the Untouchable serving girl who has befriended her, and we learn that Muriel was discarded as 'old' and replaced with a younger servant by the family she served. She had believed she was a member of that family, and she had cared for and about them deeply. This had affected her sense of self, and she had felt devalued as a human being, which led to a breakdown in her personality (Honneth, 1990). Muriel puts the many valuable skills she learned as a housekeeper to use in the Best Exotic Marigold Hotel, and she becomes the manager of the hotel. The respect she receives from Sonny and the other people around her contributes to her regaining her positive sense of self. As the movie draws to a close, Muriel briefly leaves her wheelchair and walks without assistance. She is transformed because she obtained a positive sense of self through the respect she received in the three spheres of intimate relationships (love), work and the core institutions of the state/legal (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). She has grown and learned from her experiences and is no longer ill, frail, vulnerable, bitter and angry; instead, she is a contributing member of society and is becoming healthy as a result. The movie proposes that work and active ageing were the

best thing for Muriel. This is a reasonable approach because Muriel chose to work; however, it fails to show that active ageing belittles and infantilises older people who would choose to rest and relax.

At the beginning of the film, four of the older protagonists (Evelyn, Douglas, Norman and Madge) are treated disrespectfully in their intimate relationships and viewed as incompetent and 'old', which is interpreted as frail, vulnerable and ill. However, in different ways, they show that they are not incompetent, frail, ill or vulnerable, but rather extremely competent and capable human beings.

Evelyn wants to work and support herself, so she gets a job in a call centre that usually only employs young people, and the large institution shows her respect and becomes her sphere of work (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Through Evelyn's decision to work, active ageing is portrayed as a positive way to age. Evelyn attempts to purchase cloth in the Indian marketplace, and despite well-meaning interference from Douglas, who tries to help and protect her but instead manages to lose the sale, Evelyn purchases the cloth she wants. Although Evelyn does not haggle with the dealer, he treats her respectfully, and the audience infers that she paid the appropriate price for the material; thus, she receives respect and recognition at the meso level of Indian society. Evelyn gradually grows in confidence and self-belief because she gains a positive sense of self through the respect she receives in the two different spheres of love and work (Fraser & Honneth, 2003), as well as at the meso level in the marketplace.

Douglas wants to learn and see new things, and he wants to be treated with respect and dignity. By becoming involved in life in India, he has new experiences and is treated with respect and dignity. Through this recognition, Douglas transforms from an

uncertain and ungainly character, and he gains a positive sense of self through his intimate relationships with the other older protagonists.

Norman and Madge are both interested in forming new sexual relationships. Madge is disrespected and treated as 'mad' by her immediate family in England, and her sense of self has been impaired as a result. When she receives recognition in India from her new intimate sphere and from the large club she joins, which represents the meso level of society, she grows and transforms by gaining a positive sense of self and beginning a new relationship. At the beginning of the movie, Norman seeks relationships with younger women through speed-dating in England, where he is thoroughly disrespected and treated as a 'dirty old man'. In India, Norman is treated respectfully and forms a lasting, sexual and meaningful relationship with a woman of his own age. This is arguably ageist, as there was nothing to prevent him from becoming involved with a younger woman. Norman also joins the same club as Madge, and he receives respect and recognition from his intimate relationships (love sphere) and at the meso level of society. Through receiving respect from these two spheres, Norman obtains a positive sense of self (Fraser & Honneth, 2003).

The movie implies that the respect shown to the older protagonists by Sonny and the other protagonists, as well as the recognition offered by people they meet in the core institutions of the state (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) and at the meso level of society, improves their sense of self and helps them to achieve their retirement goals.

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) also explores disrespect towards Sonny from his mother (i.e., older person to younger person), and it shows that Sonny is unsure of his worth and abilities due to this disrespectful treatment. Further, Sonny does not have a positive sense of self, as it has been impaired by his mother's disrespect. During the

movie, Sonny grows and matures as a person due to the positive sense of self he acquires through the recognition he receives from the older protagonists.

Disrespect from the class and caste system in India is also briefly portrayed in the relationship that forms between Muriel and the Untouchable servant girl. Muriel speaks to the girl in the same way she speaks to everyone else, and therefore the girl feels recognised, which provides her with a positive sense of self. However, the disrespect that older women in India receive (WHO, 2002) is an aspect of Indian culture that is ignored by the movie.

The film also explores the 'outsourcing' business culture in a humorous way when it depicts the 'outsourcing of old age' to India. One of the main institutions depicted is a large call centre, which is an outsourced company whose customers are mainly older and living in the UK. The man who runs the company acknowledges that there are cultural issues that need to be addressed, and he offers Evelyn the job of training the staff on how to communicate with older people in the UK, thereby giving her a positive sense of self in the work/achievement sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). The large and core institutions of the state in India are depicted as granting older people recognition, but the respondents in this study did not report receiving respect from large institutions, especially insurance companies (see Section 5 of Chapter 5).

Jean, who refuses to engage in life in India, is portrayed as an antagonist who is negative, nasty and disrespectful of other people. Jean terminates her relationship with her husband, Douglas, at the end of the movie, acknowledging that he deserves better treatment than she has given him, and that she wants a relationship with someone who has better social standing in Britain and more wealth than he has. Jean is portrayed not as a 'bad' person, but as one whose values and desires are not compatible with those of

her husband. Her values and desires may not be compatible with those of the majority of the audience either, but the film states that she is 'negative' rather than 'bad'. When pushed beyond his limit, Douglas says to her:

> Can you hear yourself? Can you? Do you have any idea what a terrible person you've become? All you give out is this endless negativity. A refusal to see any kind of light and joy even when it's staring you in the face and a desperate need to squash any sign of happiness in me or or [sic] anyone else. It's a wonder I don't fling myself at the first kind word or gesture that comes my way but I don't out out [sic] of some sense of dried up loyalty and respect neither of which I ever bloody get in return.

Jean chooses to ignore his outburst rather than address the problem. She is angry and bitter that after many years in the civil service, her husband could not afford to live in the manner she desired. Jean believes that she deserves to be rich and socially important. She is not a stereotypically happily married older woman; rather, she is discontented with her marriage and she blames her husband for not being the wealthy, upper-class person she believes she deserves.

After the death of Graham Dashwood (High Court Judge), the other older protagonists discuss what it means to be older, with particular reference to the British society they were living in. Madge says: 'I don't want to grow older; I don't want to be condescended to; to become marginalised and ignored by society', thereby suggesting that older people are invisible in Britain and that British society fails to recognise them. Graham's death deconstructs the stereotype of retirement meaning inactivity and death. Graham has a terminal heart condition of which he is aware, and when he realises he is going to die soon, he decides to retire and look up his first gay lover in India to find out

if his life had been destroyed by their relationship as he, Graham, had feared would happen. Graham had been feeling guilty because when he was discovered with Manoj, whose family were servants of Graham's family, Manoj's whole family were dismissed by Graham's parents. However, Graham discovers that Manoj has been happily living in an arranged marriage to a woman for many decades, and that he did not feel disgraced. On the contrary, he had been respected by his wife and gained a positive sense of self as a result.

Graham actively searches old records in an Indian Records Office—a core institution of the state—to find Manoj. Although this institution is depicted as inefficient, Graham feels recognised by the workers and does not feel disrespected. After Graham finds and speaks with Manoj, he is happy and feels he can allow himself to die. Graham dies having achieved what he wanted to achieve from his retirement. He was actively involved with helping the other protagonists settle into India, and actively involved in his own life and decisions. His death was not portrayed as a passive acceptance of illness; Graham actively achieved his goal and then accepted his death because he felt that his life was now completed. Graham was gay, but he was not a stereotypically gay person. Graham had received respect from the people he was associating with as a High Court Judge in England, which represented both the legal sphere as a core institution of the state and the work/achievement sphere. Graham's relationships with the other protagonists are positive and he is treated respectfully by them. He was regarded as an extremely helpful and important part of the group of expatriates living in the Best Exotic Marigold Hotel and he enjoyed those relationships and treated the other members of his intimate sphere with great respect whether their actions were appropriate or not. Graham received recognition and respect from all three spheres (love, legal and achievement; Fraser & Honneth, 2003); therefore, his self-esteem and

sense of self were high and positive. His character therefore had no need to grow and transform in the context of the movie.

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) deconstructs stereotypes of older people. For example, Muriel is in a wheelchair, and although she would therefore be assumed to be frail, ill and vulnerable, she is assertive and acerbic and is far from being either frail or vulnerable, although she is ill at the beginning of the movie. Although she is racially prejudiced, which is a stereotype of older British people, she is not demonised in the film. In fact, she grows and transforms and stops being racially prejudiced due to her experiences in India and particularly in her relationship with the 'Untouchable' woman who is employed to clean and wait on guests in the hotel. Further, Norman wants to be sexually active, and although he is initially seen as the stereotypical 'dirty old man' and is disrespected as such by the younger women he attempts to date, this stereotype is also deconstructed, and he is shown to be an older person who is still desirous of having a relationship. However, Norman finds his match in a woman of similar age to himself, so although the stereotype is deconstructed, the audience infers that older people must restrict their sexual relationships to people from a similar age group.

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) engages the audience with the older protagonists with deep understanding and empathy. The older protagonists acquire a positive sense of self through their respectful intimate relationships in their newly constructed intimate sphere in India, and also from the work sphere (Evelyn), the core institutions of the state (Muriel and Graham) and the meso level of society (Evelyn, Douglas, Norman and Madge) (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). The positive sense of self obtained from the different spheres is supported by the results of the interviews with the participants in this study. The respondents reported feeling respected within their

intimate relationships and at the meso level of their community, but not from large, market-driven institutions such as insurance companies (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Therefore, they displayed high levels of self-esteem and had a positive sense of self despite reports of disrespect or mistreatment from some members of intimate spheres (see Chapters 4 and 5). The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) investigates the core institutions and meso level of society, as well as the protagonists' intimate relationships, as it explores the everyday lived experiences of the older protagonists. I expected to find disrespect for older people in popular culture, with films portraying older people disrespectfully, and with the respondents reporting disrespectful treatment from both their intimate relationships and the meso level of society. However, this film actively portrays respectful treatment of older people in their intimate relationships, the work sphere, the meso level of society and the core institutions of the state (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). It actively deconstructs ageing stereotypes and portrays older people as having power and agency, as well as being positively involved in their own lives and the lives of the younger and older people with whom they have relationships. However, the movie does not propose that active ageing is the only 'successful' way to age; rather, it proposes that active ageing is one positive way to age among many. The respondents in this study also felt respected by their intimate sphere, work sphere and at the meso level of society. Overall, this movie portrays a positive attitude towards older people.

3. RED (Retired Extremely Dangerous) 2010

The screenplay for RED (2010) was written by Jon and Erich Hoeber. The box office takings and information about the cast and their ages are outlined in the appendix. The

main cast were aged between 55 and 93 years. This movie was aimed at an older

audience. Summit Entertainment describes the movie as:

> After surviving an assault from a squad of hit men, retired CIA agent Frank
>
> Moses reassembles his old team for an all-out war. Frank reunites with old Joe,
>
> crazy Marvin and wily Victoria to uncover a massive conspiracy that threatens
>
> their lives. Only their expert training will allow them to survive a near-
>
> impossible mission—breaking into CIA headquarters. (Summit Entertainment,
>
> 2015)

The protagonists are a group of older people who have retired from working as

intelligence operatives for various organisations. The movie includes older women in

the action and portrays them as being capable of taking part in the action; therefore, it

deconstructs the stereotypes of protagonists in action movies. Protagonists in action

movies are usually younger to middle-aged men, and if they include women in the

action, their roles are limited. However, in RED (2010), Victoria is a highly skilled

assassin for MI6 and Sarah, although a novice, acquits herself very well.

The movie's applicability to the general older population is limited because although it

explores how a group of people react to retirement, their vocation was outside the

normal boundaries and constraints of society. For such a group of people, integrating

into society upon their retirement would be exceedingly difficult. For example, at the

beginning of the movie, Frank compares the outside of his house with the other houses

on his street. He realises that the other houses have Christmas decorations on them but

that his does not, so the next scene shows that he has put up Christmas decorations

around the outside of his house, although there are still no decorations inside. Thus,

Frank tries to integrate into his neighbourhood, but he does not fit in.

RED (2010) suggests that active ageing is the only appropriate way for older people to engage with life. The writers assert that to choose rest and relaxation in retirement is an 'unsuccessful' choice in older age. The themes in RED (2010) are disrespect for older people, retirement and identity after retirement. The lack of respect for the older protagonists is portrayed as a factual part of life and as something to be expected during older age. For example, the main younger character, Cooper, affectionately calls Frank 'Grandpa' at the end of the movie. This is disrespectful of everything that Frank achieved during the movie. The film attributes Frank's successes to his active ageing and work ethic. He undertakes an extreme and rigorous workout at the beginning of every day and is still in peak physical condition. This fails to recognise that older people should be given the choice to rest and relax if that is what they want, rather than do what policy makers decree is best for them, which infantilises them. RED (2010) replaces respect with affectionate disrespect, which is portrayed as an acceptable way to treat older people. However, as this is a comedy film, it is possible that the movie is trying to deconstruct disrespect and show that it is inappropriate, but this is not clear from the movie.

Social norms and older age and 'fitting in[to]' society are important themes in RED, as are identity and 'being old'. The concept that 'being old' is unacceptable to society is an important concept in this film. Disrespect for older people is portrayed as being the norm, even though the main protagonists are all actively involved in work. The movie deconstructs the normative view of active ageing as older people engaging in work that contributes to society, as the protagonists are all retired CIA, MI6 or KGB operatives who were actively involved in murdering people during their career. However, active ageing and continuing to work is portrayed as the only way of being worthy of respect when you are 'old', and even then, respect is not accorded to the protagonists by the

younger characters in the film. Cooper asks his boss why Frank was retired, and her response is: 'Because he was old'. The core institutions of the US, as represented by the CIA, refuse to recognise anyone who has grown older (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). The film thereby suggests that older people are not recognised by the core institutions of the state, regardless of their position in, and contribution to, society. The film shows that to the legal sphere (core institutions of the state), being older is a problem that can only be solved by death.

However, at the same time, the movie deconstructs the stereotype of 'old, frail, ill and vulnerable', suggesting that being old and ill is not a problem. Further, the film proposes that older people are not frail and vulnerable simply because they are 'old' and/or 'ill'. None of the protagonists are frail or vulnerable. Joe, who is 80 years old and dying of stage four liver cancer, is shown to have extremely advanced reflexes, capable of killing someone to survive, and to have retained the ability to quickly analyse a situation and deal with it appropriately. He is also portrayed as still being interested in women from a sexual viewpoint. He is ill and dying, but is neither frail nor vulnerable; he easily defeats and kills the young man who tries to kill him.

Identity is an important theme in the movie, and work is represented as the only medium of maintaining identity. Frank and Joe are the only two protagonists who have really retired. Frank struggles with retirement and Victoria tells him, without stating it explicitly, that retirement is a 'wound' to his identity and 'pressure' must be applied to that wound, by which she means he should reengage in work. Much of this discussion about the 'wound of retirement' is conducted via the looks that pass between Victoria and Frank as she dresses his bullet wound. For example, in a close-up shot of Victoria, she looks very 'sneaky' as she tells him that she 'still takes the occasional contract' to

'keep my hand in'. Joe does not work because he expects to die in the next few months. Marvin, Sarah, Victoria and Ivan all continue to work. As a retiree, Frank struggles with his identity. Western discourse displays a powerful conceptual relationship between physical bodies and social identity, and older people are denied identity or are expected to find a new identity because they are older (Calasanti, 2010; Hockey & James, 1993; Sontag, 1972). However, other areas of research, such as sexuality and gender studies, no longer investigate the concept of identity. Cruikshank (cited in van Dyk, 2014, p. 100) argues that:

> Given the trend away from identity politics in sexuality studies, it seems curious that the identity 'old' has not undergone similar transformation in age studies. The social construction of ageing is widely acknowledged, but expansive and revisionist thought on 'women' and 'gay' finds few parallels with 'old' as an identity.

An identity that narrows a person down to attributes that only relate to 'older' may be used to discriminate against the person, whereas research into concepts of 'older' or 'women' or 'gay' should help prevent discrimination and tear down the barriers that lock people into one small set of attributes. Research around older people and 'identity' 'is not just enabling and meaningful but exclusive and repressive at the same time: Any identity marks its downside and produces abjects that are unintelligible according to hegemonial identity standards' (van Dyk, 2014, p. 100). In RED (2010), the main antagonist, Cynthia, gives the main protagonists the 'identity' of 'old'. She describes them as such on many occasions, and this is the explanation she provides for the various problems and difficulties they experience. For example, Frank was 'retired because he was old' and he should have easily been defeated because he was 'old'. Further,

although Cynthia refuses to explain why she wants Cooper to kill Frank, she implies that Frank deserves to die because he is 'old'. However, an 'identity' that is offered on only one 'undesirable' (to most of society) attribute is not a real identity. Stets and Burke (2012, p. 2) suggest that to identify oneself, one must be 'reflective' and be able to see how larger patterns of behaviour fit into society: 'She may engage in a variety of actions and interactions to convey these images. These are individual patterns of behavior and help us understand the individual'. Therefore, an identity is not based on one single attribute, but on an overall picture of oneself based on a number of behaviours (Stets & Burke, 2012).

RED (2010) briefly alludes to the concept of invisibility when the younger antagonist, Cynthia, is angry that the older protagonists have not died invisibly, as was the original plan. Ageist societal representations of older people suggest that they are weak, ineffectual, frail, ill and vulnerable. Ageism may also be expressed as a failure to perceive older people when they are physically present (Honneth & Margalit, 2001). As the antagonist, Cynthia continually declaims her ageist views, and she is surprised that Frank does not die easily in the first attack on his home because he 'was old'. Cynthia does not want to 'see' any of the older protagonists, and when she is forced to recognise their presence and abilities, she becomes angry and suggests that Cooper may be 'the problem' rather than the fact that the older CIA agents are very capable human beings. Cynthia represents the attitude of the CIA, which purposefully fails to recognise its retired personnel because they are older. This is a purposeful lack of recognition and results in disrespect and degradation (Honneth, 1995). Cynthia believes that the older protagonists should simply disappear, and she sees retirement as invisibility. However, her attitude is not a reflection of Australian society, where older people receive recognition for their work in the form of pensions and superannuation, and from the

core institutions of the state (see Chapter 1). However, one respondent in this study expressed the view that she was invisible to her daughter-in-law.

The only relationships established within the context of RED (2010) are between the 'correct' age groupings, including the romantic involvement between Frank and Sarah. Although Sarah is nine years younger than Frank, she is over forty-five years old, which is regarded as 'older' by Hollywood standards (Barsam & Monahan, 2013, p. 314). Therefore, according to Hollywood criteria, which has homogenised the age group of 'older people', this relationship is within the same age grouping of older people. However, this was found to be inappropriate in the current study, as the respondents felt that they were a heterogeneous group of people rather than a homogenous group.

There are only five interactions between the main older protagonist, Frank, and the main younger protagonist, Cooper. In the first interaction, Frank defeats Cooper in a fight in Cooper's office. At the beginning of the fight, Cooper says 'Bad move, Grandpa'. As Frank dislocates Cooper's shoulder, he says 'Gordeski trained you'. When Cooper replies 'Yeah', Frank's response is 'I trained Gordeski', thereby showing that Frank has a better skill set than Cooper. This is a prelude to Cooper's defeat. The second interaction is a brief telephone call that takes place when Cooper has the group surrounded at Dunning's house. Cooper assures Frank that he will not fire; although he keeps his word, someone else opens fire and kills Joe, who volunteers to sacrifice himself for his friends because he knows he is going to die soon anyway. Cooper is portrayed as having integrity, and it becomes apparent to the audience that he is not the antagonist of the movie. The other three interactions between Frank and Cooper are equally as brief and continue to establish Cooper as a misdirected 'goodie' who must follow his boss's orders while not killing the older people, who he realises are not the

real problem. The audience does not know who has really ordered the murders of the protagonists until the end of the movie. The people trying to kill the protagonists are not typical 'baddies', but are under orders from the antagonists and are merely doing their job. Cooper eventually makes it clear that he has no desire to murder Frank, but that he is willing to 'bring him in to the CIA to answer for whatever problem' has caused the situation. The movie deconstructs the concept of 'good versus evil', and the audience is finally expected to consider whether the real murderer was a 'baddie' or simply a greedy person who wanted to remove all opposition to his plans for the future.

Stereotypes of older people portray them as mentally ill, frail, vulnerable and physically ill, as well as benevolent. However, in RED (2010), these stereotypes are deconstructed and found to be inappropriate, as the protagonists are actively engaged in work. Further, although Joe sacrifices his life to save the others and is therefore portrayed as benevolent, the concept of 'benevolent' old age is deconstructed by his willingness to kill those who are fighting against him and his friends.

As the older female protagonist, Victoria suffers the double disrespect of both ageism and sexism, as she must be rescued by her 'old' lover even though she continues to receive contracts as a hit-woman and expertly handles many kinds of weaponry, including machine guns. The other protagonists describe her as 'the best wet worker in the business', meaning that she is the best contract killer under government orders. At first, Marvin is afraid to approach her; he says of himself, Joe, Frank and Sarah, 'Now we're all going to get killed', meaning that she is better than the three other retired intelligence agents together. Despite her skills and capabilities, Victoria is an older woman and therefore needs to be rescued at one point. Further, her rescue is depicted as 'romantic'. Although the concept of 'baddie' is deconstructed—Victoria would

normally be regarded as the 'baddie'—the movie's writers adhere to the sexist concept that a woman must be 'rescued' by her lover at some point. The antagonists, or 'baddies', in this film would normally be regarded as the 'goodies' or 'good guys', but because they are trying to kill the protagonists, they are therefore automatically viewed as the 'baddies'. The antagonists' attitudes towards the older people are disrespectful, and because the antagonists are trying to kill them, this is both violent and abusive. However, as the protagonists obtain their positive sense of self from their intimate relationships within their own group and from their achievements against the CIA and its operatives (work sphere), they gain recognition in two of the three spheres (love and achievement; Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Therefore, the antagonists are essentially only people to be removed from their path in the most expeditious manner possible, and they do not affect their self-esteem.

RED (2010) is designed to shock the audience into viewing older people differently. At the age of 65, Helen Mirren is portrayed as being extremely attractive and able to use a machine gun. This contradicts the stereotypical images of age, which often include unattractiveness, dementia and walkers, and it is especially contradictory for an older woman. The film proposes that this particular group of older people deserve recognition because they have retained their identity by working beyond the usual retirement age. However, although they are youthful in their attitudes and activities, and therefore engage in active ageing, the younger people within their private and public spheres do not accord them respect. Active ageing is not as positive as the movie proposes, as it fails to recognise older people who choose not to engage in work and exercise. The protagonists form their own intimate sphere due to their allegiance to one another and the necessity to have this allegiance to survive. This particular formation of an intimate sphere gives the protagonists a positive sense of self, as each member of the group is

valued by the others both as an individual and for their overall contribution to keeping the group alive and functioning effectively against the younger antagonists at the CIA.

When the character Marvin Boggs is first introduced, he is shown to be living as a mentally ill and paranoid hermit, possibly with a form of age-related dementia. It is explained that this is the result of him forcibly being given LSD as part of uncontrolled CIA drug trials in the 1960s. However, this portrayal is quickly deconstructed as an inappropriate evaluation, as the character's assessments and judgements are shown to be correct rather than the result of paranoia. Marvin is portrayed comically; for example, when the group decides to visit Victoria, he says 'We'll all get killed', and when we briefly see him dressed up as a tree outside Victoria's window, she says 'Oh tell Marvin to stand down before he gets hurt'. However, his thought processes are proven to be correct. Despite his apparent mental illness, the other protagonists treat Marvin with respect both as a friend (the love sphere) and for his abilities and talents as an intelligence operative (the achievement sphere) (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). When Marvin believes that a young woman is following them, he grabs her by the throat, and Frank verbally eases the situation and allows the woman to go free. However, when the same young woman later tries to kill them, they discover that Marvin's assessment of the situation had been correct. Marvin could have displayed a negative sense of self due to his circumstances and the abusive treatment the CIA meted out to him when he was young, which represents disrespect, degradation and a lack of recognition (Honneth, 1995) by the core institution of the state. However, the character is portrayed as believing in himself and his abilities despite his mental troubles. Marvin retains a positive sense of self in isolation because he is still actively engaged with his work, and therefore with society (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Further, his intimate relationships

with the other protagonists provide an appropriate intersubjective avenue for obtaining a positive sense of self through their respect for him and his abilities (Honneth, 1990).

Although the older protagonists gain a positive sense of self from their intimate relationships, they are treated with contemptuous disrespect by the majority of the younger characters, and even with affectionate disrespect by the younger protagonist. The movie suggests that older people will not receive respect from younger people. The movie critiques society's view of older people and portrays the older protagonists as capable and efficient and still able to engage in work, even though the younger characters are not willing to see this. It suggests that society still views older people as frail and vulnerable, but that even older people who suffer from ill health are not necessarily frail and vulnerable. In RED (2010), the protagonists' method for gaining a positive sense of self is similar to the everyday lived experiences of the respondents in this study. However, the movie suggests that work and exercise (i.e., active ageing) are the only appropriate ways for older people to gain recognition, thereby suggesting that older people who choose to rest and relax are 'failures'. The respondents in this study did not experience a lack of recognition from core institutions (Fraser & Honneth, 2003), as was portrayed in the movie, although they felt that they were not recognised as viable markets for insurance companies.

4. The Holiday (2006)

The Holiday (2006) is billed as a romantic comedy and was written by Nancy Meyers. The box office takings and information about the cast and their ages are outlined in the appendix. Four of the five main protagonists in this movie are in their early thirties. The movie revolves around the romances between the young characters and is aimed at people in their early thirties. The movie is described by Sony Pictures as:

In Nancy Meyers' The Holiday, a romantic comedy from the director of
Something's Gotta Give and What Women Want, two women trade homes only
to find that a change of address can change their lives. Iris is in love with a man
who is about to marry another woman. Across the globe, Amanda realizes the
man she lives with has been unfaithful. Two women who have never met and
live 6000 miles apart, find themselves in the exact same place. They meet online
at a home exchange website and impulsively switch homes for The Holiday. Iris
moves into Amanda's L.A. house in sunny California as Amanda arrives in the
snow covered English countryside. Shortly after arriving at their destinations,
both women find the last thing either wants or expects: a new romance. Amanda
is charmed by Iris' handsome brother Graham and Iris, with inspiration provided
by legendary screenwriter Arthur, mends her heart when she meets film
composer Miles. (Sony Picture Digital Productions Inc., 2014)

The Holiday (2006) has five main protagonists, one of whom is 90-year-old Arthur,
who is a retired Hollywood screenwriter who had won many Academy Awards. At the
beginning of the movie, Arthur is portrayed as a stereotypical older person who needs a
carer and a walker, and who is confused and possibly dementing. When Iris first sees
Arthur, he is walking with a carer and is using a walking frame. Iris later meets Arthur
when he is alone and appears to be confused and lost. Arthur says to Iris, 'Do you know
where I live?', and Iris responds, 'Yes, I believe I do'. Arthur says, 'Well, that makes
one of us'. Arthur undergoes a transformation from older to actively engaged, and
therefore to 'young' or 'young at heart', with Iris's help, and this is portrayed as a
positive enhancement to the older Arthur. He relates to younger people and engages in
exercise, so he no longer needs his walker, and he is shown to be sound in his mental
capacities. The Holiday (2006) therefore promotes active ageing; however, Arthur is

infantilised by the active ageing discourse. The movie deconstructs the stereotype of the dementing older person, as Arthur proves to be extremely intelligent and not dementing at all; his confusion about where he lives is explained away because his street had changed so dramatically over the years that he could no longer recognise where his house was situated. This symbolises Arthur's disconnection from society and a lack of confidence of his place in society. As he feels displaced and obsolete, he spends too much time indoors; therefore, he fails to internalise the changes to his neighbourhood. Arthur is not recognised at the meso level of society as represented by his local community, but this changes when he meets Iris.

Arthur is instrumental in Iris's journey to transformation, enlightenment and belief in herself as a capable and intelligent woman. Arthur explains that she is supposed to be the leading lady of her own life, but that she acts like 'the best friend'. Iris responds: 'I've been going to a therapist for three years and she's never explained anything that well. Arthur that was brilliant. Brutal but brilliant'.

Arthur gives Iris a list of classical movies and insists that she watch them. He chooses movies that portray women as strong, independent and courageous. He discusses the movies with Iris and helps her to see that she needs to change her views about herself and her life. Arthur's intelligence, wisdom and willingness to be involved with Iris help her transform, grow and mature as a person. This makes him a uniquely acceptable character who is not held up for derision and contempt because he is older. Thus, the movie suggests that older people who are youthful in their outlook, and who participate in active ageing, are useful and helpful towards younger people, and they thereby contribute to society and are worthy of respect. However, this may suggest that older people who are frail, vulnerable, ill or physically disabled are not worthy of respectful

treatment. The concept that older people must be 'worthy' to receive respect suggests that being 'older' is equivalent to not being 'worthy', and that older people must do something to show that they can still be 'youthful' and thereby prove that they are 'worthy'. Thus, this represents misrecognition. Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition suggests that recognition is not about the individual being 'worthy' of recognition, but that recognition of a person should be normative.

The Holiday (2006) encourages its younger audience to show respect for, and form relationships with, older people to encourage them to reengage with society. Therefore, well-meaning and 'good' young people may respect older people despite the fact they do not 'deserve' it because of their frailty, illness or vulnerability. This promotes the active ageing paradigm and shames and blames older people who suffer from health-related difficulties. Although respect and recognition are usually only accorded to people who are not deemed to be 'others', it is the appropriate way to view and treat all members of society. Illness is not a reason to treat a person disrespectfully, regardless of whether society perceives ill heath to be the person's fault due to his or her lifestyle choices. Social justice decrees that older people do not 'deserve' to be respected simply because their life choices coincide with societal ideals of 'successful ageing'; instead, they should be shown respect automatically.

Arthur describes his meeting with Iris as a 'meet cute', which is a scene in a movie or television show where a future romantic couple meet in an 'adorable' fashion. Here, he merely asserts his intelligence and displays his ability as a writer; he does not suggest that he regards Iris as a potential romantic partner. This idea is dismissed by the context of the movie. The framing of Arthur and Iris in the two shots that include them do not show them closely linked; the film photography shows that they are together only as

friends. However, although Miles, the composer, is not as young as Iris and is not very attractive, he is presented as a potential romantic interest for her because he is 'good', kind and young.

When Iris asks Arthur if he is busy or if he would like to have dinner with her that night, he tells her that he has 'not been busy since 1978'. Thus, the movie suggests that Arthur is no longer worthy of the respect he once received because he is not engaged in the work sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). This suggests that he has to make changes to himself, his attitude and his lifestyle to be considered worthy of respect, which is an example of active ageing discourse deciding what is best for older people. However, Arthur has been actively engaged in his life with his friends, even though he has not taken part in the active ageing paradigm. Active ageing suggests that older people only age 'successfully' when they actively participate in work and society. This aligns closely with the results of the interviews for this study, as all respondents, including those who suffered from ill health, believed that they were positively engaged in their own lives, and that there was mutual respect between themselves and younger people.

Although Arthur's character deconstructs the stereotype of the frail, ill and dementing older person as the audience gets to know him as an individual rather than a symbol of older age, the character endorses the stereotype of the wise and benevolent older person. Moreover, The Holiday (2006) suggests that older people who do not take part in the active ageing paradigm will be confused, frail, ill and vulnerable. It also suggests that exercise is responsible for stopping Arthur's confusion, frailty and ill health. The film proposes that active ageing is the only 'successful' way to age, which is disrespectful of older people who have consciously chosen not to take part in active ageing.

At the beginning of The Holiday (2006), Arthur is shown to be disengaged from society, but not from life, as he regularly meets up with two good friends, Ernie (84 years old) and Norman (81 years old). Arthur's friends are extremely intelligent and alert people who highly value and respect Arthur and his opinions. Arthur receives mutual recognition from his own age group, and the movie shows this as normative behaviour. Therefore, it is to be assumed that, as with the participants in this research, Arthur gains a positive sense of self from his intimate relationships, and he does not experience an impaired positive understanding of self due to disrespectful attitudes in society. Although Arthur is portrayed as confused, frail and dementing at the beginning of the movie, there is no suggestion that he lacks self-esteem at this time. Arthur is a positive, resourceful character who positively interacts with his friends, which shows good self-esteem and a positive sense of self. However, as the story unfolds, there is confusion as to whether Arthur does in fact have a positive sense of self. This is due to the screenwriter's lack of insight rather than the character's confusion about himself. Arthur was an important screenwriter in Hollywood when he was young and employed, and he was honoured by his peers for his work and achievements with Academy Awards, which he displays around his house. However, Arthur criticises his physical abilities; for example, he fumbles with his keys and says, 'This could take me until tomorrow'. This is a mildly amusing statement that is supposed to add to the comedy of the film, but it is also a self-criticism. It may indicate a lack of self-esteem, or it could show high self-esteem because it shows that Arthur can laugh at himself. The lack of clarity about this scene is due to the poor writing.

The Holiday (2006) explores and deconstructs themes around stereotyping older people, especially the stereotypes of older people needing a carer and a walker, and being confused and dementing. However, the film fails to investigate or deconstruct the

stereotype of benevolent older age as wise and helpful for younger people. Older age occurs simply because people live past the age of 65; this does not mean that older people are any wiser or more benevolent than they were when they were younger. However, the stereotype of older age being benevolent and wise enables younger people to relate to older people with some degree of respect and kindness. It allows younger people to view older people in a positive light and as having a positive effect on their own understanding of self.

The movie proposes that older people who are not active, and who therefore do not participate in active ageing, deserve to be treated and spoken about disrespectfully. For example, the protagonists Iris and Miles discuss Arthur affectionately, but they are disrespectful when talking about his physical fitness:

Iris: I'm working out with Arthur.

Miles (laughing): I'm trying not to picture it.

Iris: Well, the workout's not that great but the conversation is truly fantastic.

Miles: No, that I truly believe.

Iris and Miles laugh at Arthur because they think he is 'old' and cannot 'do a proper workout'. Although this is supposed to be affectionate laughter, it derides older people as being incapable of 'proper exercise'. However, this raises an important question regarding what constitutes a 'proper workout' or 'proper exercise', other than that which is appropriate for age, health and fitness levels. The two younger protagonists show disrespect by laughing at the older protagonist because he is older and not as fit. Younger viewers may, in turn, believe that it is normal and expected behaviour to disrespect older people who are not as physically active as themselves. Thus, The

Holiday (2006) suggests that this is acceptable behaviour, thereby promoting active ageing discourse, which suggests that older people who choose to rest and relax are failures and not worthy of recognition. Honneth (1990) describes disrespect as the denial of approval or recognition of another person; therefore, it is disrespectful to deride an older person because of his or her physical frailty or ill health. The 'normality' of affectionately disrespecting older people is emphasised in the film, as both Iris and Miles treat Arthur respectfully in all other interactions with him and about him, and the film does not deride the affectionate disrespect, but shows it as normal. Honneth (1990) suggests that disrespect, insult and degradation harm a person's sense of self; however, the disrespectful treatment of Arthur does not impair his sense of self because it occurs when he is not present to witness it. Although Arthur does not witness the disrespect, it does not mean it is either acceptable or appropriate behaviour (Honneth, 1995).

The Holiday (2006) also explores and deconstructs the concept that 'older' is the same as 'embarrassment'. Arthur is asked to give a speech at a ceremony honouring his work, but he does not want to go. He later agrees, saying, 'Ok, let's do it. Let's get this embarrassment over with'. However, Arthur's use of 'embarrassment' was written to make the audience laugh with Arthur rather than at him, the 'embarrassment of being older' is brought to the audience's attention as an ageist phenomenon rather than an acceptable way of viewing older age. Arthur discusses the award night with Iris:

> Iris: I reckon, that with a little exercise you could walk out there on your own and maybe I could go with you, as like your date.

> Arthur: Anyway, how would you propose to get me in shape? Seriously?

Iris and Arthur commence an exercise program using Amanda's swimming pool. When Arthur goes under water on the first lap, Iris must go back and help him. At other times, Iris moves the walker out of reach with her foot, forcing Arthur to walk small distances without it. This whole sequence is infantilising because it suggests that older people cannot work out what they need to do to become more physically fit without the help of younger people. Thus, it reinforces the stereotype of older people being confused and incapable of looking after themselves or making appropriate decisions. It shows that, because Arthur had not participated in active ageing, he could not make good decisions for himself. Therefore, although the movie attempts to deconstruct the stereotype of inactivity, it also reinforces that inactivity is wrong. Arthur is not portrayed as a person with agency. He gives his agency to Iris even though Iris needs his help and support in her own growth and transformation. Although the relationship could be regarded as mutually helpful and respectful, Iris has more power and agency than Arthur, and she disrespects him when he is not present. The movie shows that affectionate disrespect for older people is an appropriate way of relating to older people.

As Arthur's award night approaches, Miles creates a musical theme to be played when Arthur walks onto the stage. Miles describes the musical theme as 'cheeky', and Iris reinforces that this is how they view Arthur by saying that 'It sounds like him'. These statements portray affection for Arthur; however, 'cheeky' is a descriptor that is usually applied to a small child. Therefore, Arthur is again infantilised and disrespected by Iris and Miles when they discuss him outside of his presence. This reinforces the concept that older people are not worthy of recognition simply because they are older.

Arthur is nervous on his award night and says, 'Ok, let's do it. Let's get this embarrassment over with'. He and Iris walk into a seemingly empty theatre, and he is

escorted through the doors into a large and completely full hall. Arthur is astonished and becomes more confident when he sees the number of people who have turned up to see him. Arthur is recognised for his work achievements by the Academy of Film, which represents a core institution of the state in the US (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Therefore, Arthur receives recognition from two of the three spheres of recognition (Fraser & Honneth, 2003), and he gains recognition from the third sphere of love through his relationships with Ernie, Norman, Iris and Miles.

Arthur's friends all attend the award ceremony to support him. When Arthur arrives at the stage steps and anxiously looks at them, Miles plays the theme song, which inspires Arthur to spring up the steps alone and partly dance across the stage. When Arthur's speech commences, he is shown to be an intelligent and articulate speaker: 'I am absolutely overwhelmed' (pause) 'That I could climb those stairs'. The theatre laughs:

> I came to Hollywood over 60 years ago and immediately fell in love with motion pictures and it's a love that has lasted a life time. When I first arrived in Tinseltown there were no Cineplexes. No such thing as a blockbuster or DVD. I was here before conglomerates owned the studios, before pictures had special effects teams and definitely before box office results were reported like baseball scores on the nightly news.

At this point, Arthur's transformation is complete. It is implied that he could not have achieved this without the help and input of the younger people, which denies recognition of his capabilities as an older person (Honneth, 1990). However, The Holiday (2006) also deconstructs stereotypes of relationships between older people and younger people. Arthur's relationship with Iris is not romantic, which is the usual movie explanation for relationships between older men and younger women. Further,

the relationship between Iris and Arthur is one of mutual help and provides mutual satisfaction. This relationship also extends the relationships of Arthur's friends and Miles, who is Iris's romantic interest, so there are mutually satisfying intergenerational relationships. On one of Miles's visits to Iris, she admits him into the house and he hears loud sounds of merriment coming from somewhere unseen. He finds that Iris is having a Hanukah party for Arthur and his two friends. Iris says to Miles, 'My neighbour knew I didn't know anybody so he's invited a couple of his friends'. During the party, Miles explains that his girlfriend is on location in New Mexico for a small independent film, and Arthur momentarily looks sceptical. This shows the wisdom and knowledge of human nature that the movie implies younger people have not yet acquired, but Arthur is wise enough not to tell Miles about his doubts. However, older age and wisdom are not automatically entwined. This could be a subtle acknowledgement from the film's writer that authors are aware of human nature, but if so, it is so subtle that the message is lost. As Miles and Iris clean up after the older people have left, Miles says: 'This was an amazing night [pause]. You know, Arthur Abbott is maybe the last of the great Hollywood writers of that generation'. Iris and Miles both have a wonderful time interacting with, and relating to, Arthur and his friends, who also clearly enjoy the party. Therefore, there is mutual recognition between these five people.

Although The Holiday (2006) deconstructs some stereotypes of older age, it chooses to keep others intact. The younger and older characters display mutual recognition and esteem in their relationships, and the older people who take part in active ageing are regarded as being worthy of respect, even while they are generally derided as being unable to perform 'proper' physical workouts. Therefore, the movie's message of respect is contradictory and confused. This confusion is partly due to the movie linking

respect with active ageing and showing that only older people who are engaged in active ageing are respected. It is also partly due to the poor quality of the screenwriting and the lack of insight shown by the writer.

5. Reasons for Choosing Films

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) was chosen because it explores the social dynamics of both respect and disrespect as its two major themes, which makes the film relevant to this thesis. The film also explores active ageing and whether the protagonists receive recognition from the core institutions of the state. It actively deconstructs ageing stereotypes, and it briefly touches on infantilisation.

RED (2010) is an action movie and, as such, there is little character development, as the main point of the movie is to kill antagonistic characters as spectacularly as possible. Therefore, the movie has a limited number of themes. However, RED (2010) was chosen as being relevant to this research because its main cast and protagonists are a group of older people who unsuccessfully try to reconcile themselves to retirement. Further, the film explores the theme of disrespect of older people by younger people and the core institutions of the state, and it proposes that older people will be disrespected regardless of whether they are actively engaged in life and work. Active ageing is a major theme in this film. The younger characters in the film are angry that the older protagonists did not die invisibly, as was the plan. The younger characters believe that 'old' is the equivalent of 'weak' and 'bad'. Although a number of other movies in the action genre have older protagonists—for example, The Expendables (2010, 2012, 2014) series of movies—the ageing themes are less relevant to the movies than the action elements. Further, they do not feature older women as protagonists, and the comedy element, although present, is not as important as it is in RED (2010). Thus,

RED (2010) provides a better comparison with The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) and The Holiday (2006) than other action movies with older protagonists.

The Holiday (2006) was chosen as being relevant to the research because one of the main protagonists is ninety years old, and this character is central to the film's plot. Further, one of the main themes of the film is that being treated respectfully gives a person a positive sense of self and enables him or her to grow and mature into a better person. The Holiday (2006) shows the older protagonist receiving recognition from the Academy of Film in the US, and this represents the core institutions of the state, or the legal sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). The film also explores infantilisation and deconstructs ageing stereotypes, and it briefly explores active ageing.

6. Coding Scheme

A coding scheme was developed for the movies selected for this study and then used to analyse the movie data. The codes for the movies were designed as retrieval and organising devices that clustered the relevant segments of data relating to particular themes (Minichiello et al., 1995), as the movies were not simply about older people and older people's issues. Further, respect for older people was not a central theme in all the movies, but I applied the coding scheme to determine whether the older characters were treated and portrayed respectfully. Table 2.1 shows the codes and the number of times they occurred in all five movies.

Table 2.1 Codes Occurring in Movies

Codes	TBEMH	RED	TH	TH:AUJ	TGBH
Disrespect	12	3	5	2	10
Respect	17	5	6	7	12
Retirement	3	7	2	2	0
Active Ageing	2	15	8	42	0
Old	1	4	3	2	
Stereotypes	7	8	5	16	10
Invisibility	1	2	0	2	13

TBEMH = The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012)
RED = RED (2010)
TH = The Holiday (2006)
TH:AUJ = The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012)
TGBH = The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014)

7. Discussion

Although The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) are comedy films, they are in different sub-genres and so are written in different ways. The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) is a comedy drama, RED (2010) is fast-paced action interspersed with comedy, and The Holiday (2006) is a romantic comedy. As all three films have some comedy elements, they treat the issues and themes of being older without drama or trauma, and with some care and sensitivity. The films bring comedy into the themes and thereby make them easy for audiences to accept and relate to. Age, and older age in particular, is a relevant structural factor in each movie. In all three films, the age of the older protagonists is revealed as the reason for the disrespectful treatment they receive. RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) suggest that respect can be replaced with affectionate disrespect, whereas The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012)

suggests that respectful treatment of older people is an important part of their positive sense of self and their ability to achieve their goals in their older age.

All three films portray growth and transformation in the older protagonists as they obtain a positive sense of self through their intimate relationships (Honneth, 1990). Although there is some suggestion that intergenerational mutual recognition can occur, especially in The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), the protagonists in all three films mainly receive respect from the intimate spheres formed in their own age groupings. This concept is based on ageist prejudices and the expectation that older people should not be impinging on the lives of younger people. The respondents in this research study felt that they received respect from their intimate spheres, including friends and family of all ages. Therefore, although the movies that portray older people receiving respect from their intimate spheres appear to match the results of the interviews for this study, they fail to show that respect for older people is also shown by younger family members, as well as friends from their own age group (see Chapter 4).

All three films deconstruct older age stereotypes and show that they are based on ageist prejudices. The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) suggest that older people need to be positively engaged in their lives (see Section 7 in Chapter 5). However, RED (2010) proposes active ageing rather than retiring. The movie suggests that working and keeping the work identity intact is the only solution to disrespect for older people, and even then, disrespect will still be part of older people's lived experiences. The Holiday (2006) proposes that older people need to be actively engaged in physical fitness regimes in order to promote good health and successful ageing. Arthur was not 'ageing successfully' before he met Iris, but he was shown to be ageing 'successfully' after he started some physical exercise.

'Successful' ageing is an ageist concept that suggests that older people who do not follow the same path to 'successful' ageing are failures. Thus, active ageing discourse states that older people who choose to rest and relax are considered 'unsuccessful', and that older people who suffer from ill health and/or frailty cause their own problems through their 'unsuccessful' attitudes and practices. Although active ageing discourse is regarded as benign, it is in fact ageist and shows that older people who do not take part in active ageing may continue to have negative experiences (see Chapter 5).

However, The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) explores ill health in ageing and does not suggest that it is the older person's fault. The movie indicates that older people who suffer from ill health can still have positive experiences, achieve positive outcomes and enjoy their final years despite their ill health or disability. It also shows that death is not a sign of unsuccessful ageing, but is a fact of growing older. Further, neither The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) nor RED (2010) equate ill health with frailty. In The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), Graham Dashwood is depicted as vigorous and able to take part in a cricket match with children despite his ill health. Further, in RED (2010), Joe plays a prominent role in the action despite his stage four liver cancer and imminent death.

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) indicates that being actively engaged in work is only one route of many to positive ageing and happiness for older people (see Section 7 in Chapter 5), and that older people should be recognised even when they are not actively engaged in work. RED (2010) argues that older people must engage in work and refuse to retire, and only then are they 'worthy' of recognition. Although both RED (2010) and The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) show that older people are more than capable of continuing to work, none of the older characters in The Holiday (2006)

are engaged in work. However, in The Holiday (2006), Arthur gives a speech that is indicative of his working life and is part of an award for his achievements during his working career. This represents recognition in the achievement sphere. All three movies show that older protagonists can receive recognition in the work/achievement sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003).

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) suggests that respect for older people helps them to fulfil their dreams and desires for retirement, and that it is possible for them to retire but retain their identity and achieve positive outcomes by undertaking fulfilling activities. In contrast, both The Holiday (2006) and RED (2010) depict respect for older people as being separate from older people achieving positive outcomes in their lives. In The Holiday (2006), the positive outcome is achieved through active ageing, exercise and relationships with younger people. Although the relationships appear to be respectful, the younger people show disrespect for Arthur and his abilities when he is not present, thereby infantilising him. RED (2010) shows that positive outcomes can be achieved by older people when they work, despite the lack of respect they receive from younger people.

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) propose that older people can enjoy their lives and have relationships. However, RED (2010) shows that these relationships must be within the appropriate age group of older people, whereas both The Holiday (2006) and The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) suggest that older people can have positive relationships with younger people who are not directly related to them, and that both older and younger people can receive mutual benefits from those relationships. Mutual recognition is important in The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) and The Holiday (2006).

Both RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) suggest that older people will always experience some form of disrespect, and the movies critique this through the medium of comedy. Although The Holiday (2006) appears to propose that being physically active and fit will prevent disrespect, the older protagonist is still treated with affectionate disrespect. However, RED (2010) suggests that older people will be disrespected simply because they are 'old'. It does not suggest that disrespect for older people is linked with physical frailty, ill health or disability, as it portrays the older protagonist, who is dying of stage four liver cancer, as being treated the same way, and with the same disrespect and disregard for his abilities, that the other older protagonists experience. The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) deconstructs disrespect for older people, portraying it as an unnecessary component of Western culture and one that does not occur in India. However, research shows that older women in India are not always treated respectfully, and older widows are driven out of their villages because they are regarded as a drain on village resources (WHO, 2002).

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) and RED (2010) depict the older protagonists as agents who are situated within their own contexts and who can make their own decisions and exercise their own power and choice. However, RED (2010) shows that the older people are unable to rise above their contexts and make positive changes in their lives that do not involve work; therefore, it promotes active ageing and suggests that people who do not participate in active ageing are not 'successful'. The older protagonists' only choice is to continue to work as intelligence operatives, although not necessarily for their former agencies, as they were forcibly ejected due to their age, which represents a lack of recognition in the work sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). However, RED (2010) suggests that continuing to work is the best thing to do in older age, and it ignores the possibility of rising above context and making choices that

involve resting and relaxing, and work and/or positive engagement with life in contexts other than intelligence work. In The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), all the protagonists rise above their contexts and exercise their agency by choosing to move to another country to enjoy the benefits of living in a different culture that recognises older people. It also suggests that it is cheaper and easier to live in India than in the UK. In contrast, The Holiday (2006) does not depict Arthur as a situated agent. Arthur has limited agency, and he is only able to exercise his agency when he is in a platonic relationship with, and has the help of, a younger person. Arthur is shown to be declining into ill health, frailty and disability through his negative choice to not be involved in a physical exercise regime, and this fails to recognise that older people can choose not to participate in active ageing. Arthur's agency in The Holiday (2006) is limited to making choices that negatively affect his life; however, his relationship with Iris enables him to make choices that positively affect his life and empower him to begin moving and become engaged with society. Arthur is not shown as having real agency. Even though he does not want to attend the award night that is to be held in his honour, Iris forcibly persuades him to accept the invitation. The movie implies that this is for Arthur's 'own good', but portraying the situation this way removes Arthur's choice, power and agency, as he places his agency into the hands of the benevolent younger person. The Holiday (2006) implies that this is the right thing to do because the younger person knows what is best for him. Thus, the movie infantilises Arthur.

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) and The Holiday (2006) show that the older protagonists receive recognition from the legal sphere (core institutions of the state), the work/achievement sphere and the intimate spheres, and the interplay of recognition from all three spheres gives them high self-esteem and a positive sense of self (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). The protagonists in RED (2010) do not receive recognition from the

legal sphere, but they receive recognition from their intimate and achievement spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003); therefore, their positive sense of self is intact.

The Holiday (2006) and RED (2010) suggest that younger people can replace respect with a form of affectionate regard, and that treating older people disrespectfully is acceptable if they are treated affectionately. In contrast, Honneth (1990) states that disrespect, insult and degradation impair a person's positive sense of self and can lead to a breakdown in personality. These movies suggest that affectionate regard for older people is more important than respect, and that it can replace respect in relationships with older people. However, in The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), Sonny successfully treats all the older protagonists with both affection and respect. The minor young characters refer to the older protagonists as 'uncle' or 'auntie', depending on gender, which indicates both affection, due to the implied close relationship of an uncle or aunt, and respect, from the implication that they are not old enough to be referred to as either 'grandpa' or 'grandma'. Honneth's (1990) work on recognition describes disrespect as the denial of approval or recognition of another person; therefore, respect cannot be replaced with affection, and older people need to be treated with both affection and respect. These differing forms of treatment are not mutually exclusive, and although both RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) suggest that affectionate disrespect is an acceptable alternative to respect, The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) clearly shows that both affection and respect are possible. Arguably, RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) critique the societal lack of respect for older people by replacing it with affectionate disrespect, and they do not suggest that affectionate disrespect is a viable alternative from younger people. However, as the affectionate disrespect they display is not critiqued by the younger protagonists, it is likely that the

films are suggesting that this is acceptable. However, recognition of all people should be considered a social norm (Honneth, 1990).

8. Conclusion

This chapter argued that The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) portray active ageing. Further, RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) espouse this paradigm as the only appropriate way to age 'successfully', although The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) portrays active ageing as one way among many to age 'successfully'. It was argued that although active ageing is presented as benign and positive for older people, the discourse suggests that older people who choose to rest and relax, or who have health-related difficulties, do not age 'successfully' and are thereby failures. The Holiday (2006) portrays the older protagonist as having caused his own health problems by not engaging in exercise and active ageing, and it was argued that the movie therefore infantilises the protagonist.

All three films present the protagonists and their relationships within their intimate spheres, the work sphere and the core institutions of the state. The key framework of the protagonists' relationships shows how respect works in the wider context of society and this was compared with the results from the interviews. The films suggest that, like the respondents in this study, the protagonists receive respect from their intimate and work spheres. The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) and The Holiday (2006) show the protagonists receiving respect from the legal sphere, whereas RED (2010) does not. The respondents in this study received respect from the legal sphere, but they felt they were not regarded as a viable market by large institutions such as insurance companies. The movies all show that the protagonists' intimate spheres were within their own age groupings, although the intimate spheres of the respondents in this study also included

children, grandchildren, and nephews and nieces. The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) shows that the protagonists do not experience respect from their families in Britain, but this was not the case for the respondents in this study.

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) were analysed and compared and contrasted in this chapter, and they depicted various forms of respect and disrespect for older protagonists. The older protagonists received respect from their own age group and the intimate spheres they created within that group. This allowed them to obtain or keep a positive sense of self, which was instrumental in their growth and transformation. RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) showed that younger people may treat older people disrespectfully, but that this is acceptable as long as they are held in affectionate regard. In contrast, Honneth (1990) states that disrespect impairs a person's positive sense of self and can lead to a breakdown in personality. The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) portrayed the older protagonists as receiving respect and affection from the younger protagonist and minor younger characters. In The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) and The Holiday (2006), the older protagonists received recognition from the legal sphere (core institutions of the state), the work/achievement sphere and the intimate spheres, and the interplay of recognition from all three spheres gave them high self-esteem and a positive sense of self (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). RED (2010) showed that the protagonists did not receive recognition from the legal sphere, but they received recognition from the intimate and achievement spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003); therefore, their positive sense of self was intact.

All three films portrayed, and strongly critiqued, varying forms of disrespectful treatment of older people. They suggest that disrespect of older people is a societal

norm that needs to be analysed and addressed with the appropriate recognition of older

people.

Chapter 3: Fantasy Films

1. Introduction

This chapter argues that The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) portrays and supports the active ageing paradigm and the suggestion that it is the only 'successful' way to age and it is noted in section two that the movie is chosen for this reason. The movie shows that older people who are not engaged in work are not 'worthy' of respect. However, according to Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition, recognition is not about the individual being 'worthy' of recognition; rather, recognition should be normative. Therefore, active ageing, which refuses to recognise older people who choose to rest and relax, is ageist, and although it appears to be positive for older people, it is far from benign. In contrast to The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012), The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) suggests that older people can be positively engaged in their lives in whatever way they desire and this is the reason the movie is chosen as outlined in section two. This is a more positive view of ageing, as it does not suggest that 'successful' ageing depends on particular behaviours, or that those who do not engage in those behaviours are therefore 'unsuccessful'. Further, The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) shows that being positively engaged and interested in life, other people and what is happening in society provides joy and recognition to older people.

This chapter explores the fantasy genre, which is rich in themes relating to older age. Much of the discourse around older age, as well as a large number of ageist stereotypes, are represented in fantasy. For example, wise and benevolent older men are portrayed as wizards, and 'bad' older women are portrayed as 'witches'. Further, fantasy provides a safe platform from which to explore these themes because it is removed from societal

norms and people's everyday lived experiences. It is important to explore the similarities and differences between the film protagonists' experiences of respect and the respondents' reports of respectful treatment; therefore, this chapter includes references to the analysis of the interviews.

Section three analyses The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) which is a fantasy film with comedy elements in detail. The movie is aimed at all age groups, and it introduces the themes of ageing, active ageing, respecting older people and recognition that enables older people to maintain a positive sense of self. A minor theme is the invisibility of older people. Section four analyses The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) which is also a fantasy and comedy film that investigates older age, respect and recognition that enables older people to maintain a positive sense of self. It also explores disrespect, including abuse, towards older people, as well as invisibility experienced by older people and people who are othered by society.

Section five discusses both movies. The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) explores the themes of respect and older people, and it deconstructs stereotypes of older people in depth and develops the older protagonists' characters by displaying their relationships within their intimate spheres and how the respect of their intimate spheres keeps their positive sense of self intact. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) conveys in some depth the concept that older people and people with disabilities suffer intensely from invisibility, which represents disrespect and a lack of recognition. The respondents' experiences are related to those of the protagonists and characters in the movies.

Section six compares and contrasts The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) with The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) and it is found that both movies address issues of

recognition of older people although The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) is espousing active ageing whereas The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) recommends that older people enjoy their older age in whatever way they choose. Section seven compares and contrasts the analyses of all five movies and similarities and differences are discussed using Honneth's theory of recognition.

2. Reasons for Choosing Films

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) was chosen for this research because some of its major themes and topics of interest are the older protagonists and whether they are respected. The movie deconstructs various stereotypes of ageing and investigates active ageing. The respondents in this study were also involved in active ageing and spoke about it in great depth, although two of the respondents felt that they were blamed for their ill health. All the respondents reported being involved in active ageing in some way—even the stroke victim who lived in a nursing home. The respondents felt that if they did not report being involved in active ageing; they would be regarded as not ageing 'successfully'.

The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) was chosen because the main protagonist is deeply respectful of older people and all people, regardless of whether they are considered 'societal norms' or 'others', and this respect enables the other characters to obtain a positive sense of self.

3. The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012)

This movie was based on 'The Hobbit', which was written by J. R. R. Tolkien and published in 1937. The screenwriters were Philippa Boyens, Guillermo del Toro, Peter Jackson and Fran Walsh. The box office takings and information about the cast and

their ages are outlined in the appendix. The cast ranged in age from 41 to 90 years. The

two main protagonists were played by actors who were 41 years old. This movie was

aimed at both younger and older audiences. The story is described as:

> Bilbo Baggins is swept into a quest to reclaim the lost Dwarf Kingdom of
>
> Erebor from the fearsome dragon Smaug. Approached out of the blue by the
>
> wizard Gandalf the Grey, Bilbo finds himself joining a company of thirteen
>
> dwarves led by the legendary warrior, Thorin Oakenshield. Their journey will
>
> take them into the Wild; through treacherous lands swarming with Goblins and
>
> Orcs, deadly Wargs and Giant Spiders, Shapeshifters and Sorcerers. Although
>
> their goal lies to the East and the wastelands of the Lonely Mountain first they
>
> must escape the goblin tunnels, where Bilbo meets the creature that will change
>
> his life forever ... Gollum. Here, alone with Gollum, on the shores of an
>
> underground lake, the unassuming Bilbo Baggins not only discovers depths of
>
> guile and courage that surprise even him, he also gains possession of Gollum's
>
> 'precious' ring that holds unexpected and useful qualities … A simple, gold ring
>
> that is tied to the fate of all Middle-earth in ways Bilbo cannot begin to know.
>
> (IMDb, 2015)

Table 3.1 Codes Occurring in The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012)

Codes	All	Bilbo	Thorin	Gandalf	Dwarves
Disrespect	2				
Respect	7				
Retirement	2				
Work	42	2	3	2	9
Contract		4			
Interview		2			
Reference		1			

Remuneration		2			
Role: Burglar		17			
Anger & Resentment			17		
Old	2				
'Looks'	9				
Stereotypes	16				
Invisibility	2				

The analysis of the movie was undertaken by using the codes in the above table and the number of times they occurred throughout the film. These codes represent the presence in the action, screenshots and dialogue of various aspects of disrespectful (twice) or respectful (seven occasions) treatment of characters; of retirement (twice) and of work in general (forty-two times); also particular references to work include the contract to be employed which Bilbo has to read and sign (four times); the interview for the job (twice) as well as any references Bilbo may have (once) and the remuneration he will be paid for his work (twice); Bilbo's work in the role of burglar is prominent throughout the movie and occurs in particular on seventeen occasions; anger and resentment are very prominent themes in the film particularly from Thorin (seventeen times); simply being 'old' is shown on two occasions; stereotypes of old age are portrayed on sixteen separate occasions; invisibility due to older age is also portrayed twice. On nine occasions various protagonists convey a great deal of information simply by the way they 'look' at other characters.

The Hobbit (Tolkien, 1937) was written and published at a time when life expectancy was around 60 years and retirement was envisaged as a time of inactivity and disengagement from society (Roser, 2015). In The Hobbit (Tolkien, 1937), Tolkien critiques inactivity and disengagement as a paradigm and suggests that it should be

replaced with something that is more appropriate for older people. The movie makes forty-two separate references to work, older protagonists working and gaining respect due to their work, and various aspects of work. Therefore, it espouses the postmodern active ageing paradigm. However, Jackson's enthusiastic engagement with this paradigm has little to do with Tolkien's intentions when he wrote the book. Chapter 1 and Section 6 of Chapter 4 discuss active ageing and outline how the respondents felt that they should be deeply involved in active ageing, even though two of the respondents felt that they were blamed for their ill health. This could be attributed to active ageing discourse.

It is worth noting that the images used to advertise The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) suggest that mid-life is ageless and older age is only acceptable under specific circumstances. For example, Martin Freeman, who played Bilbo Baggins, a 50-year-old character, was 41 years old at the time, but the advertising poster was air-brushed to make him look younger than 21 years of age. In contrast, the image of Richard Armitage, who was also 41 years old at the time, but who played 195-year-old protagonist Thorin Oakenshield, made him look much older than 41. Thus, the production team idealised mid-life and vilified older age before the movie was even screened.

 Screenshot 3.1 Martin Freeman in The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) (IMdB, 2015) looks younger than Richard Armitage even though they are the same age.

Screenshot 3.2 Richard Armitage (on the right) in The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) (IMdB, 2015)

The movie uses framing to indicate Bilbo's separation from the company of dwarves; whenever there is dialogue between Bilbo and the dwarves, the shots separate Bilbo from the dwarves, and the dwarves are usually close together. Thorin is also set apart from the other dwarves by framing, and Gandalf is separated from the whole company by his height. Looks between various characters are also used to suggest extra knowledge that the rest of the company does not possess. For example, when Thorin says that Gandalf was planning to take them to Rivendell but that he refused to go, the look in Gandalf's eyes tells the audience that the company will be going to Rivendell. Further, although it is only mentioned once in the movie that Thorin is consumed by anger, bitterness and resentment, 17 separate shots show the audience that Thorin is indeed very angry.

At the beginning of the movie, Bilbo Baggins is entrenched in the societal norms of the hobbit community. Therefore, he must rise above his own inherent (Baggins) nature and the general societal culture of being invisible, resting, staying in one place and being inactive as one ages, which is defined as 'respectability':

Bilbo: I can't just go running off into the blue. I am a Baggins of Bag End.

Gandalf: You are also a Took.

Bilbo: Can you promise that I will come back?

Gandalf: No. And if you do, you will not be the same. (The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey, 2012)

Bilbo loses the respect of his neighbours because he leaves the community to have an adventure, thereby participating in active ageing. At the beginning of the movie, it is important for Bilbo to feel respected by his neighbours because he maintains a positive sense of self through their respect. However, as the movie progresses, Bilbo attains a positive sense of self by taking part in the work or achievement sphere on his adventure and forming relationships with the dwarves (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). At the beginning of the film, Bilbo is portrayed as an uncertain part of the company (in that he is an unknown quantity to the rest of the company and he lacks self-confidence) and probably not worthy of the dwarves' respect because he had been inactive. However, the dwarves show him respect because he has been engaged to work with them, and he is deemed to be worthy of respect as part of the work sphere. Honneth (1995) suggests that recognition should be given not because a person is 'worthy', but because recognition of a person should be normative. Bilbo displays courage at the end of the movie when he saves Thorin's life and thereby proves to be a valuable member of the company. This espousal of active ageing discourse appears to be benign, but it fails to recognise older people who choose to rest and relax, and who are therefore deemed 'unworthy' of respect by active ageing discourse.

Thorin appears to be the leader and hero at the beginning of the movie, but he displays greed and poor decision making, which the movie attributes to his age. Thorin's older age gives Bilbo the opportunity to rise above his antipathy to active ageing and meet the

challenge of working. This is a distinctive and noticeable disparagement of age, and it is also a promotion of active ageing. Both Thorin and Bilbo are depicted as agents who are situated within their contexts, and Bilbo as the younger character is able to exercise his agency and rise above his context, whereas Thorin as the older character is unable to exercise real agency. Thorin simply continues down the same path to mental illness that his grandfather had already taken.

Radagast the Brown is 11,000 years old and is a stereotypical symbol of age in that he appears to be mad. He has a bird's nest under his hat and bird poop in his hair and beard. Radagast behaves erratically and appears to be paranoid, dementing and unaware of what is going on around him in terms of the human inhabitants of his world. Further, he is openly mocked and disparaged by Saruman, who is also 11,000 years old:

> Saruman: Radagast! Do not speak to me of Radagast the Brown. He is a foolish fellow.
>
> Gandalf: He's not. Radagast the brown lives a solitary life but …
>
> Saruman: It's his excessive consumption of mushrooms. They have addled him and yellowed his teeth. I warned him it is unbefitting one of his … (The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey, 2012)

However, the movie deconstructs this stereotype of ageing, and Radagast becomes one of the key players against evil despite his age and supposed dementia. When Radagast has a discussion with Gandalf, who shows respect for him, Radagast is shown to be highly intelligent, aware and capable of making accurate observations and deductions about the circumstances around him. Therefore, due to the positive sense of self he attains through his respectful relationship with Gandalf, Radagast is helpful to the

protagonists and their quest. Saruman is the leader of the order of wizards, but he proves to be less wise and more prejudiced than Gandalf. Gandalf accords Saruman the respect that his position as leader of the order requires as part of the work/achievement sphere, but he maintains his own position of mutual respect and recognition for others.

Gandalf is also 11,000 years old and is another stereotypical symbol of both ageing and active ageing. He is wise, displaying both wisdom and wizardry, and apparently knows what is best for everyone. Gandalf actively participates in working (when Bilbo assumes that he should have retired due to his age, Gandalf is appalled) and is actively engaged in caring for his society. He voluntarily takes part in working towards a better society because of his wisdom. Gandalf receives respect from his intimate relationships and his work/achievement sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Although his superior, Saruman, fails to listen to him (and thereby displays a lack of wisdom), the respect that Gandalf receives through his work and relationships means that he still has a positive sense of self. Therefore, Gandalf represents the epitome of the active ageing paradigm, and this suggests that those who do not participate in active ageing are not worthy of respect. Gandalf sacrifices himself for the good of the company on a number of occasions, but due to his wisdom and skill as a wizard, he manages to stay alive on every occasion.

When Bilbo first meets Gandalf, Bilbo expresses the common view that being 'old' means slipping into obscurity and invisibility, and doing nothing:

Bilbo: I had no idea you were still in business.

Gandalf: And where else should I be?

Bilbo: Well, ahem. (The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey, 2012)

By clearing his throat, Bilbo implies that Gandalf is old and should no longer be working.

At this time, Bilbo is reluctant to go on 'an adventure', as this would mean doing something as he grows older. As part of an overarching commentary as an older Bilbo, he says, 'In those days I was always on time. I was entirely respectable and nothing unexpected ever happened'. Further, the young Bilbo tells Gandalf, 'Adventures are nasty disturbing, uncomfortable things. They make you late for dinner'. This implies that not engaging in active ageing makes you a boring person.

Galadriel is a similar age to Saruman and Gandalf, both of whom are played by older actors. Saruman is played by 90-year-old Christopher Lee and Gandalf is played by 73-year-old Ian McKellen. However, as Galadriel is a woman, by Hollywood and general societal standards she is not allowed to age, as older women suffer from dual forms of disrespect: ageism and sexism (Calassanti, 2010; Sontag, 1972). Therefore, in contrast to Saruman and Gandalf, Galadriel is played by 43-year-old Cate Blanchett. When her character is first introduced, Gandalf says of Galadriel, 'Age may have changed me but not so the Lady of Lorien', and this serves as an explanation for both her older age and youthful appearance.

When Thorin first meets Bilbo, he questions Bilbo's suitability to be part of his group because Bilbo has led a 'respectable' hobbit life. Thorin is thereby questioning Bilbo's suitability because he had not been participating in active ageing. This represents a lack of recognition for those who choose not to participate in active ageing:

> Thorin: Tell me Mr Baggins, have you done much fighting? Axe or sword as a
> weapon of choice?

Bilbo: Well I have some skill at conkers, if you must know. But I fail to see why that's relevant.

Thorin: I thought as much. He looks more like a grocer than a burglar. [The other dwarves and Gandalf laugh.]

Gandalf: You asked me to find the 14th member of this company and I have chosen Mr Baggins. There is a lot more to him than appearances suggest and he's got a great deal more to offer than any of you know, including himself. You must trust me on this.

Thorin: Very well. Give him a contract. (The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey, 2012)

Thorin trusts Gandalf but has no respect for Bilbo because he has not been working. Thorin believes that everyone should be engaged in the work/achievement sphere to be deemed worthy of respect.

Thorin's grandfather, Thror, became 'mentally sick' and was greedy for the Arkenstone, power and gold. Thror is described as 'old', and this is ostensibly the cause to which his mental illness is attributed, as no other explanation is offered. Thorin shows the first signs of mental illness when he lacks the wisdom to accept good advice from Gandalf, whom he has asked to be part of the company to provide advice and wisdom. Further, Thorin refuses to let go of the anger and bitterness he feels towards all elves because of the past actions of one elf. As Gandalf says, 'I did not give you that map and key for you to hold onto the past'. Thorin is consumed with anger and bitterness, and he acquires the same mental illness that his grandfather had when he is

near the gold and the Arkenstone. Therefore, the movie suggests that if you do not age 'successfully', you may become mentally ill.

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) shows that older people can be recognised and treated respectfully as long as they participate in active ageing. This idea represents a lack of recognition for people who choose to rest and relax, or who cannot participate in active ageing due to health problems. The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) also displays a Hollywood disregard for older age (Barsam & Monahan, 2013, p. 314), as ten of the main protagonists are over the age of 100 years, but of these ten protagonists, only four are played by people aged sixty-five or over. As noted earlier, 195-year-old Thorin, who is the second main protagonist, is played by 41-year-old Richard Armitage.

Respect for older age is only depicted as necessary if older people behave according to society's expectations, or if they hold a rank or social status that commands respect. However, respect is shown to be translatable from one society to another if the person is engaged in active ageing. In older age, hobbits are expected to be still and disengaged from life. Bilbo loses the respect of his fellow hobbits when he becomes actively engaged in work and embarks upon an adventure, but he gains a positive sense of self through his relationships within the company of dwarves, who become respectful of his abilities, good sense and leadership. Although Thorin proves to be unworthy of respect, he is still held in high regard and respect by dwarves because of his rank (he is heir to the dwarfish throne). This means that he has a high position in the legal sphere, and his achievements in the work sphere mean that he is deemed worthy of recognition. Thorin eventually pays the ultimate price for his anger, resentment and bitterness, which lead to poor choices, mistakes and bad behaviour, and he makes the ultimate sacrifice of

dying in battle. Thorin is able to maintain his positive sense of self because he is accorded respect by his society despite his inherent character flaws and mental illness.

The elves at Rivendell oversee the entire land of Middle Earth; thus, they represent the legal sphere or core institutions of the state (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Thorin does not want to take his quest (to regain his homeland in the Lonely Mountain) to the elves in Rivendell for two reasons. The first reason is his intense bitterness and hatred over the betrayal of his grandfather by a different group of elves centuries earlier. The second, and more important, reason is that the elves have jurisdiction over Middle Earth, and he expects that they will forbid his quest. When Bilbo, Thorin and the rest of the dwarves are led to Rivendell by Gandalf, they are met with courtesy and respect, which represents recognition on a personal level. However, when the dwarves' quest is revealed to the elves, a council is held that includes the leaders of the elves and the leaders of the wizards, and the council decides to forbid the dwarves from undertaking their quest. The council fails to recognise the dwarves' legal rights to their inheritance in the Lonely Mountain because they feel that the peace of Middle Earth would be disrupted. This shows a lack of recognition in the legal sphere by the core institution of the state (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). However, the dwarves decide not to recognise the authority of the council, and they stealthily leave Rivendell to continue their quest. Therefore, although they did not receive recognition in the legal sphere, it was a mutual lack of recognition. The dwarves felt that their legal right to their inheritance took precedence over the council's decision, so they decided not to recognise the council's authority. This mutual lack of recognition did not cause harm to any of the individuals involved because they understood the others' viewpoint and received recognition from their own intimate (love) and work/achievement spheres. For the dwarves, being recognised in the two spheres outweighed the negative effect of the lack of recognition

in the legal sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). However, the respondents in this study felt that they were being recognised in all three spheres (see Chapters 4 and 5).

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) investigates the love (intimate relationships) and work spheres, as well as the legal sphere as portrayed by the council. Further, it explores how recognition from these spheres, or a lack thereof, affects the lives of the older protagonists. The film actively portrays the respectful treatment of older people in their intimate relationships and work spheres, but not in the legal sphere. It actively deconstructs ageing stereotypes and portrays older people as having power and agency, as well as being positively involved in their own life. It also investigates mental illness and how it affects an individual. The respondents in this research also felt respected in their intimate relationships and the work sphere. The movie espouses active ageing discourse and only offers recognition to people who engage with active ageing. However, as Honneth (1990) suggests in his theory of recognition, recognition is not about the individual being 'worthy' of recognition; rather, recognition should be normative. The older people in this movie who do not work are not deemed worthy of respect and are thereby portrayed as negligible.

4. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014)

The story of The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) was written by Wes Anderson and Hugo Guinness. Anderson wrote the screenplay and credited Stefan Zweig (1888–1942) as an inspiration for the movie (IMDb, 2015). The film is set in an alternate reality that was created especially for the story; therefore, it is classified as fantasy. The movie is a fantastical story wherein the action could not possibly have occurred. It is set in a fictitious country in the period between World War I and World War II. It is both fantasy and comedy. The box office takings and information about the cast and their

ages are outlined in the appendix. The main cast are aged between 18 and 74 years, with some in their early forties and fifties. The two main protagonists are aged 51 and 18 respectively. This movie is aimed at an audience that ranges from 18 years to older. Twentieth Century Fox describes the movie as:

> The Grand Budapest Hotel recounts the adventures of Gustav H, a legendary concierge at a famous European hotel between the wars, and Zero Moustafa, the lobby boy who becomes his most trusted friend. The story involves the theft and recovery of a priceless Renaissance painting and the battle for an enormous family fortune—all against the back-drop of a suddenly and dramatically changing Continent. (Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 2015b)

The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) does not espouse or portray active ageing. It shows that older people can be engaged in life in a positive way, and can still receive recognition, without engaging in active ageing. The movie could be read by merely accepting the story of M. Gustav as it is recounted by Moustafa to the Author. However, the action shows that both Moustafa and the Author have failed to understand and appreciate the depth of character and strength of personality displayed by M. Gustav. The film conspicuously portrays M. Gustav very differently from the story that Moustafa and the Author recount; therefore, the writers hope that the audience engage with the character of M. Gustav on a much deeper level than Moustafa or the Author.

The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) portrays M. Gustav as being deeply involved in the lives of the people he meets, and he treats everyone he meets with tolerance and respect, including older people, refugees, short people (dwarves) and people with disabilities or disfigurements. That is, M. Gustav is tolerant of, and recognises, people who are usually invisible to, and 'othered' by, the general population. M. Gustav does

not other older people or display an ageist prejudice by only treating older people in a stereotypical way. His respect for all people is real and devoid of prejudgement. This is demonstrated from the beginning of the movie, when M. Gustav notices that the shoe shine boy is disabled and wants to give him some money to help him. Further, when he meets Agatha, M. Gustav describes her as 'charming, so charming' despite a large, disfiguring birthmark on her face. Further, at the mid-point in the story, when M. Gustav has defended Moustafa from the army at the frontier, who want to arrest and kill him because he is a refugee and therefore an undesirable person, a policeman intervenes and releases them both because he remembers M. Gustav as having treated him kindly and with respect as a young, lonely child. However, the narrative that is built by Moustafa and the Author suggests that M. Gustav is vain, shallow and insecure. The movie thereby proposes that the people who are really vain, shallow and insecure are Moustafa and the Author.

Moustafa's failure to recognise that M. Gustav treats him with affection and respect is demonstrated in the fantasy sequence of shots. The fantasy sequence shows the action from Moustafa's perspective, with M. Gustav always framed in the lead and Moustafa framed as following him. This suggests a mentor–mentee relationship. However, when M. Gustav and Moustafa appear together in shots throughout the rest of the movie, they are framed as standing, sitting, walking or running beside one another. Thus, M. Gustav starts relating to Moustafa as an equal rather than his mentor.

The failure to understand and appreciate the depth of M. Gustav's feelings for Moustafa as his protégé is portrayed as Moustafa's failure as a human being. This shows that M. Gustav as an older person is invisible to Moustafa, and that this invisibility is part of the disrespect that Moustafa displays for everyone he 'others'. It is apparent that the Author

also fails to understand M. Gustav's character, resilience, strength and resourcefulness. The Author is depicted as a hero of the revolution (his grave has a monument that states, 'In Memory of Our National Treasure') in the fictional country, so it is possible that he takes the 'party' line in the telling of M. Gustav's story. However, the Author is shown to be a man who has no interest in, or empathy for, other people. At the beginning of the movie, the Author is creating a movie about being a writer and says:

> Once the public knows you're a writer they bring the characters to you and as long as you maintain your ability to look and to carefully listen, these stories will continue to … Stop it, stop it, don't do it. (The Grand Budapest Hotel, 2014)

The Author stops the movie to angrily scream at his grandson, who is trying to play with him. The Author is more interested in his movie about himself than in his grandchild. Further, he describes a man choking as:

> A domestic matter which required the immediate and complete attention of M. Jean but frankly did not hold mine for long. (The Grand Budapest Hotel, 2014)

The Author summons the lift as soon as he no longer has M. Jean's attention, and he leaves the scene with no interest in whether the choking man will survive.

Therefore, The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) suggests that both Moustafa and the Author are vain, shallow people. Moustafa cannot recognise the good in M. Gustav because he is not good himself. Moustafa fails to accurately describe the character of M. Gustav to the Author, and tells the Author that M. Gustav only associates with rich, vain, shallow, insecure, blond people. Anyone who is older or 'other' to Moustafa is invisible to him, with the only exception being Agatha, his love interest. However, as a

refugee without citizenship status, Moustafa could not choose a romantic partner from general society; therefore, he chose a girl who would normally have been invisible to him due to the large birthmark on her face. Six of the fourteen respondents in this study also reported and discussed invisibility; one of the respondents reported invisibility from family members, and one of the respondents who suffered from a disability reported feeling generally invisible to society. The other respondents reported feeling invisible to the government, media and other institutions rather than to individuals or society as a whole.

Moustafa fails to grow as a character throughout the narration of the story, which could be an expression of his shallowness. However, Moustafa was a refugee from a war, and the description of the intense suffering he experienced is unemotional, so he could therefore be experiencing some form of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder that has turned him into a shallow person with little emotion and no emotional attachment to anyone other than himself. The only real emotion expressed by Moustafa throughout the recounting of a highly emotional story is when he begins to describe Agatha. However, he fails to display emotion when he describes Agatha's death and the death of his infant son.

The Author describes Moustafa when he is first introduced as:

> A small elderly man, smartly dressed, with an exceptionally lively intelligent face and an immediately perceptible air of sadness. … He was like the rest of us, alone, but I also must say he was the first that struck one as being deeply and truly lonely, a symptom of my own medical condition as well. (The Grand Budapest Hotel, 2014)

The guests staying in the hotel are othered by the Author, who sees them as wanting to be alone because he does not want to interact with them. He describes the other hotel guests in a desultory and uninterested fashion, and the audience infers that they are invisible to him; however, he shows an interest in a person to whom he ascribes a similarity with himself. The Author had previously described his 'medical condition' as 'scribe's fever', and the audience is given to understand that he merely suffers from writer's block. The audience is therefore informed that the Author and Moustafa are equally uninterested in, and lacking in empathy towards, the people around them, and that they only see people who they feel are the same as themselves, or who are important to society in some way. The Author is vain and only becomes interested in Moustafa's story when Moustafa says to him, 'I know and admire your wonderful work'. Moustafa is also vain; when he was an 18-year-old Lobby Boy in The Grand Budapest Hotel, he drew a moustache on his face every morning.

The story focuses on the respectful relationship between M. Gustav, who is approximately 51 years old, and Madame D., who is 84 years old, and shows that older people should be treated with respect. Madame D. is murdered by her unscrupulous family, who accuse M. Gustav of having murdered her. M. Gustav tries to run away but is captured and arrested by the police and put in prison. The subsequent scene positively depicts M. Gustav's respectful relationships with the other prisoners, and his consequent escape (which was enabled by his respect for the other prisoners) and attempt to clear his name. M. Gustav is ultimately recaptured and faces trial, but because he has formed excellent and respectful relationships with the jury, he is cleared of the charge. This represents recognition in the legal sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Dmitri, the real murderer, disappears to evade justice.

Deputy Kovacs represents the legal sphere both as a lawyer and as a representative of a core institution of the state (Fraser & Honneth, 2003), as he worked in a public office and in private practice. Kovacs must uphold the law, and he does so with integrity. Kovacs recognises the desires of his dead client (Madame D.) and M. Gustav and Moustafa by holding up the processes of the law until the second will is revealed. Kovacs' murder shows that Dmitri and Jopling are criminals who refuse to recognise the legal sphere of the state. The Grand Budapest Hotel is one of the large institutions of the state, and because it is run by M. Gustav, who recognises and respects everyone, the large institution also recognises and treats people respectfully. However, when the Nazis arrive and take over the hotel, people are no longer recognised.

The movie deconstructs the stereotypes of both older men and women. The older women in The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) are not unattractive and incompetent older women, but attractive, intelligent and capable women who are engaged with life. Moustafa is the older man at the beginning of the movie who tells the story of how he inherited The Grand Budapest Hotel, and he is not a stereotypical old man. As Moustafa relates the story to the Author, the audience is shown that there is a conflict between what he says and what the movie shows as reality. Moustafa fails to learn and grow as a human being, and he sees the world, and M. Gustav in particular, through the lens of his own vanity and shallowness. Society is mainly othered by Moustafa, and the people in it are mostly invisible to him. Therefore, Moustafa is not the wise, benevolent, older man of fictional stereotypes. He disrespects M. Gustav, and when forced to interact with older people in the course of his job, he is shown as being disrespectful towards, and disdainful of, them. Further, he often simply fails to see them because they are invisible to him. The only person that Moustafa treats respectfully is Agatha, his romantic interest. Moustafa was given the name Zero because he had zero experience in

hotel work, zero education and zero family (they were killed in a war in his country). He could have left that nickname behind by growing as a human being, but the movie shows that because this has not happened, the name Zero has remained with him. Moustafa describes his relationship with the man who sacrificed his life to protect him as merely having shared a vocation:

> The Author (to himself): Zero Moustafa had traded a great and important fortune in exchange for one costly, unprofitable, doomed hotel. Why? Was it merely sentimental? It was quite forward of me and a bit out of character but I felt I must know, for my health I suppose.
>
> The Author (to Moustafa): Forgive me for asking. I hope I haven't upset you.
>
> Moustafa: No, of course not.
>
> The Author: Is it simply your last connection to the banished world, his world, if you would?
>
> Moustafa: His world? No, I don't think so; you see we shared a vocation. It wouldn't have been necessary. No. The hotel I keep for Agatha. [He displays the symbol of the crossed keys that she wore as an indication of her connection with M. Gustav through the Society of the Crossed Keys, of which Moustafa was unaware.] We were happy here for a little while. To be frank, I think his world had vanished long before he ever entered it but I will say he sustained the illusion with a marvellous grace. Are you going up? (The Grand Budapest Hotel, 2014)

The Society of the Crossed Keys is another large institution of the state (although it is secret), and M. Gustav gains recognition and respect from the Society of the Crossed

Keys as well as from Kovacs, who is the representative of the legal sphere. M. Gustav also gains recognition and respect from his intimate relationships, except in his relationship with Moustafa, and from his work sphere. M. Gustav therefore has a positive sense of self through recognition in the three spheres of love (intimate relationships), legal and work/achievement (Fraser & Honneth, 2003).

The narrative suggests that M. Gustav has indiscriminate sexual relationships with many different people, including older women (i.e., over the age of 80). However, the movie shows that M. Gustav has few sexual encounters with anyone. M. Gustav describes the older women he has known as being 'flavourful' due to their older age. However, Moustafa describes the older women in M. Gustav's life as:

> Moustafa: Always the same: they had to be rich, old, insecure, vain, superficial, blond, needy …
>
> The Author: Why blond?
>
> Moustafa: Because they all were. (The Grand Budapest Hotel, 2014)

However, as Moustafa describes these women, the movie shows that none of them were blond, and that although they all may have been rich, they were certainly not insecure, vain, superficial or needy. In fact, they were actively involved in life and in pursuing various interests and sporting activities. Further, they were interested in M. Gustav because he was kind and respectful, and this respect enabled them to pursue life in an active and interested manner. None of the older women were portrayed as being stereotypical older women. The respect that the women receive from M. Gustav allows them to maintain a positive sense of self through their intimate relationship with him, although they do not necessarily receive respect from other people in their lives. For

example, Madame D. is treated disrespectfully by her 'ghastly, deceitful children who she loathed', and she expects that they will murder her for her money. M. Gustav says that 'they will be dancing like gypsies' because she is dead.

Although the audience is led to believe that Madame D.'s relationship with her children is poor and disrespectful, and that it is highly likely that her children have been abusive towards her, we are never shown this relationship. Madame D. is extremely agitated at the beginning of the movie because she does not want to leave the hotel; she fears that her children are planning to murder her:

Madame: I'm not leaving.

M. Gustav: I beg your pardon?

Madame: I'm not leaving.

M. Gustav: Why not?

Madame: I'm frightened.

M. Gustav: Of what?

Madame: I fear this may be the last time we ever see each other.

M. Gustav: Why on earth would that be the case?

Madame: Well I can't put it into words but I feel it.

M. Gustav: Well for goodness sake there's no reason for you to leave us if you'd rather …

Madame: Come with me.

M. Gustav: Go to f***ing Lutz?

Madame: Please.

M. Gustav: Give me your hand. You've nothing to fear. You're always anxious before you travel. I admit you appear to be suffering a more acute attack on this occasion, but truly and honestly … (The Grand Budapest Hotel, 2014)

The audience does not discover why she is so agitated until halfway through the movie. The inferred abuse that she experiences from her children means that although she is able to maintain her positive sense of self while she is treated respectfully at The Grand Budapest Hotel by M. Gustav, she experiences a breakdown in her personality when she is away from M. Gustav and suffering from disrespectful and abusive treatment (Honneth, 1990). Hence, she is 'always anxious' before she travels.

The movie deconstructs many stereotypes, including the stereotype of unattractive, rich older women who are susceptible to the flattery of younger men looking to steal their money. Further, it deconstructs the stereotypes of wise and benevolent older men, homosexuals, refugees, people with disabilities and writers. Moustafa describes M. Gustav as 'the most liberally perfumed man I have ever encountered', and M. Gustav's sexuality is questioned when Dmitri describes him as a 'faggot'. There is an exchange between M. Gustav and Pinky during M. Gustav's time in prison:

Pinky: We think you're a very straight person.

M. Gustav: Well I've never been accused of that before. (The Grand Budapest Hotel, 2014)

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However, the film portrays M. Gustav's sexual encounters as being heterosexual in nature. Therefore, the stereotype of a homosexual man is deconstructed.

M. Gustav does not take advantage of rich older women who are susceptible to the flattery of an unctuous, younger man who is a confidence trickster. He is simply kind and respectful to his friends, who are not treated respectfully by their family. Moustafa as the refugee is neither deserving nor trying to become rich at the expense of the people in his adopted country. Further, he does not attempt to live off the social security of a rich country. Moustafa is simply a young man who has had to flee from war and persecution; he is not particularly praiseworthy or notable other than that he inherits a fortune from a kind man who respected him, tried to take care of him and sacrificed his life for him. People with disabilities are not portrayed as being shy and nervous around other people, unable to communicate properly due to their disability, or as living on social security. The Author is not wise, empathetic or compassionate, and he is unaware of humanity and its foibles and troubles. This therefore deconstructs the stereotype of writers as people with immense empathy for, and insight into, other humans. These types of people are portrayed without resorting to stereotypes.

The main theme of the movie is M. Gustav's kindness and respect for everyone, which enables the people he associates with to maintain a positive sense of self in the face of disrespect and abuse. This kindness and respect is reflected in the way The Grand Budapest Hotel operates as a representative example of a large institution (Fraser & Honneth, 2003), as M. Gustav is in charge of the hotel. Moustafa and the Author both fail to recognise M. Gustav's kindness and respect for people because they are vain, shallow and insecure people to whom others are invisible. Moustafa as the refugee is not portrayed sympathetically, but as a person who lacks empathy and character. The

Author is also depicted as a person who is devoid of character and lacking in empathy or concern for other people, including members of his own family.

The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) shows that a person retains a positive sense of self when respect occurs in intimate relationships. Further, when recognition occurs in more than one sphere, the person exhibits high self-esteem. This supports the results of the interviews with the participants in this study (see Chapters 4 and 5). The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) portrays the everyday lived experiences of the older characters and concludes that a lack of recognition can lead to a breakdown in personality (Honneth, 1990). None of the interviewees had experienced this kind of disrespectful treatment, but they felt that it was possible that people from differing demographics could experience disrespect.

5. Discussion

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) shows that active ageing is the only 'successful' way to age, and that older people only 'deserve' to be respected when they engage in active ageing. However, Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition suggests that recognition is not about the individual being 'worthy' of recognition, but that recognition should be normative.

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) proposes that older people who do not engage in active ageing do not know what is best for themselves, and this infantilises older people. Active ageing discourse is about 'successful' ageing; therefore, it suggests that those who do not engage with active ageing, whether by choice or due to ill health, are failures. However, the suggestion that those who suffer from ill health are failures is perhaps unintentional.

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) is a fantasy film in the traditional sense. It includes protagonists who are hobbits, dwarves, elves and wizards. In contrast, The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) is a fantasy film in the sense that the action is often entirely fantasy-based; it is set in an alternate reality in a fantasy country. M. Gustav, who is the human protagonist in The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014), is portrayed towards the end of the movie as being slightly magical, with powers that are beyond the range of humans. However, the protagonists in The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) are fantastical creatures that are portrayed with human characteristics; they have many human failings and foibles, as well as some excellent human qualities.

Both movies show that respectful treatment of older people gives them a positive sense of self, which enables them to rise above any disrespectful treatment they receive. However, the relationships in The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) are limited, and with a few exceptions, they are only portrayed as occurring between M. Gustav and the other characters. This is because the main protagonists and storytellers appear to be incapable of sustaining relationships. Further, Moustafa's restricted ability to perceive what is happening in the lives of the people around him, as well as his lack of empathy and compassion for the people he meets, means that he can only describe the events of the story in a dispassionate and narrow fashion. The older people in the film appear to have a positive sense of self, but it cannot be inferred whether this is only due to the respect they receive from M. Gustav or whether they receive respect in their other relationships as well. One notable exception is Madame D., who experiences disrespect from her family, and possibly also familial abuse. Moustafa appears to believe that the characters' positive sense of self is derived from their possession of large amounts of wealth, but the movie explores the idea that the characters have a positive sense of self due to the respect they receive from M. Gustav. Further, Moustafa is portrayed as being

disrespectful towards the older characters, as he refuses to recognise them, and the audience suspects that they are also treated with disrespect by other people in their life. However, The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) shows extensive interactions between the various protagonists, thereby allowing the audience to witness both respectful and disrespectful treatment and their effects on the protagonists' sense of self. Respectful treatment received by the protagonists gives them a positive sense of self.

At the beginning of The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012), Bilbo Baggins is treated disrespectfully by Thorin. However, he is treated respectfully by the rest of the dwarves, who try not to follow Thorin's example, and they respect his role as burglar. Bilbo himself is not sure whether he is worthy of the dwarves' respect, and he suspects that he is not. Therefore, Bilbo has a moderately negative sense of self. However, Gandalf believes that 'There is more to him than any of you know, even himself'. His respect for Bilbo enables Bilbo to grow as a character and become a leader through his positive sense of self that is kindled by recognition.

Both movies display varying degrees of disrespectful behaviour towards older people, which gives the characters a negative sense of self. However, The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) portrays this negative sense of self, as exhibited by Bilbo Baggins, as being mild. In contrast to the moderately negative sense of self displayed by Bilbo Baggins is Madame D.'s severe breakdown of personality (Honneth, 1990) in The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) due to the disrespectful treatment she receives from her children. However, as the audience is given to believe that Madame D.'s children also abuse her, her personality breakdown is due to the abuse she experiences, whereas Bilbo Baggins only experiences a mild form of disrespect.

As The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) unfolds, it becomes apparent that Thorin is also experiencing a major personality breakdown. However, Thorin is always treated with respect in his relationships. Thorin's grandfather was shown to also have a mental illness; therefore, Thorin's personality breakdown is not due to disrespectful treatment; rather, it is an inherent problem that appears to be caused by his character flaws and older age. The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) leaves the audience to conclude that ageing negatively can lead to mental illness, whereas The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) does not make that association. Moustafa and the Author's lack of character and integrity are present both when they are young and in their older age. While Moustafa's lack of character and integrity could be due to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, the Author is portrayed as a person who is devoid of empathy and cannot understand other people. Therefore, although Moustafa's lack of character and the breakdown in his personality could be due to the severe abuse and physical violence he suffered during the war, which is the highest level of lack of recognition, the Author is provided with no such excuse.

Both The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) and The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) deconstruct ageing stereotypes. The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) actively deconstructs a large number of older age stereotypes, including dementing in older age, older men generally and older women as unattractive, and benevolent and wise older age. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) takes a much simpler approach and deconstructs the stereotypes of wise and benevolent older men and unattractive, rich older women who are susceptible to the flattery of younger men looking to steal their money.

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) is a fantasy film that introduces the themes of ageing, active ageing, respecting older people, and respect enabling older people to maintain a positive sense of self. While this movie shows that older people suffer from invisibility in the Shire (the hobbit community), it does not portray invisibility in other societies. However, it suggests that older people may only receive recognition if they engage in active ageing. This suggests that older people who choose to rest and relax should not receive recognition. This is not a benign concept, as it actively disrespects anyone who does not want to engage in active ageing. The dwarves' legal rights to the Lonely Mountain are not recognised by the council as representing the core institutions of the state and thereby the legal sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003), so the dwarves refuse to recognise the council's authority. The dwarves receive recognition in their intimate/love and work/achievement spheres, and they regard their own society as their legal sphere; therefore, the council's lack of recognition is not a problem for them.

The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) is also a fantasy film that investigates older age and respect, as well as respect that enabling older people to maintain a positive sense of self. It also explores disrespect, including abuse, towards older people, and the invisibility experienced by older people and those who are othered in society. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) briefly portrays the legal and work spheres, and how recognition in those spheres positively affects an individual's self-esteem (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) proposes that active ageing—especially being engaged in some form of work—is the only successful way to age, whereas The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) suggests that positively engaging in life and being interested in life, other people and what is happening in society provides joy and fulfilment to people who are positively engaged with their lives.

6. Results

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), RED (2010), The Holiday (2006) and The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) all engage with active ageing, whereas The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) does not. The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) proposes that active ageing is merely one way of many to age successfully. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) portrays that older people can be positively engaged in their own lives, and that they have a positive sense of self when they receive recognition. RED (2010), The Holiday (2006) and The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) propose that active ageing is the only appropriate and 'successful' way to age, and that older people who do not engage with active ageing do not age 'successfully'. This suggests that older people are only 'worthy' of respect if they engage in active ageing. However, the concept that older people must be 'worthy' of respect suggests that to be 'older' is equivalent to not being 'worthy'. The idea that older people must do something to show that they can still be 'youthful' and engaged with active ageing, and thereby prove that they are 'worthy', is ageist. Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition suggests that recognition is not about the individual being 'worthy' of recognition, but that recognition of a person should be normative.

All five movies attempt to deconstruct stereotypes of older age. They all show that older people can obtain a positive sense of self from their intimate relationships, from the work sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) and at the meso level of society. This result is confirmed by the fourteen qualitative interviews conducted with older Australians. RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) propose that older people experience affectionate disrespect from the younger people they encounter, and that this is an acceptable alternative to respect. The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) suggests that older people

in India experience respect from society generally; however, research suggests that respect in India is gendered in nature, and that older women experience misrecognition and abuse (WHO, 2002). The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) proposes that active ageing and work are the only way that older people can experience respect from society. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) shows that older people and people with illnesses or disabilities who are othered by society suffer from invisibility and other forms of disrespect. Further, the movie shows that they can suffer disrespect and abuse within their intimate spheres, but they can retain their positive sense of self if they receive respect from one sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). All five movies show that respect for older people occurs in the work sphere. The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), The Holiday (2006) and the Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) show that older people are respected in the large and core institutions of the state. All five films portray varying forms of disrespectful treatment of older people, suggesting that disrespect of older people is a societal norm. The films show that older people's positive sense of self can be seriously affected and diminished by misrecognition. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) shows that there can be a breakdown in personality (Honneth, 1990) as a result of receiving abuse from people in the older person's intimate sphere, and from family in particular.

Although the qualitative sample of five movies is limited, the films embody the social issues experienced by older people. The protagonists' experiences are similar to those reported by the respondents in this study. For example, the respondents obtain a positive sense of self through recognition in their intimate relationships, the work sphere (especially around active ageing) and at the meso level of society (see Chapters 4 and 5). However, the respondents also reported experiences of invisibility, and this is also reflected in these movies.

7. Conclusion

This chapter argued that The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) portrays and supports the active ageing paradigm. The movie shows that older people who are not engaged in work are not 'worthy' of respect; however, according to Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition, recognition is not about the individual being 'worthy' of recognition; rather, recognition of a person should be normative. Therefore, active ageing, which refuses to recognise older people who choose to rest and relax, is ageist, and although it appears to be positive for older people, it is far from benign. The key framework of the protagonists' relationships shows how respect works in the wider context of society and this was compared with the results from the interviews. The respondents in this study were also very involved in active ageing and spoke about it in depth, although two of the respondents felt that they were blamed for their ill health. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) suggests that older people can be positively engaged in their life in whatever way they desire. This is a much more positive view of ageing, as it does not suggest that 'successful' ageing depends on particular behaviours, or that those who do not engage with those behaviours are therefore 'unsuccessful'.

As a qualitative study, the number of movies chosen for analysis was limited to five. The films were analysed using a dispositive approach to critical discourse analysis. This allowed for an analysis of the linguistic features of the film and the narrative, as well as non-linguistic features such as symbols, film shots and unspoken interactions between protagonists, which provided more depth to the analysis than other methods would have. Although this sample is a fragment of a whole, it is useful for analysing the social issues experienced by older people. The protagonists' experiences are similar to those reported by the respondents in this study. For example, the respondents obtain a

positive sense of self through recognition in their intimate relationships, the work sphere (especially around active ageing) and at the meso level of society (see Chapters 4 and 5). However, the respondents also reported experiences of invisibility, and they discussed active ageing in great depth, and this is also reflected in these movies.

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) explores respect and older people, and it deconstructs stereotypes of older people in depth by showing the older people and their relationships within their intimate and work spheres, and how this recognition (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) keeps their positive sense of self intact. There was a mutual lack of recognition in the legal sphere between the dwarves and the council, but this did not cause any harm, as each side could see the other's viewpoint, and they received recognition from their intimate (love) and work/achievement spheres. For the dwarves, being recognised in these spheres outweighed the negative effect of the lack of recognition in the legal sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). The respondents in this study generally felt that they received recognition in the love, work and legal spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) conveys the concept that older people and those with disabilities suffer intensely from invisibility, which represents disrespect and a lack of recognition. The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) does not investigate this concept in any depth. Six of the fourteen respondents in this study also reported and discussed invisibility; one respondent reported invisibility from family members, one respondent who suffered from a disability reported feeling generally invisible to society, and the other respondents reported feeling invisible to the government, the media and other institutions rather than to individuals or society as a whole.

All the films promote the concept that older people should be actively engaged in life to receive respect from society. The Holiday (2006), RED (2010) and The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) suggest that active ageing is the only form of acceptable ageing, whereas The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) and The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) promote the idea that positive engagement in life is the ideal and positive way to age rather than active ageing. The respondents in this study were also very involved in active ageing and spoke about it in depth, although two respondents felt that they were blamed for their ill health. The respondents obtain a positive sense of self through recognition in their intimate relationships, the work sphere (especially around active ageing) and at the meso level of society. All five films portray and strongly critique varying forms of disrespectful treatment of older people, and they propose that disrespect of older people is a societal norm that needs to be analysed and addressed through better treatment of older people. RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) suggest that it is acceptable to replace respect with affectionate disrespect, whereas The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) and The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) portray respectful treatment of older people as the appropriate societal norm. The films show that older people's positive sense of self can be seriously affected and diminished by disrespectful treatment. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) shows that there can be a breakdown in personality as a result of disrespectful treatment from people in the older person's family (Honneth, 1990). All the films, except The Holiday (2006), show that the core institutions of the state fail to recognise older people (in The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel, 2012, older people are recognised by the core institutions of the state in India, but not in Britain).

Chapter 4:
Homogenisation of Older Age; Respect for Older People

1. Introduction

I critically analysed and coded the interviews with fourteen respondents. Section two provides a summative discussion of central sample characteristics, along with a table listing all pseudonyms and core characteristics and section three briefly outlines the themes that the respondents discussed, showing that some themes were more important to the respondents than other themes e.g. intellect, wisdom, maturity, socioeconomic status and sexism were not discussed as often as other topics.

The homogenisation of older people is discussed in section 4 and the findings suggested that attitudes were different among different cohorts, whereas all the respondents appeared to be self-stereotyping as mid-life rather than older, including 92-year-old Georgia, because they were taking part in active ageing. It would have been easy to consider this a psychological phenomenon of 'living in the moment', but the respondents associated being categorised as mid-life with their participation in active ageing.

Now from my point of view, looking at elderly, I sort of think of eighties and beyond, maybe late seventies but … I sort of don't feel as if I would be classed as elderly. (Karen)

Themes of respect (section 5), mutual respect (section 5.1), respect in intimate relationships (section 5.2) and respect in the past (section 5.3) are discussed in this chapter while disrespect, infantilisation, invisibility, the law (core institutions of the

state) and work (achievement) spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) and active ageing are discussed in Chapter 5.

The interviewees reported problems such as dependence, ill health, age-related disease and disability, but they all reported feeling respected. This may be due to respect received in the legal sphere or core institutions of the state (see Chapter 1), the work sphere, in that the respondents were receiving superannuation and part pensions (see Chapter 1), participating in volunteer work and various work-related activities associated with active ageing (and this is discussed in section 5.4). All the respondents indicated that they were participating in active ageing. The recognition that the respondents received enabled them to retain a positive sense of self (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Further research is recommended to establish whether the results apply to the general population of older people.

2. Participants

Table 4.1 Participants' Demographics

Pseudonym	Age	Suburb State Postcode	Physically Independent or Not
Barry Innes	75	Hornsby Heights NSW 2077	Independent
Brian Newman	75	Berowra NSW 2081	Independent
Georgia Urquhart	92	Turramurra NSW	Independent

		2074	
Jane Sefton	82	Turramurra NSW 2074	Nursing Home
Ken Thompson	74	Hornsby NSW 2077	Independent
Kathleen Hart	90	Turramurra NSW 2074	Needs some support
Kaitlyn Newman	73	Berowra NSW 2081	Independent
Kieran Tennant	74	Berowra NSW 2081	Independent
Karen Davis	74	Turramurra NSW 2074	Independent
Narelle Innes	74	Hornsby Heights 2077	Needs some support due to fall which broke her spine
Naomi Thompson	72	Hornsby NSW 2077	Independent
Nicole Tennant	75	Berowra NSW 2081	Needs support

| Nathan Underhill | 66 | Hornsby NSW 2077 | Independent |
| Pamela Darcy | 82 | Turramurra NSW 2077 | Independent |

The sample was demographically homogenous: Hornsby, Hornsby Heights, Turramurra and Berowra are fairly affluent suburbs. All respondents, except Jane Sefton owned their homes. Three respondents were totally independent from Centrelink and government support, two respondents depended on Government support, all other respondents were partially dependent on Government support.

Three of the respondents needed some support due to physical disability, one respondent needed full time care in a nursing home, the other respondents were physically independent.

Six of the respondents were married couples, however, they interviewed separately from one another. Narelle Innes' husband was present at her interview for physical support, he did occasionally interject some of his thoughts but this was part of the conversation. Analysis of Narelle's interview was only of Narelle's words.

3. Results

Although the respondents reported feeling respected, they discussed disrespect and varying aspects of disrespect more than any other topic. Respect and various aspects of respect are discussed in Section 4 of this chapter, and disrespect is discussed in Chapter 5. The respondents predominantly discussed similar topics to one another, although

some of the topics were unique to one respondent. For example, intellect was only discussed by one respondent, who felt that it was important to mention that older people are viewed by society as not wanting or needing intellectual stimulation. Three respondents discussed insurance companies as representatives of markets and larger institutions (see Chapter 5). Further, wisdom, maturity, socioeconomic status and sexism were not discussed as often as other topics, but the respondents who talked about these issues felt that they were important to older people and their relationships, whether respectful (e.g., wisdom and maturity) or disrespectful (e.g., people with a lower socioeconomic status experienced more disrespect, and sexism and ageism were experienced by older women).

Thirteen of the fourteen respondents felt respected within their intimate relationships between themselves and their family and friends. This finding was reflected in the five movies in the recognition received by the older protagonists in their intimate spheres. However, the intimate spheres in the movies usually consisted of friends of the same age group and did not include family members. The thirteen respondents had acquired a positive sense of self through their intimate relationships (Honneth, 1990), and this was also reflected in the movies. The fourteenth respondent, Jane, was struggling with ill health and cognitive issues due to a stroke, and she felt disrespected and infantilised by her sons and daughters-in-law. However, she had formed an intimate sphere at her nursing home and felt respected within the relationships she had formed there. Jane also felt recognised at the meso level of society, and this respect together with the respect from her friends gave her a positive sense of self. The protagonists in the movies also created, and were recognised in, intimate spheres with their friends in their own age group. In The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) and The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012), they also experienced respect at the meso level of society. Of the

thirteen respondents who felt respected by their family, eleven generalised this respect to society as a whole. Two of the thirteen respondents had withdrawn from society as a whole in order to feel respected by the society they chose to engage with. Georgia refused to interact with people who might not treat her well: 'One has to be realistic and realise that there are people who aren't [going to treat you well]. You don't have to rub shoulders with them anyway'.

Naomi said:

> I suppose I'm quite happy with the way society treats me in that the society I live in is is [sic] of my choosing and I don't go to places where, um, I'm not treated or regarded or happy um and I and I um have the ability to do that now. Um, I don't have to go to go into any situations I don't want to go into.

The fourteenth respondent reported positive encounters at the meso level of society—for example, at the local shopping centre and with her doctor and optometrist, as well as with taxi drivers she encountered—and she extrapolated this to society as a whole.

As a qualitative study, the number of participants is limited and the demographics of the respondents are similar (see the appendix for a breakdown of the demographical data for each respondent). Further research is recommended to ascertain whether these findings apply to the general population of older people.

4. Homogenisation of the Group of Older People

The respondents did not 'feel old' and expressed varying degrees of surprise that they would fit into the category of 'older people'. The respondents all reported that they were taking part in active ageing, which was why they considered themselves young and as ageing 'successfully'. They were therefore submitting to, and agreeing with, the

discourse that suggests that policy makers and researchers know what is best for older

people rather than the older people themselves (see Chapter 1). For example, 66-year-

old Nathan stated that 'I wouldn't describe myself as elderly, but they [young people]

probably would'. Nathan thought that someone aged around 18 years would believe he

was an older person, but that he felt young and in mid-life. The respondents discussed

the age differences at which people appeared to be 'older', and these differences

appeared to increase by 10–20-year increments (the older a person was, the smaller the

increments). Thus, a person aged forty-five would think that a 65-year-old was older,

but not someone aged fifty-five, and a person aged fifty-five would consider a 75-year-

old older. Respondents who were aged in their mid-seventies believed that people aged

eighty-five or over could be considered older, but that they themselves were not 'older',

and an 85-year-old would regard someone in their nineties as an 'older person'.

However, Georgia felt that she was not an older person because she was still physically

active and able to help her younger associates who had health problems. Therefore, the

definition of an 'older person' was subjective and depended very much on the age of

the person answering the question. However, the consensus was that it did not apply to

any of the respondents (see Section 5 of Chapter 1 for more detail).

Naomi discussed ageing and her own age from a pragmatic viewpoint:

> I probably never even thought about growing old when I was … younger and …
>
> certainly when I was younger … forty seemed ancient and then sixty seemed
>
> ancient and then seventy seemed ancient. … I'm conscious of the value of life
>
> and … the passing of time but … I have this thing … I'm thinking I've got
>
> another … twenty years and then I'll … be happy to … pop off. (Naomi)

Naomi laughed when she talked about 'popping off'. At seventy-four years, Naomi felt

that another twenty years would be enough time for her and that dying at ninety-four

would be acceptable, but Georgia felt that she had plenty of time left and that she was

not old: 'I never think of age as such and I don't think my family think of it either'.

At seventy-four years of age, Karen brought the age difference for being 'old' down to

less than ten years:

> Now from my point of view, looking at elderly, I sort of think of eighties and
>
> beyond, maybe late seventies but … I sort of don't feel as if I would be classed
>
> as elderly. I guess it's your own perception of ageing too. (Karen)

Georgia was also surprised that a person aged sixty-five could be categorised as an

older person because this meant that her son, who she considered young at sixty-five

years, would have been eligible to take part in this study. This shows that a number of

generations make up the group classified as 'older Australians'; therefore, the group

itself is far from being a homogenous group of people who all think, feel and behave in

similar ways. In fact, it is a heterogeneous group of people with dissimilar experiences

in youth, and therefore dissimilar attitudes and ways of being and doing. However, the

respondents from various cohorts believed that their cohort was a much more

homogenous group than the entire group classified as 'older people'.

van Dyk (2014) discusses the homogenisation of older age and declares that 'The

implicated homogenization goes so far that some authors even drop the distinction of

third and fourth age, in order to "re-unify" old age in its uniqueness and broadness',

whereas the respondents felt that they had not yet reached 'old age'. Therefore, as

discussed in Chapter 1, the homogenisation of a group of 'older people' who refuse to

identify themselves as 'old' problematises the structural foundations of the group.

Further, the homogenisation of the group known as 'older people' fails to consider the various cohorts of people in that group. Australians are classified as 'older' when they turn sixty-five years old, which means that the group of people classified as 'older' includes baby boomers (who have a different view of life from the generation above them; Featherstone & Hepworth, 1988, p. 387), the generation above baby boomers and the remaining members of the generation above that (see Chapter 1). This failure 'restricts consideration of the role of social forces in shaping individuals' (Dannefer, 2013, p. 794). The protagonists in RED (2010) were homogenised into one group of 'older people', although the various ages of the protagonists did not necessarily fit into this classification.

Although age-grading is useful for structural and institutional purposes, the ABS has shortened the age groups in the over-65 group to 10-year gaps to match the age groupings of younger people, as the number of people in the over-65 group had become too large to make it a meaningful group for statistical purposes (ABS, 2014f).

The oldest respondent in this study, Georgia, was 92 years old, and she was more fit and active and had more in common with younger people than some of her associates ('friends or acquaintances') who were in their early seventies and suffering from ill health. Georgia did not see herself as achievement-oriented or competitive, but she felt that she had purpose because she helped younger people with some of their activities of daily living, as well as outings to the shops. Georgia believed that she was ageing 'successfully' because she was fit and active, and that members of her village who were not healthy were therefore not ageing 'successfully'. This suggests that active ageing is firmly entrenched in her thinking, as it was for all respondents.

4.1 Attitudes among Different Cohorts

Georgia believed that her experiences, and those of her cohort, during the Great

Depression helped her to feel grateful for what she had, whereas subsequent generations

did not have that experience and therefore were not grateful for the 'blessings' and

'privileges' of life. However, the Great Depression can be regarded as a 'proximate

contextual experience' (Dannefer, 2013, p. 796), while larger structural forces, such as

institutions (e.g., schools), shape 'the everyday dynamics within which lives are played

out' (Dannefer, 2013, p. 796). Therefore, Georgia's grateful attitude could be related

more to her education and the influence of her schooling than her experience of

hardship during the 1930s. However, whether Georgia's attitude has been shaped by her

contextual experience (of the Great Depression) or by the structural forces of

institutions (e.g., schools), she believes that she has different attitudes and values from

the younger cohorts because of her experiences. However, at seventy-four years of age,

Ken was twenty years younger than Georgia and of a different cohort, but he had a

similar attitude. He was grateful for the comfort of his own lifestyle and felt

compassion towards people who do not experience it:

> I live a fairly comfortable life here in so far as nobody's hassling me. When I
>
> see these people [homeless people] … well it must be freezing and it must be
>
> horrible and the police move you along from time to time and it's pretty tough.
>
> (Ken)

Therefore, a grateful attitude was not only shaped by proximate contextual experiences,

such as the Great Depression, but possibly by other experiences or structural forces.

However, this is outside of the scope of this thesis and was not investigated in any of

the empirical work. Therefore, further research is recommended.

4.2 Self-Stereotyping

This research includes people who do not think they are 'old', and although they fit the criteria for being 'older', this raises a question of whether 'active ageing' has become such a far-reaching, all-encompassing policy that older people themselves relate more to mid-life than they do to growing older. Active ageing has produced older people who self-stereotype as people in mid-life because they are active. This could seriously affect their view of themselves, and they could suffer from self-esteem issues if they have an accident that prevents them from taking part in active ageing, as an accident could mean that they are 'suddenly' older when they were used to self-stereotyping as being in mid-life. Narelle had suffered a serious fall and had spent some time in hospital as a result, but she did not consider herself older, as she was planning to reengage in active ageing once she had regained her health. However, during the time of the interview, she was still suffering from the after effects of the accident:

> Narelle: Now my voice has changed because I had a fall and I got some damage to my body and my voice doesn't always sound like this, does it?
>
> Barry: No, no.
>
> Narelle: Anyway, you wouldn't know that so it doesn't matter.
>
> Lyn: No, it sounds alright to me.

Narelle was self-conscious about her voice, but I could not detect any problems with it. When an older person suffers from some form of age-related illness that means they are unable to participate in the 'active ageing' way of life, this could create a crisis of 'identity' (Phillipson, 1998). Further, older people who choose to rest and enjoy their retirement feel that they are not taking part in 'life, as it is supposed to be'. However,

the older respondents in this study, including those suffering from age-related illnesses or frailty, exhibited good self-esteem and did not express feelings of insecurity.

The respondents self-stereotyped as being in mid-life and refused to accept the stereotypes of older age as being applicable to themselves. For example, Georgia did not regard herself as abject and old, even though she felt that some younger people may see older people that way. She also did not see herself as wise or experienced, loyal or reliable, altruistic, non-materialistic, or spiritual; instead, she viewed herself as 'pretty ordinary. … [she has] lived a long life and survived many experiences' (Bytheway, 1995, p. 128). Further, Georgia did not consider herself an 'older person', and she did not consider age a limiting factor in her life because she was participating in active ageing.

5. Respect

The interview process had a design flaw in that I failed to ask the respondents how they defined respect, as I believed it was a mutually understood concept. The respondents did not ask me how I defined respect, so they also believed it to be a mutually understood concept. Most of the respondents used the term 'treat/ed me well' to indicate respectful behaviour towards them. I have used Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition to define respect (see Chapter 1). Honneth (1995, p. 112) proposes that 'the respect for a human being as a person' can be traced 'back to a type of "recognition respect", because it primarily involves cognitively recognizing the fact that, with regard to the other, one is dealing with a being possessed of personal qualities'. Thus, according to Honneth's theory of recognition, respect is 'recognising' the other person as a human being. This relates respect to visibility and disrespect to invisibility.

The respondents discussed indicators of respect from their neighbourhood. For example, Brian said of his neighbourhood that 'there's certainly no racial tensions here'. He viewed this as a sign of mutual recognition among his neighbours, who are of various nationalities. Barry mentioned that his neighbours give him and his wife food [due to his wife's accident], which he viewed as a sign of respect:

> because it is important how we relate to other people. And with Narelle's sickness … our neighbours have brought food. … I don't cook and the neighbours have been bringing us ... some … meals, which is great. (Barry)

Karen talked about being cared for by her family as an indicator of respect, as well as being shown 'consideration' from strangers. For example, she 'gets a bit more consideration of "can you carry all those parcels?" Things like that, from strangers' (Karen). However, there are few of these indicators, and the respondents discussed them as examples of respectful treatment rather than 'indicators'.

The respondents reported that they believed they were treated respectfully within their intimate relationships with family members and close friends. They linked the respect they received within their intimate spheres with mutual recognition. Further, as mentioned in Section 3 of this chapter, some of the respondents reported that they chose the society they spent time in deliberately and with forethought in order to experience respectful treatment and avoid being disrespected and/or treated badly or abusively.

The respondents also reported being treated respectfully in various clubs, churches and other affiliations. Moreover, the majority of the respondents appeared to generalise the respect from their intimate spheres and their meso-level associations to the population of Australia as a whole. This suggests that because they gained a positive sense of self through the respectful relationships in their intimate spheres and the connections at the

meso level, they had high self-esteem and an attitude that disregards disrespectful treatment as being a problem within the disrespectful individual and not in society as a whole. They also discussed self-esteem and confidence, which they associated with the mutual respect they gave and received within their relationships. The protagonists in the movies also experienced recognition in their intimate relationships, and in The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), they experienced respect at the meso level of society. Mutual recognition was portrayed as occurring in the intimate spheres in all the movies.

5.1 Mutual Respect

The respondents believed that respectful relationships should not be one-way relationships from younger people to older people, but that there should be mutual respect within their friendships and between older and younger family members. Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 138) discusses mutual recognition as an important aspect of recognition: 'the distinctively human dependence on intersubjective recognition is always shaped by the particular manner in which the mutual granting of recognition is institutionalised within a society' (see Chapter 1).

Kieran said that 'I treat them [his family members] with love and respect and they treat me like this in return'. Kieran discussed his (and the other respondents') definition of mutual respect:

> I've always lived by the principle that you treat others the way you want them to treat you and that principle still works well for me today … I am accepted and respected by the children I meet at Kids' Games [a local church initiative he takes part in]. A lot of young people swear today but they don't swear around me. (Kieran)

Kieran believed that young people refraining from swearing in his presence was a sign of respect for him and his beliefs.

Kaitlyn believed that because she treated the boys she worked with at Asquith Boys High School with respect, they treated her respectfully as well. She said:

> I worked at Asquith Boys High School in the office up until about ten years ago on a casual basis. When I first went there, I think about thirteen years ago … I thought … 'How am I going to get on with all these boys?' I found they were very respectful to the office staff. They always called me Miss. … I found them fine. Though what they said when they went out the door I wouldn't know but … they were always … polite. I never had anyone swear at me or be rude … so I enjoyed those years at Asquith Boys. (Kaitlyn)

Although Pamela did not use the term 'mutual respect' and she did not explicitly state that she felt respected by young people, she discussed her respectful treatment of children and young people and how it influenced the way they responded to her:

> I know that there have been children or young people that I've listened to and behind their story what they were really telling me was that they've been hurt or they've been ignored or … somebody has been very rude to them. What can you do, but say to them 'I'm sorry for what was done there, will you forgive us?' … But just keep doing what you feel is what you need to do, and if you are wrong at any time, for goodness sake say so. (Pamela)

Pamela felt that apologising for bad, poor or wrong behaviour was a sign of respect towards the person receiving the apology, and that older people should respect younger people.

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Kathleen discussed mutual respect and mutual helping:

> I just stood back and let them go [the trolley men] and when I got to Harris
> Farm Market … I was just standing looking at the mushrooms and one of those
> men came up and said thank you to me … he said 'Let me pick some for you'
> and he chose the nicest ones. Honestly, most people would ignore them [the
> trolley men]. Give the best and the best comes back to you. … they treat you as
> you treat them. (Kathleen)

The respondents believed that mutual respect was something to be given and experienced in both their intimate relationships and at the meso level of society. It was important to the respondents that they treat other people respectfully, and they believed that this was why they were treated respectfully in return.

5.2 Respect in Intimate Relationships

The respondents discussed mutual respect between themselves and their family and friends, and they believed that mutual respect was an important aspect of respectful relationships. The relationships they discussed included horizontal relationships (between friends of a similar age to themselves) and vertical relationships (this was mainly about grandchildren as representatives of children and young people generally).

Mutually respectful friendships were important to the respondents. For example, Brian said, 'We've got some pretty good friends, don't have any problems with friends', and Kaitlyn added that 'They're like-minded people I suppose we mix with'. Brian and Kaitlyn both felt respected by the friends in their age group, and this is important to them.

Karen talked about different life stages causing differences in her intimate relationships. She said that now her children had left home and had their own families, she had made friendships with her own age group, and it was important to her that these friendships were positive and respectful:

> … thirty years ago I was busy bringing up family and involved in all the family things going on … and you miss that when you get to older age and you start to look more for friendships in your age group … and here in the village, when I came here I thought 'I'm of an age now where I'm not going to make many friends, but I've been surprised by how many friends I've made since coming here. That's good. Most of the friends I've made are in my age bracket. (Karen)

Karen lived in a retirement village and enjoyed the relationships she had formed there. Karen also felt positive about her family: 'They check on me more often … which is good to know that'. She felt that being 'checked on' was a sign of care for her well-being, and this in turn was a sign of respect.

Nathan also discussed friends and family when he thought about being treated respectfully. He felt that he was well treated in his intimate relationships, and therefore felt respected: 'we've had the same neighbours for over thirty years and they treat me the same' and 'I think my children treat me pretty well'.

Grandchildren were an important topic of conversation for all the respondents except Nathan, who did not have any grandchildren. The respondents felt that their grandchildren were representatives of the younger generation, and that because they felt respected by their grandchildren, this would apply to that generation as a whole.

Barry talked about his grandchildren treating himself and Narelle respectfully:

> We have sixteen grandchildren. We are treated with wonderful respect and I
> think they all care about us and when we're sick we get cards and we get phone
> calls. (Barry)

Although receiving cards and phone calls could simply imply love and affection rather than respect, Barry viewed them as signs of respect. Further, researchers have reported that gifts are an indicator of respect (e.g., Silverman & Maxwell, 1978; Palmore & Maeda, 1985; Mehta, cited in Sung et al., 2010; Ingersoll-Dayton & Saengtienchai, 1999).

Narelle also spoke about her grandchildren. She discussed them as individuals with different behaviours:

> our grandchildren are just … lovely and they do treat us with respect. And
> they're very loving, some are more … demonstrative and even when I have my
> friends here some of them will come up and give them a kiss hello. And the
> other day I had a friend here, and Marcus is 11, and he put his hand out to shake
> her hand … our grandchildren treat us well. (Narelle)

Narelle believed that her grandson wanting to shake hands with one of her friends was a sign of respect, and she also viewed being 'treated well' as respectful. She regarded this as more than someone being 'nice' to her, because she did not mention anyone 'being nice'. This was also borne out with the other respondents; none of them talked about someone 'being nice' to them as a sign of respect, but they believed that being 'treated well' meant that they were respected.

Kieran enjoyed the company of his grandchildren because they treated him respectfully. He said that he feels:

loved and respected by my family, friends, children, nieces and nephews and my
grandchildren … I enjoy the company of the younger ones as well as my
children, nieces and nephews. (Kieran)

Although Kieran associated love with respect in this example, he did not confuse loving
or affectionate treatment with respect. The older protagonists in RED (2010) and The
Holiday (2006) experienced affectionate disrespect, but the respondents in this study
did not experience this kind of treatment; instead, they experienced affection and
respect.

Pamela felt that her grandchildren treated her well, and that they were respectful when
she spoke to them. She felt 'protected' by her grandchildren and viewed this as a sign of
respect. Pamela believed that her grandchildren understood her and how she wanted to
be treated, and they related to her in a way that made her feel respected. She also
mentioned (of her grandchildren) that 'they could ask me', thereby implying a form of
mutual respect:

> My grandchildren are quote protective; … they do listen; they do try to do
> things for me. … I think that's [the things her grandchildren do for her] very
> thoughtful. They like me to go to their graduations for things, which I do …
> There are times I probably bore them to screams, but they're gentle enough to
> … just sit. But I think they do know, that if it comes to the point, they could ask
> me. And that's how I like to be treated. (Pamela)

Although being 'protective' could be regarded as infantilisation, it depends on whether
the person being 'protected' feels that his or her autonomy and agency are respected
while they are being treated protectively. Pamela believed that her autonomy and

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agency were respected by her grandchildren, and she viewed this as a positive sign of respect rather than infantilisation.

Georgia discussed being cared for by her family, and she regarded this as being treated respectfully by her family members:

> I could see my family was always [worrying] … and I thought they shouldn't be worrying about that so somehow I found myself here and now they don't worry as much. I see them just as much. You do it [move into the village] for your family as well as yourself and it becomes a great benefit. (Georgia)

She discussed her intimate relationships as being respectful and caring, but recognised that other people may not act the same way (as discussed in Section 3 of this chapter). However, Georgia enjoyed living in the retirement village, and her intimate relationships had grown in number to include friends she had made in the village. This helped her to feel respected, safe and protected:

> I find living here wonderful. They're all different, all lived different lives and gradually over the years we get to know more about each other. We don't intrude on each other, on each other's doorstep but if anyone is sick or needing anything we will rise to that. (Georgia)

Georgia believed that mutual respect included helping other people, but she also felt that she was not 'old' because she participated in active ageing and was not unhealthy. Further, she believed that her friends who were inactive or experiencing ill health, but who were younger than her, were 'old'.

Naomi felt that even though the language that people use has changed, her children and grandchildren treated her respectfully: 'the language has changed a lot but as far as I

can see my grandchildren, younger and teenagers, and … my kids just talk to me … the same way'. She felt that her family showed her respect by talking to her in a way she understood so she could participate meaningfully and fully in the conversation.

Most of the respondents told stories about receiving respect from their family, and from grandchildren and younger family members in particular, as they believed that the respectful treatment they received from their younger family members could be extrapolated to younger people in society. However, their discussion of respect was not isolated to respect from younger people to themselves only; they also discussed respect between themselves and people of their own age group. It is important not to oversimplify respect and discuss it as if the only important respectful relationships are one-way vertical relationships from younger people to older people. The respondents valued the respectful relationships they had with friends and younger family members.

The movies analysed in Chapters 2 and 3 show that although the older protagonists were portrayed as treating younger characters with respect, younger people and institutions (in Western societies) based around young to mid-life people are generally portrayed as treating older people with either affectionate disrespect or disrespect rather than respect. Therefore, the older protagonists are portrayed as obtaining their positive sense of self from their intimate relationships in their own age group rather than from society as a whole. This appears to suggest that disrespect is only one way: from younger to older people. While this is a simplistic view, the films use it to show that relationships between younger and older people do not have to be based on disrespect from younger people, as disrespect from younger to older people is a widely held normative view of Western society.

Although the older respondents who were suffering from ill health or some form of age-related illness told some stories of disrespectful treatment, they also discussed being respected within their intimate relationships. The majority of the respondents believed that they treated their family and friends respectfully, and that this mutual respect encouraged their family and friends to treat them respectfully. However, buying into active ageing discourse also meant that they did not believe they could be considered 'older'.

5.3 Respectful Treatment of Older People in the Past

The respondents had grown up and learned about relationships during a period when older people were treated respectfully. They were taught by their parents to treat older people with respect, but they now live in a time when older people are not necessarily shown respect by society, or at the very least, they are not treated in the same way that the respondents treated older people when they were young. For example, Kathleen said, 'I think it's all about the way you were brought up. My parents would have been treated respectfully'. Nathan also said, 'They [young people] tend to not treat the elderly with the respect they perhaps once did'.

Both Kathleen and Nathan noticed that the way young people responded to them did not align with the way they responded to older people when they were young. It is not that they felt they were being treated disrespectfully, but that the way they were treated and spoken to was different from how they were taught to treat older people. For example, a number of respondents discussed standing up for older people on public transport as a sign of respect from their childhood. However, Nathan would be 'horrified' if someone stood up for him on public transport, as this would mean that he was being seen and treated as 'old'.

Karen believed that the way of life she experienced when she was growing up was better than the way people are taught to behave in the present:

> I don't know. I think we had the best of worlds, I mean we went through World War II, which wasn't a good time, but I think things to my way of thinking were better anyway. I think a lot of people in my age bracket think the same way. (Karen)

She believed there had been a significant change in attitudes from the past to the present, and this had caused her some frustration, especially in relation to gratitude:

> I think the attitude in the young is different. I don't know whether it is because we've had so much break up in families. I think a lot of it has been caused by that as they don't have the influence of both mum and dad. I find my grandchildren, I get a bit frustrated with them because I send them some money for a birthday or something and I don't get a reply; and to my way of thinking that is not showing respect and proper gratitude. (Karen)

Karen did not feel disrespected by her grandchildren:

> I mean my grandkids are great when I'm with them. They'll do things for me and be very helpful. It's this easy attitude that 'oh well, we'll do it tomorrow' for the young people I think. (Karen)

However, she believed that the standards of the past were important, and she was unhappy that changes had occurred.

Pamela was also aware that there were differences between her generation and her grandchildren's generation. She discussed how she taught children to behave 'years ago', and she felt strongly that people should be taught similar standards today:

> … when I've, in those days, years ago, when I've thought they were deliberately doing something and they knew better than that and I taught them better and I just said 'Sit down and think about what you've just been doing'. And I think that's what lots of people need to do to young people today. Tell them that's not the way they're going to get on in life, think about it, and I'd like to see that happen [today]. (Pamela)

Pamela believed that people who swore were disrespectful, and that swearing publicly would not have occurred in the past:

> I'm appalled at the swearing in public, um, the swearing of all ages. I heard a lady on the ABC this morning, say, that 'when you're feeling shitty' now you would never have said that and she was talking about it, um, you know as if it was a word you use all the time. And it's you know; 'pissed' is another word people talk about, as if it again was meant to be just accepted. I'm afraid, I have been known to say to people, 'please don't swear in front of me' or 'don't swear, think of a better word'. 'That's a lazy word' is what I usually say. 'That's a lazy word, there's a better word than that'. (Pamela)

Nathan felt that life was completely different now from the past, but he did not regard the differences as bad:

> I, now, I try not to look back on, you know, life then and compare it to life now because it's, um, apples and oranges, you can't really compare it. Um, I just

would have loved to have had access to technology that is now available, when I was working. When I think back to how, my God, how did we ever get things done. (Nathan)

Nathan's recent retirement was a prominent issue for him, so when he considered the past, he did not think about the differences in the way people behaved, as the older respondents did. Nathan's focus was still on his work, and he appeared to miss work and his work environment.

However, although the respondents felt that respectful behaviour in the past was different to how people generally behave in present times, they still felt respected. They had developed expectations of behaviours and treatments that were different to those they had been taught as children. The respondents wanted to see some standards of behaviour upheld (e.g., swearing, as noted by Kieran and Pamela); however, they were mostly content with the way they were treated.

5.4 Respect at the Meso Level

The respondents discussed their lives and the respect they received at the meso level of society and from their intimate relationships. Their local neighbourhood, community and the organisations they volunteered for and belonged to were an important part of their life, and an important way for them to feel respected by 'society' was the respect they received at this level. However, the meso level of society does not closely match Honneth's (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) three levels of recognition: love (intimate relationships), law (equality before the law and therefore the public level of society) and achievement (work).

Kaitlyn discussed her local neighbourhood and her involvement in it. This was an important aspect of her feeling that she was recognised and respected. Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 138) states that people need more than one sphere of recognition:

> Accordingly, the practical self-relation of human beings—the capacity, made possible by recognition, to reflexively assure themselves of their own competences and rights—is not something given once and for all; like subjective recognition expectations, this ability expands with the number of spheres that are differentiated in the course of social development for socially recognising specific components of the personality. (Kaitlyn)

Therefore, for Kaitlyn and the other respondents in this study, recognition and respect at the meso level of society were important for their self-esteem:

> And we've also, we've lived in this one place here for 47 years, in Berowra. And er so, a lot of our friends we've known for a very long time. And Berowra has grown from er about 2,000 people when we first came here to over 12,000. So we've seen growth here but the friends we associate with are probably in the range of say 55 up to about 80 and they've got similar ideals to us; interests. You know, we belong to various organisations here. (Kaitlyn)

Kaitlyn also discussed the organisation she volunteered with:

> We do a lot of gardening. As you can see we've got a nice garden out there and uh I belong to the Garden Club. Been president, secretary, whatever, over the years. I've belonged to it for about 40 years and uh we belong to Probus, we're involved there aren't we? And the church, in various committees, and running things and we're involved. (Kaitlyn)

Kaitlyn believed that holding an important position (e.g., president or secretary, or being on various church committees and 'running things') in the clubs she belongs to shows that she is recognised and respected by her community.

Brian noted that he lives is a close-knit community in Berowra Heights: 'There's a very large, it's like a village'. He believed that the people there were similar to himself and his wife. This was important to him, as he felt that being 'like-minded' with his neighbours produced mutually respectful behaviour and recognition. Brian also discussed the various positions he has held in the organisations he volunteers for, as well as in his working life:

> And I've been er in various positions. I've been vice president and president of Probus Berowra, I'm currently the tour director. I organise tours to various sites. I've been on the committee and vice president, president of the Berowra Gardening Society. I've been leader of our seniors group, er, coleader at St Marks. … I spent thirty, forty years in the public service and I was uh Operations Officer for State Fisheries. The operational side of it and uh then I went to the Premier's Department and I ended up there as uh Manager of Parliamentary Business and Special Projects but also ah policy analysis as well. I was in the Director General's executive support tribunal working a lot by myself. So, you know, you speak to department heads and other top senior people around the place and um that sort of I suppose obviously affects your outlook during that sort of later part of your life. (Brian)

It is important to note that Brian's working life and volunteer work match the normative notion of the middle-class male, which Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 141) regards as the standard from which recognition of work is achieved:

Of course, the latter kind of social relation—which represented a third sphere of recognition alongside love and the new legal principle in the developing capitalist society—was hierarchically organised in an unambiguously ideological way from the start. For the extent to which something counts as 'achievement', as a cooperative contribution, is defined against a value standard whose normative reference point is the economic activity of the independent, middle-class, male bourgeois. What is distinguished as 'work', with a specific, quantifiable use for society, hence amounts to the result of a group-specific determination of value—to which whole sectors of other activities, themselves equally necessary for reproduction (e.g., household work), fall victim. Moreover, this altered principle of social order at the same time represents a moment of material violence insofar as the one-sided, ideological valuing of certain achievements can determine how much of which resources individuals legitimately have at their disposal. Between the new status hierarchy—the gradation of social esteem according to values of industrial capitalism—and the unequal distribution of material resources there is, to this extent, more than a merely external relation of 'super-structure' and 'basis', of 'ideology' and objective reality. The hegemonic, thoroughly one-sided valuation of achievement rather represents an institutional framework in which the criteria or principles for distributing resources in bourgeois-capitalist society can meet with normative agreement.

Brian's feeling of recognition was therefore based on being highly valued in the hierarchy of his work and community involvement. Brian mentioned an award he had received for his work:

> In the Queen's Birthday Honours List in June 1990 I was awarded the
> Australian Public Service Medal for services. I don't really know why but I just
> did my job, that was all. So that was a great honour. (Brian)

Although Brian said that he did not know why he had received the award, it was an important part of his feeling of being recognised for his achievements. He felt that his contribution was valuable and recognised, and that he was therefore respected in the sphere of work and achievement.

Most of the respondents did not achieve this kind of recognition—particularly the women, who had held working positions that were not regarded as important because they were held by women (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, pp. 148, 153). However, they still obtained mutual recognition from their local community.

Kathleen found that 'they [strangers she comes across on the streets or in the shopping centre] are very helpful, maybe because I have a stick'. Kathleen spoke about her experiences at her local shopping centre on a number of occasions because she found them to be very positive, and she felt that she received mutual recognition and respect from the people there. For example:

> I go to Woolworths ... It was a new girl on the checkout and I said I usually shop
> on Friday's but I've got a busy day tomorrow. I know I'm too late to get my
> order delivered so I asked her if she could put the groceries in small loads of
> them as I can't carry a heavy bag. She said certainly … She finished serving me
> and took my money and everything and then she rang the button and the man
> came up and she asked him 'Would you mind helping this lady to her car
> please? She finds it difficult to lift and carry things'. He happened to be the
> Supervisor and he said 'I am busy, but oh yes. Is the car close by?' Yes, just out

of the lift. In the end, he stood there chatting to me. I can only say I don't have any problems. (Kathleen)

Kathleen felt that she gave and received recognition, and that 'help' under these conditions was a form of respectful recognition. If help is provided in circumstances where the recipient feels that his or her choice and autonomy have been removed—that is, that they are not receiving mutual recognition—the help could be perceived as disrespectful. This is discussed further in Chapter 5.

Karen enjoyed living in a village and felt that being involved in some of the activities provided her with mutual respect and recognition from other people she knows. Further, she felt that people who could not take part in the group activities were missing out on this important aspect of life:

> Living in a village like this, where all your people are over 55, but so many don't consider themselves old enough to come in at 55 or even sixty-five and when they do come in a lot of them are not able bodied enough to be active in the things that we have going here, which is always sad I find. We are close to the bush for bush walking and lots of us get together for those sort of things but only some people avail themselves of what is going on. It's sad when they come into a village like this when they have all the activities going on. (Karen)

Karen felt that she was part of the village and the village life, and she used the pronoun 'we' when talking about the activities. As part of the village life, she received respect at the meso level, and her self-esteem was very high as a result. Further, Karen believed that taking part in the physical activities in her village meant that she was participating in active ageing and was therefore in mid-life and still young.

Nathan felt that his recent retirement had caused him to associate with different people:

> we see people in shops and on transport much more than we once did … it tends
> not to be related to them perceiving me as being a certain age … It's simply that
> I'm associating more with … those sorts of people rather than perhaps my
> family or my work mates. (Nathan)

Nathan had only retired twelve months previously and was feeling the loss of his job.
He had been a journalist and had enjoyed the adrenalin and importance of the job, and
he missed working and being involved with people as part of the media. However,
Nathan implicitly discussed recognition and felt that he was still recognised and
therefore respected:

> Also, if I had a disability, an obvious physical disability I would be treated
> differently as well. On one hand allowances would be made for me but on the
> other hand I would be seen as less worthy of attention perhaps or um, less
> worthy of recognition. So again there I'm lucky that I don't have an obvious
> physical disability. (Nathan)

Nathan believed that he received recognition because he was a white, healthy, middle-
class male, and that he would not be treated with the same level of respect, or that
society might refuse to recognise him, if he had a disability. This was part of Nathan's
acceptance of the active ageing paradigm.

When discussing respect and disrespect, the respondents reported that they felt
respected. They occasionally told stories of disrespect, but these were regarded as the
perpetrators' issues rather than being directly related to the respondent. For example,
Brian spoke about a ticket collector on a trip to Paris:

Except this grumpy … ticket … fellow in the Gare du Nord in Paris, who was

rather rude, but … well, that was just … him I think and I think he must have

had a bad morning because sometimes you do get people who have had a bad

day, so what I do is … become circumspect and I don't inflame the situation.

(Brian)

Other respondents put the lack of respect down to 'the times' rather than personal

disrespect. For example, Naomi said that 'some of the young ones … won't pay any

attention to you, but that's a sign of the times, I think'. The respondents' self-esteem—

especially that of respondents who self-reported as being healthy—appeared to be high

enough that they did not regard bad treatment as a personal attack. Nathan believed that

his socioeconomic status meant that he was treated well:

I think I'm treated pretty well … if I was living somewhere else, and I was

living in a different socioeconomic group and I was a different skin colour … it

would be a very different experience, but because I am who I am I'm treated

pretty well. (Nathan)

Further, Nathan believed that young people experienced information overload, which

meant they could not concentrate enough to treat people respectfully:

… this very short attention span as a result of this information overload that we

all suffer from … it's the pressure that people are under today to do ten things at

once and I think that's probably the reason if I am treated differently or spoken

to differently. (Nathan)

The respondents in this study received recognition, and therefore respect, from their

intimate relationships and from the meso-level associations within their community and

the organisations they were involved with. They acquired a positive sense of self and high self-esteem from two different spheres, and they extrapolated the respect they received to society as a whole. Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) notes that it is important for a person to feel recognised in more than one sphere, as the individual's subjective autonomy increases with each stage of mutual regard (Honneth, 1995, p. 94). Therefore, the individual obtains a higher sense of self if he or she receives recognition in all three spheres. All the movies that were analysed in this study reflect recognition in the intimate sphere, with the protagonists forming intimate spheres wherein they give and receive mutual recognition. However, only The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) and The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) portray the protagonists as being respected at the meso level of society.

6. Conclusion

This chapter argued that the respondents all believed that active ageing discourse was an important part of their own experience of growing older. The respondents (including the 92-year-old respondent) believed that they could self-stereotype as being in mid-life as long as they participated in active ageing.

Important topics of discussion for the respondents included respect, respect in intimate relationships, mutual respect and respect at the meso level of society. The respondents all felt respected in their intimate relationships and at the meso level of society. This chapter argued that the respondents linked active ageing with the respect they received.

Although the respondents were brought up by their parents to treat older people respectfully, they now live in a time when the societal view of older people is not the same as it was when they were younger. However, the respondents still exhibited high self-esteem and confidence because they obtained a positive sense of self through their

intimate relationships (Honneth, 1990) and meso-level associations. The respondents who reported disrespect mainly put it down to the individual's poor behaviour, 'bad day' or information overload rather than general societal disrespect. They did not regard bad treatment as a personal attack because they believed they received recognition and respect due to their engagement with active ageing. Further, healthy respondents attributed respect to working, being healthy and being engaged with active ageing, and respondents with health problems attributed respect to their participation in active ageing. Even respondents suffering from health or disability problems participated in active ageing and spoke about how they were involved in it. For example, Jane, who had a stroke and was confined to a nursing home, talked about participating in active ageing through her involvement with the community gardening program.

The fourteen interviews investigated whether older people receive respect in their everyday lived experiences in order to answer the question of whether older people in Australia feel that they receive respect from the micro level of their intimate relationships and the meso level of their community and the organisations they belong to. The results of this study suggest that older people receive respect from their intimate spheres at the micro level, and that this respect gives older people a positive sense of self. However, one respondent, who was suffering from disability and health issues, did not feel respected by her family members. Although she felt infantilised and invisible, she obtained her positive sense of self from her relationships with other people in her nursing home and from the respect she received at the meso level of society. The respondents believed that people suffering from health or disability issues would not receive the same respect as healthy respondents. Chapter 5 further investigates the interviews with the respondents and discusses disrespect, infantilisation, invisibility and active ageing.

Chapter 5:
Disrespect and Active Ageing

1. Introduction

This chapter argues that all the respondents accepted active ageing discourse and policy as the 'successful' way to age, and they believed that people who relax and do not engage with work or exercise, or who suffer from ill health or disability, are therefore 'failures'. The respondents who suffered from ill health and disability felt that they were blamed for their poor health, and that they had to discuss how active they were and the work they were doing. The respondents believed that older people who suffered from ill health or mobility problems were not recognised or respected. It is therefore argued that active ageing is a form of symbolic violence against older people. It is 'the subtle imposition of systems of meaning that legitimize and thus solidify structures of inequality' (Wacquant, 2006, p. 4) and is exercised on an agent with his or her complicity (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2007).

This chapter explores the themes of disrespect, invisibility and infantilisation, which are regarded as forms of a lack of recognition (Honneth, 1992). Institutional disrespect is explored, and although the respondents reported some forms of institutional disrespect from insurance companies, they experienced recognition from Australian Government institutions (the core institutions of the state that make up Honneth's legal sphere; Fraser & Honneth, 2003) through anti-discrimination laws.

Although the respondents in this study reported that they experienced respect from their intimate relationships, they also told stories of disrespect, invisibility and infantilisation. Invisibility is portrayed in three of the movies—RED (2010), The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) and The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014)—that are analysed in Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis. The lack of recognition reported by the respondents was not usually from intimate relationships (although some of it occurred within intimate relationships); rather, it usually occurred in public and from institutions.

2. Disrespect

The respondents reported various forms of disrespect and discussed them at length throughout the interviews. Despite the respondents all reporting that they felt they were treated respectfully, some of them discussed aspects of ageist treatment, including: invisibility; dependence versus independence; ageism, which occurred when two respondents spoke about being viewed as an oddity (Georgia) or a curio (Ken) by their grandchildren; sexism, which was linked with ageism for older women; and infantilisation. Although the respondents predominantly felt respected, the interviewees who were experiencing ill health or frailty reported some disrespect, dependence, invisibility and ageist treatment from their intimate and public spheres. The older respondents who were in good health generally reported disrespectful treatment as a behavioural problem of a particular individual or individuals rather than as disrespect.

When the respondents discussed respect, they talked about relationships within their own age group (friends), as well as relationships with younger people, including children and grandchildren. However, when they discussed disrespect, they talked about disrespectful treatment from younger people, as they felt they were respected by their own age group. This was possibly due to a design flaw in the study, wherein the

respondents all came from a similar demographical area and were financially secure.

Most of them were on part pensions from the Australian Government, some were

financially independent and only two were entirely dependent on Australian

Government pensions; however, these two respondents owned their own home (as did

all the respondents), and this gave them financial freedom that is not experienced by

renters on age pensions.

The respondents who suffered from ill health or disability told stories of being treated

or regarded differently by people they met in public. This had nothing to do with their

age, as the younger respondents with health problems also reported issues. For example,

Nicole recounted a frightening incident on a train:

> I was catching the train from the Central Coast and it was a bunch of young
>
> people. … However, security did come through the train and I told them about
>
> it. They helped me move to another carriage. Um, it wasn't the sort of behaviour
>
> that I felt a reasonable person could cope with. I told the station master when I
>
> got to Berowra and he said 'Please report it to the police'. He was the one who
>
> said to report it, because that sort of behaviour shouldn't happen on a regular
>
> route. … because I'm used to better behaviour and not that sort of language.
>
> Um, it only seems to come from the young ones because they get over the top.
>
> They get excited and these were carrying alcohol with them and I was aware of
>
> that … and I think this was why they were behaving like that. (Nicole)

When I asked her for more details, Nicole was visibly upset and did not want to talk

about it any further. At this point, I had to maintain a balance between taking care not to

cause harm and the right to be involved in the research. A core principle of ethics is

respecting people's choices; thus, when Nicole did not want to discuss the incident further, I respected her request. Nicole simply added:

> and that to me was a very short trip … had I been doing a longer distance it could have been quite frightening. Again, when you have limited access to get up because of mobility problems you feel more threatened in a sense. (Nicole)

Nicole felt that the young people on the train had failed to recognise, and therefore respect, her (Honneth, 1990). However, she also exhibited high self-esteem and obtained a positive sense of self from her intimate relationships.

In Chapter 4, Kathleen discussed her thoughts about respect and being 'helped' rather than being respected. For example, 'Would you mind helping this lady to her car please? She finds it difficult to lift and carry things', and 'I find they are very helpful, maybe because I have a stick. Whether they treat all elderly people the same way I don't know'. Kathleen equated 'being helped' with 'being respected', and she had a different view of her disability and lack of mobility than some of the other respondents.

Jane did not feel respected by being helped; instead, she described her daughter-in-law helping her move as 'people taking, people thinking they've got the right to take control of your life and tell you what's best for you. I was on the fringes, really'. However, she discussed help from strangers somewhat differently:

> Usually you find people are very helpful if you need help. So, I don't mind going up to somebody in a shop … and saying 'Excuse me, do you mind giving me a hand with this'. (Jane)

When Jane believed she was in control and could ask for help, but could still make her own decisions, she felt that she was recognised and respected. However, when the

decision making was taken from her, she felt that this was a failure to recognise her agency, and was therefore unacceptable treatment. Therefore, offering 'help' can be respectful or disrespectful depending on how it is offered and whether the receiving person retains control of what is happening and is responsible for making his or her own decisions. Theories of respect relate to how people feel about, and react to, the phenomena they are experiencing. Therefore, while one person may experience 'help' as respect, another person may experience it as disrespect depending on how he or she is regarded within the interaction. The interaction is considered disrespectful if the individual believes that he or she is not being recognised. Honneth (1990, pp. 188–189) describes disrespect as the denial of approval or recognition of another person. He states that:

> what is needed is a basic conceptual shift to the normative premises of a theory of recognition that locates the core of all experiences of injustice in the withdrawal of social recognition, in the phenomena of humiliation and disrespect. (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 134)

For example, Jane felt humiliated and disrespected by her daughter-in-law when she was not given choices or the ability to make decisions about moving her possessions. Jane's description of her daughter-in-law's behaviour towards her suggested that she was being infantilised by her daughter-in-law. Further, Jane felt that her independence had been taken away due to her health problems. She therefore experienced a denial of recognition from her daughter-in-law.

Ken also experienced disrespect from his grandchildren when he discussed being a 'curio' for them; however, he felt that he received recognition and therefore did not regard this as disrespect:

I'm a curio, aren't I? … the grandchildren think that. They … accept you and treat you as … a funny bit of history … but not cheekily. … maybe occasionally they try on a bit of cheek but by and large they're respectful … respectful, I think, not grovelling or anything but … not rude either. … they're decent. (Ken)

Although being regarded as a 'curio' or a 'funny bit of history' could be seen as disrespectful, Ken's self-esteem and confidence was strong enough not to see or care that this attitude reflected badly on him. He felt respected in his intimate relationships with older people, which gave him a positive sense of self (Honneth, 1990); therefore, he regarded his grandchildren's attitude as interesting rather than disrespectful.

Naomi (Ken's wife) discussed her grandchildren: 'my grandchildren are all school age and … I think they treat me the same as they treat everybody'. This was an ambiguous statement, as her grandchildren may treat everybody disrespectfully. Ambiguity and possible disrespect were further suggested when Naomi discussed a recent interview with her 15-year-old granddaughter about her migrant experiences: 'I think I went up in her estimation which is quite funny, so I don't know what her impressions of older people are'. Naomi's granddaughter had previously been dismissive of her and her abilities, but now Naomi was being regarded as someone who had something important to contribute. Therefore, although she had felt disrespected before the interview with her granddaughter, she had gained a positive sense of self through her intimate relationships (Honneth, 1990) with people of her own age group. As a result, she did not feel that her granddaughter's previously negative view of older people said anything about her personally. Naomi did not feel humiliated, so she did not regard her granddaughter's dismissive attitude as disrespect. Although people experience similar

phenomena, their reactions to these phenomena vary depending on their own feelings of being recognised.

Georgia suggested that disrespect towards older people does not occur:

> a lot of it is imagination and I think you get what you give and if you're confident … they [young people] treat me as one of them. (Georgia)

Georgia took a hard line regarding older people's behaviours and attitudes: 'I think it's really up to you yourself and if you've got hang-ups and are looking for problems you can always find them. I believe in being positive'. Georgia 'find[s] people very helpful. They are aware of your age and I think they are very helpful'. Further:

> My grandparents were treated with great respect and I can honestly say I haven't experienced disrespect with my children or grandchildren. Again, I think it depends a great deal on what you expect and how you treat them. You give back what you get. If you are unkind to people or uncharitable in your thoughts, [you won't be treated well]. (Georgia)

Georgia thought that young people considered older people 'an oddity'. Being regarded as an 'oddity' was an indicator that her grandchildren viewed her as 'other' to themselves. This was a lack of recognition and was therefore disrespectful (Honneth, 1990):

> that's very interesting going to a grandchild or great-grandchild's party and I find the kids are quite gorgeous and they find you an oddity. They do come and talk to you but again I think that's up to you yourself. It's like animals, they know who to like. (Georgia)

Georgia had a positive sense of self from her other intimate relationships, particularly with her children and her friends in the village; therefore, she did not take her grandchildren's lack of recognition personally. Further, Georgia felt that older people should behave differently and treat younger people with recognition and respect:

> I was on a train and a young man got up to give an elderly woman a seat, she said 'Oh no thank you' and he looked really embarrassed and I don't think he would ever do it again. She was only going to the next station; it didn't matter, she should have thanked him and sat down for five minutes. **Old people bring it on themselves**. … You mustn't be judgemental. You must look for the best in people and then you get it. (Georgia)

Georgia was referring to mutual respect and recognition (Honneth, 1995), as discussed in Chapter 1. As an older person of 92 years, Georgia still experienced good health; therefore, her view of society was different from that of the respondents who experienced health problems.

3. Invisibility

Invisibility was an important topic discussed by many of the respondents, especially those who experienced some form of disability or ill health. For example, Nicole felt that her physical disability reduced the number of social contacts she could experience, although she reported that she does 'mix with them [young people]'. Nicole reported that when trying to get off a train:

> sometimes there'll be one who wants to push in front of you and I'll usually ask them to step back please. I try to do it politely, as most people do [step back to let her through] … my experience in lifts is similar. (Nicole)

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Nicole's intimate relationships were respectful and gave her a positive sense of self (Honneth, 1990). She discussed invisibility as a 'sign of the times' and did not take it personally:

> When you're standing on a train and there aren't any spare seats usually someone will rise to the occasion. Some of the young ones will have their nose in a book or their paper or their music and won't pay any attention to you, but that's a sign of the times. (Nicole)

Therefore, Nicole was self-confident despite her disability and age. Nicole's husband, Kieran, believed that frailty and ill health were usually the cause of ill treatment of older people:

> society reacts differently to people who are frail of in ill health than to older people who are still vigorous. … frail elderly people who are not in good health are marginalised and dismissed by society but I don't have anything to complain about because I'm treated well. I feel quite safe in public but I believe that frail elderly people are sometimes mistreated. (Kieran)

Therefore, Kieran felt that his wife was not being recognised due to her disability, although she did not report feeling this. He did not like the way she was treated, and he took it more personally than she did because he wanted her to be recognised and respected wherever she went.

Five other respondents also reported invisibility. Ken discussed invisibility 'as if the only real people are young people'. He felt that he was not recognised as a 'real' person. Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 132) discusses a lack of recognition as disrespect and social injustice:

the initial premise that the experience of a withdrawal of social recognition—of degradation and disrespect—must be at the center of a meaningful concept of socially caused suffering and injustice.

Ken did not feel that he experienced social injustice because his positive sense of self (Honneth, 1990) remained intact and he had good self-esteem. However, he sometimes felt invisible to society because he was no longer young.

Pamela discussed ageism and invisibility: 'I have the problem of people just assuming that I will accept the fact that they are saying "for your own health'''. She was forced to retire from a voluntary position at her church because she was considered too old for the position, and it was expressed as 'for your own health'. Further, she mentioned: 'I just said to her "excuse me I must tell you that I didn't see you and I didn't ignore you because we are not here to be ignored" and she thanked me for doing that'.

Pamela noted that she had been passed over as a volunteer in her church because of her age (which is an example of ageism). As a result of feeling invisible, she now tries to recognise (Honneth, 1990) the people she meets so she does not make anyone else feel invisible. Although Pamela did not like feeling invisible, she discussed the way she was treated, and because she had high self-esteem and a positive sense of self (Honneth, 1990), she clarified her belief that she was just as responsible in her relationships as the people she was relating to:

> Well I enjoy some of the way they do and I perhaps don't always enjoy some of the rest, but again I think you've got to have a balance, you've got to weigh it up and think well I can't blame their ignorance and I can't and you know I mustn't get too sure about my being right. (Pamela)

Pamela also discussed invisibility resulting from a lack of access to the Internet: 'I can't, I haven't got access to that, I can't do it that way, but I want to be part of life please'. She did not feel that her mind was clear or sharp enough to learn how to use a computer to access the Internet. Therefore, she felt that she was being passed over by larger institutions and the market because she could not access data the way that most people could. Pamela was very independent and did not want to rely on her children to provide her with Internet access. She wanted to be able to deal with her everyday affairs in a way that suited her, and still be recognised as part of society. She was attempting to keep her self-esteem intact in a world that appeared to be passing her by. Honneth's (1990, p. 189) theory of recognition is derived from the concept of intersubjectivity, which proposes that people have implicit knowledge, and that we owe our integrity and self-esteem to the approval and recognition of others. Honneth (1992, p. 189) states:

> Negative concepts of this kind are used to characterize a form of behaviour that does not represent an injustice solely because it constrains the subjects in their freedom for action or does them harm. Rather, such behaviour is injurious because it impairs these persons in their positive understanding of self—an understanding acquired by intersubjective means.

Pamela had a positive sense of self; therefore, she could accept that she would be regarded as 'out of touch' with her contacts in institutions, shops and other public places. However, this did not affect her self-esteem or sense of self. Institutional disrespect is further discussed in Section 5 of this chapter.

Jane, who was frail and in ill health, described her treatment, especially from her daughter-in-law, as:

you're tended to be condescended to … once when I'd been shopping with my daughter-in-law, … the assistant and my daughter-in-law stood against the … counter talking about me the whole time … and when I came back with the socks I had bought, the shop assistant said 'oh well, at least she's got good taste anyway'. … And like the one that I told you, you know, where they speak as if you're not there. You're just not visible. (Jane)

This invisibility upset Jane, who wanted to be recognised and treated with dignity and respect by her family members. However, she felt that she was not recognised (Honneth, 1990), which was a significant issue for her. She added that, 'I don't think she ever wanted me anyway'.

Narelle also described general invisibility: 'We were treated differently thirty years ago because I was … more into society thirty years ago'. Narelle felt more isolated from society now that she was older. However, this may have been a symptom of her recent fall and subsequent illness. Narelle and her husband were actively involved in mentoring young Chinese people through their church. If the interview had taken place some months afterwards, she may have had a different view of her life and her position in society. However, this research was limited to one interview and was not longitudinal; therefore, determining whether the respondents feel differently as they grow older and/or suffer more ill health is outside the scope of this research. Future research could be longitudinal in nature and find out how and whether older people's attitudes change in relation to the respect they receive.

The invisibility experienced by some respondents in this study was also experienced by the protagonists in RED (2010), who were invisible to some of the younger agents in the CIA. However, the protagonists obtained recognition and respect from their intimate

relationships, and they retained a positive sense of self, as did the respondents in this study. Invisibility was also experienced by some of the older characters in The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) and The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) (see Chapters 2 and 3).

4. Infantilisation

Interestingly, when reporting the behaviours of their adult children, one respondent defined the behaviour as infantilisation, while the other did not. Brian and Kaitlyn both experienced some infantilisation from their daughters. However, Kaitlyn noticed it and Brian did not:

> both my daughters … complain about our calendar as always too full. 'You do too many things in the one day'. You know, sometimes we've got three things in one day and they say 'Ooh, you can't do that'. (Kaitlyn)

However, Brian said, 'I still enjoy life … with my friends, my family … they don't treat me any different to, as far as I can think back'. Brian's positive sense of self was not affected by the treatment he received from his daughters; instead, he obtained it from his relationships with his friends and his church affiliation and club memberships. Kaitlyn obtained her positive sense of self from her relationship with her daughters, friends, church affiliation and club memberships; therefore, she noticed that they were infantilising her.

Pamela discussed infantilisation:

> I think sometimes I'm treated, … as though they want to pat me on the head, a bit like 'poor dear' sort of thing and gosh I don't need to be patted on the head either. (Pamela)

Although Pamela experienced some health issues and difficulties, she was very independent, lived alone and took care of herself. She neither needed nor wanted to be treated like a small child, and she strongly objected to this treatment. Her family did not infantilise her because they understood her desire for independence. However, her church subjected her to this treatment 'for your own good', as the church leadership believed that they knew what was best for her. Although they thought they were helping her, she found it offensive and objectionable. It was a failure to recognise and respect her as an independent adult (Honneth, 1990).

Jane described disrespect and ageism as: 'People tend to treat you like a poor old soul, "Oh, poor old soul", you know'. She described being infantilised by her children and being dependent on them: 'in fact my son said to me "Mum shut your handbag every time you open it" because the money spills', 'So now I've got a drawer where I put all my business letters and let him [her son] do that'. She also described how her daughter-in-law got rid of her things and kept her jewellery when she moved:

> I had collected things and that and she just sent them all off … and she kept my jewellery … I think that it's … people think they know best … what's right for you and not giving you space to be yourself … People thinking they've got the right to take control of your life and tell you what's best for you … Actually, the one who took all my things, we're not really close … I don't think she ever wanted me anyway. (Jane)

Jane's attitude towards her family was different from that of most respondents, as she felt infantilised and said that her independence had been taken away from her. Jane acknowledged that she was having cognitive problems because she has 'had some

strokes, and it's partly to do with that', and she described her difficulty with her mental acuity as:

> it's as if there's strings hanging down, but I can't twist them together into a knot, into a chain, sort of thing. … And the other thing is, I have difficulty making myself do things any more, my room hasn't been dusted since I moved in there …', also 'you can't rely on yourself, you check up on yourself all the time, and … you check the calculations. People tend to treat you as a poor old soul. (Jane)

However, despite her cognitive and health difficulties, Jane believed that she was capable of making her own decisions, and she resented being infantilised, particularly by her daughter-in-law. She believed that it might have been different if she had had daughters instead of sons, but she was not certain about this:

> And lots of other people have said the same, even daughters … and I think this happens a lot with old people; everybody can tell them what they should do. (Jane)

Jane felt shocked and ill-treated as a result of her jewellery being taken. Jane's daughter-in-law probably did not believe that she had stolen Jane's jewellery, but that she was keeping it safe so no one else could steal it. However, from Jane's perspective, it had been taken against her will and was therefore 'stolen'. Jane wanted to make her own decisions and be treated like a capable adult, even though she needed some help with her activities of daily living. She felt that her daughter-in-law did not recognise her, and that this treatment was unjust (Honneth, 1990).

5. Institutional Disrespect

Although the respondents reported that they had 'no problems with Centrelink' (the public institution that provides pensions and various benefits for retired Australian citizens), they did not discuss it in any detail. Most respondents did not have to deal with Centrelink on a regular basis, as they were either independent or receiving only partial benefits from the government. However, the *Age Discrimination Act 2004* is part of Australia's anti-discrimination policy (AHRC, 2015); therefore, older people in Australia have been recognised in the legal sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) since 2004.

Three of the respondents reported that insurance companies had discriminated against them due to their age. Kaitlyn discussed difficulties obtaining travel insurance for overseas trips:

> Even 70, some companies [insurance] won't touch you at 70. Then your premiums go up at 75 and then 80 that's another, like oooh, they really double [the premiums]. (Kaitlyn)

Kaitlyn felt that this treatment failed to recognise her as a healthy adult, and that it was unjust (Honneth, 1990). Brian said:

> Some [insurance companies] don't want to know you. Last time we went … we filled in the form and the chap checked 'Oh no I'm sorry'. Nothing on the form to say 'No we don't insure people over 70' … So … then we went to one company and they wanted … a phenomenal amount; and also the excess: now that was absolutely ridiculous, so I said 'No'. … If you get sick over there and then they've got the job of repatriating you, and I'm told they would rather

repatriate you than keep you in hospital over there and have treatment. Because

it is more expensive over there. (Kaitlyn)

Brian felt that insurance companies expected everyone aged 70 or over to be sick, and

that this was a failure to recognise older people appropriately. Therefore, it was a form

of social injustice (Honneth, 1990).

Pamela mentioned a 'whole of life' insurance policy that the insurance company

refused to pay after she turned 79. She fought them and threatened legal action until the

company decided to continue paying the benefit: 'I told them I wasn't going to die for

their convenience'. Insurance companies are:

> Large corporations, [that] are organised according to bureaucratic principles that
>
> are operationalized in the interests of maximising profits and minimising costs.
>
> (Parrish & Schofield, 2005, p. 43)

Insurance companies are large institutions that represent the market and try to make a

profit; therefore, according to their institutional logic, anyone who is likely to, or trying

to, make a claim represents a cost they do not want (Parrish & Schofield, 2005).

Insurance companies have relationship practices that show a lack of recognition to

anyone who may make a claim. Honneth (2014, p. 208) proposes that there is an

'institutionalised relation of mutual recognition, provided the relationship between

sellers and consumers contributes to the complementary realisation of each party's

legitimate interests'. Older people in the insurance market in particular, but also in other

markets, are regarded as liabilities and therefore not granted recognition (Honneth,

2014; Parrish & Schofield, 2005). Thus, they suffer degradation and disrespect (Fraser

& Honneth, 2003).

A number of respondents, including Nathan, Brian, Ken and Karen, felt that older people were invisible to the media. For example:

> The magazines and things like that are all oriented to the younger generation, you know the clothes, the film stars, everything. (Karen)

However, Narelle believed that older people were not invisible to the media, but were portrayed very badly:

> They have them acting out as if they are silly, in any sort of movie or something, and they become the object of laughter. (Narelle)

The media was not regarded as having much influence over the way respondents were treated; at best, the respondents felt invisible, and at worst, the media stereotypes of older age were regarded as deriding older people. The respondents felt that the media had to change.

Karen also discussed being invisible to the Australian Government:

> I find the government never seems to consider us older people very much. It's all the money for the people with young children going to school … but you know they don't consider that we are all being brought down by the financial situation, decreasing interest rates... and … we don't seem to really be considered. (Karen)

Australian Government policies for older people have focused on reducing the costs to the government of the ageing population rather than proactively seeking to enhance the lives of older people:

The focus of successive governments has been on strategies that, while they have intrinsic merit, are primarily designed to reduce the cost to government of the ageing population. Three areas have attracted the attention of governments—keeping older people in the workforce, promoting healthy ageing and reforming the aged care system. According to the Law Reform Commission with respect to keeping older people employed, the Government's overarching objective is to keep people in work, and paying taxes, longer—rather than being on the old age pension. Arguably healthy ageing keeps older people out of hospitals and aged care reform, as expressed in *Living Better Living Longer 2012*, is as at least as much about sharing the cost of care with consumers as it is about increasing choice and improving quality. (AASW, 2013)

Further, Australian Government policies for older people are set within the context of Honneth's (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) second sphere of recognition: law. Honneth's theory suggests that in the distribution of recognition within an institution, those who seek to gain any type of material benefit (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, pp. 138–141) are subjected to degradation, disrespect or a lack of recognition (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 132). The degradation and disrespect of people dealing with the core institutions of the state are an intrinsic part of those core institutions. Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 133) states:

> What those affected regard as 'unjust' are institutional rules or measures they see as necessarily violating what they consider to be well-founded claims to social recognition.

Therefore, older people will suffer from lack of recognition, which leads to degradation and disrespect when dealing with government and core institutions of the state.

Therefore, Karen's feeling of being invisible to the Australian Government resulted from the government wanting to reduce the liability of costs from the older population. However, the *Age Discrimination Act 2004* is part of Australia's anti-discrimination policy (AHRC, 2015); therefore, older people in Australia have been recognised in the legal sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) since 2004. The *Age Discrimination Act 2004* also makes it illegal to discriminate against someone in the workplace due to his or her age (AHRC, 2015), and coupled with recognition of older people through pensions and superannuation (Workplace Info, 2015), this means that older people in Australia are recognised in the work or achievement sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003; see Chapter 1).

Narelle described invisibility and ageist treatment in a recent trip to the hospital (a core institution of the state), where she received:

> too little compassion from the nurses and you had to wait for a pan for at least … a couple of hours … they don't necessarily know what's wrong with you, you've got to tell them and you've got to tell them what you need to have done. (Narelle)

Narelle felt that the treatment she received was due to her age, as younger people were receiving better care. However, she also felt that care in hospitals had generally decreased in quality in the past ten years.

As discussed and outlined in Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis, the protagonists in The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) received recognition by the core institutions of the state in India, but not in Britain (which is the representative country of Western society). The protagonist in The Holiday (2006) received recognition from the Academy of Film, and the older characters in The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) were recognised by institutions, but not when the Nazis took over. However, in RED (2010),

the protagonists experienced a lack of recognition, and thereby disrespect and degradation, by the core institutions of the state. Therefore, the older protagonists and characters in the movies chosen for analysis had similar experiences to the respondents in this study. Some recognition occurred at the institutional level, but the respondents mostly experienced a lack of recognition. Further research into institutional disrespect of older people is recommended to determine whether the general population of older people in Australia has similar experiences.

6. Active Ageing

The respondents also discussed volunteer work, work, contributing to society, positive ageing, active ageing, memberships in clubs and churches, and lifestyle and quality of life. They felt that active and healthy older people were respected by society, but that older people who suffered from ill health, age-related disease or disability suffered from disrespectful treatment and a lack of recognition. However, this was part of their overall acceptance of active ageing discourse, as older people who work and engage in physical activity and exercise are deemed to be ageing 'successfully'. This means that older people who choose to rest and relax rather than work or engage in exercise, or who suffer from health problems, are regarded as ageing 'unsuccessfully' and are therefore 'failures'. This discourse suggests that policy makers and researchers know what is best for older people rather than the older people themselves. This represents infantilisation of older people, which is a form of a lack of recognition.

For example, Karen believed that disability and ill health would cause problems for older people, and that they would feel unrecognised by society and therefore disrespected (Honneth, 1990). However, because she was healthy and able to get around, she was treated well:

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> I think that as you get older, if you become immobile and can't get about much then you are probably much more isolated and probably feel a bit ignored by society. (Karen)

Karen appreciated being healthy and felt that her good health was one of the reasons she could claim to not be an 'older person'; therefore, she accepted active ageing discourse.

Ken discussed ill health and disability as a possible trigger for discrimination: 'I'm a fairly big and strong, and fit guy, so nobody hassles me … but if I were frail maybe that might be different'.

Kieran suggested that society:

> dismisses the elderly who appear to be frail or ill but if you're vigorous you're still treated with respect and like you're a person with something to contribute. (Karen)

The belief that disability and ill health meant an automatic lack of recognition was part of an acceptance of active ageing discourse. Although the respondents did not like this aspect of the discourse, they believed that active ageing was a normative way of life, and that accepting the outcomes they did not like was therefore a necessary evil.

Active ageing and the concepts of achievement, competitiveness and productivity are a means of 'othering' people with illness and disability regardless of age, gender and race. Further, they propose that illness and disability are the result of the failure of the person to take care of themselves and their health. For example, Kathleen and Jane felt that they were blamed and held responsible for their health issues. They accepted this responsibility even though their ill health was not their fault. For example, Jane said:

'But on the other hand, there are days where I can't just get myself up and go. … but that's lazy of me'. I was unable to explore these feelings of blame and responsibility due to the constraints of the balance between taking care not to cause harm and the right to be involved in the research. Therefore, I respected Jane's decision not to discuss the matter any further.

Although it is possible that active ageing discourse is not aimed at older people who find it difficult to be active, all the respondents felt that they were expected to be active, including those suffering from health or mobility issues. For example, Jane had a stroke and found it difficult to move around, but she felt that she should walk to her local café and through the garden next door to her nursing home because she did not want to be regarded as a 'failure'. She also discussed being 'actively engaged' in life:

> I think it's important to keep your interests. I've always believed in the environment. … I came home one day and it was so hot, and the poor old birds were gasping everywhere, so I went and rang up the council and told them about the birds and I said 'If I gave you a bird bath, would you put it in the garden?' They told me 'Well, actually we're going to put a pond in the garden because we're turning it into a community garden'. So, I heard that before anybody else. It's good if you can keep yourself interested in other people and in what's going on round about you. (Jane)

Further, Narelle, who had recently broken her back and spent some time in hospital, felt that she should not be resting, even though her medical professionals had told her to rest:

although we do have a very busy life. I'm supposed not to be, um, I've broken my back and I'm not supposed to be bending or twisting, and I'm not doing anything. Well for me it's like taking my hands and my feet away. (Narelle)

None of the respondents talked about resting and enjoying retirement, including those who suffered from health issues. All the respondents believed that they had to speak about being active and working in some way (e.g., volunteer work). As previously discussed, Pamela had recently been forced to give up her volunteer work at her church, and she had been replaced by someone she felt was not as appropriate as her. She felt resentful but was trying to forgive the people who had forced her out:

This is how it was put to me:

'… I think you should pass over the job you are doing here at the church to the secretary, she can do what you're doing'. Now, she is not a member of the church, … she doesn't know sometimes what she's just pushing aside, and I had been doing that job for years and years … and I know I was doing a good job. So, but you know, in part of our service we say 'forgive us, as we want to be forgiven and let us forgive the people who have hurt us'. So, the very next morning after somebody came to me and gave me that story that they were going to just replace me, I thought I can't sit here in this service, unless I go to that person and say 'I was hurt yesterday, but, I am sitting here telling, or standing here telling you that I have forgiven you', because that's important to me, to know that I have said that. (Pamela)

Pamela felt that it was important to keep working in her volunteer capacity. She did not like having her work forcibly removed from her because she felt diminished, disrespected and unrecognised (Honneth, 1995).

Most of the respondents were involved in volunteer work of some description, and it was also raised as part of memberships in clubs or churches. The respondents believed that they contributed to society through their volunteer work, and that this was part of the reason why they received recognition and respect (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). They accepted the active ageing paradigm that as long as they worked and stayed active, fit and healthy, they could still have the same status and be regarded in the same way as those who were in mid-life. This acceptance of the active ageing paradigm is interesting and fits in with Honneth's (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 140) thoughts on the moral value of work: 'emerged as a leading cultural idea under the influence of the religious valorisation of paid work'. It also suggests that older people feel that they must denigrate leisure and rest and participate in work to receive recognition and respect (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). The respondents were 'Linking successful ageing to health, independence and productivity' without understanding that this has 'discriminatory effects on those who do not meet these criteria' (van Dyk, 2014, p. 96). Older people accept active ageing policies and believe that those who suffer from ill health have not been responsible adults. However, this does not mean that active ageing policies are positive for older people, or that those who choose to rest and relax, or who suffer from age-related illness or disability, are failures or in some way responsible for their ill health.

Despite the voluntary nature of active ageing as expressed by the participants, criticisms and doubts about the policy are both fruitful and necessary (van Dyk, 2014, p. 96).

Active ageing policy brands older people who suffer from ill health or disability as 'failures' because they cannot work in the same way that healthier individuals can. Further, they are considered 'irresponsible' because they 'have not kept themselves healthy'. However, older people should not be forced into doing things they do not want to do. Active ageing policy assumes that age-related illness and other illnesses are avoidable through 'healthy lifestyles', but this is a medical myth. Active ageing policy is 'effectively delegitimizing … physical and mental immobility' (van Dyk, Lessenich, Denninger & Richter, 2013, p. 102). Therefore, it is a form of symbolic violence, as the older agents taking part cannot see beyond their situated context that the policy discriminates against people who are voluntarily resting and partaking in leisure activities instead of working and physically engaging in exercise.

Participants who voluntarily participated in active ageing also regarded themselves as 'not being old' and as 'helping out the oldies' with their volunteer work. For example, respondents who were in their seventies and who volunteered to work for Easy Care Gardening Berowra were doing so 'to help out the oldies'. Therefore, they accepted the ageist myth that mid-life is 'ageless', and that older age is in some way 'wrong' or at least displeasing to society. van Dyk (2014, p. 96) discussed the breakdown of negative stereotypes that 'liberate' older people from the model of older age that depicts them as passive and debilitated. She suggested that this attack 'subtly coerces old people to retain the ideals' (van Dyk, 2014, p. 96) of mid-life. van Dyk et al. (2013, p. 100) propose that people 'are themselves active instances of discourse production'; therefore, the respondents who engaged in voluntary work to stay active and engaged in society were part of the discourse around active ageing, and therefore part of the symbolic violence caused by the discourse. Further, the expectation that active ageing would automatically include older people in the mid-life group fails to recognise older people

and their level of ability. Older people are expected to exhibit the same level of ability as mid-life people to achieve recognition and respect. For example, Kieran accepted active ageing discourse and said:

> society reacts differently to people who are frail or in ill health than to older people who are still vigorous. I'm still active and I'm treated with respect wherever I go. … frail elderly people who are not in good health are marginalised and dismissed by society, but I can't complain because I am treated generally pretty well. I keep in touch with the young people because I volunteer in church to help out with Kids' Games during the school holidays. … I can make a contribution and my age is not stopping me … but with sick, elderly people it is quite another story. … I'm accepted and respected by the children I meet at Kids' Games and a lot of young people swear today but they don't swear around me. (Kieran)

He concludes that 'if you're vigorous you're still treated with respect and like you're a person with something to contribute'.

Kieran was not simply extrapolating this from a theoretical viewpoint. His wife suffered from disability and mobility problems, and he saw this issue occur in her experiences, so he was grateful that he was still active and healthy, and thereby respected and recognised by his community.

Kaitlyn discussed being an active part of the Berowra community:

> we belong to various organisations here … I belong to the Garden Club. Been president, secretary, whatever, over the years. I've belonged to it for about 40

years, and … we belong to Probus, we're involved there, aren't we? And the

church in various committees, and running things and we're involved. (Kaitlyn)

Kaitlyn's husband, Brian, also discussed their involvement with the community:

> I've been vice president and president of Probus Berowra; I'm currently the tour
>
> director. I organise tours to various sites. I've been on the committee and vice
>
> president, president of the Berowra Gardening Society. I've been leader of our
>
> seniors' group … at St Marks [Church]. (Brian)

Kaitlyn and Brian felt that the respect and recognition they received within their local

community was linked to their active ageing lifestyle, and they were busy with several

different volunteer jobs. Although the Garden Club could be viewed as a leisure

activity, their intense involvement in working for, and leading, the club turned it into

work rather than leisure. They regarded this positively because it provided them with

recognition in the work sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). The recognition and respect

were important to them; therefore, their discussions were about working rather than rest

and leisure.

Volunteer work was also an important part of Barry's feelings of being recognised and

respected by society. Barry and his wife, Narelle, volunteered to mentor and pastor

people, which he viewed as helping to make people's lives better. He believed that he

received recognition and respect from the people he was helping as a result of his

contribution:

> One of the things we do is, Narelle is seventy-four and I'm seventy-five, and a
>
> couple of years ago we were asked to mentor and pastor fifty Chinese young
>
> people. They were, most of them, born in Sydney, but some of them were born

in Hong Kong, a few in mainland China and we get great respect from these

young people from fourteen years to thirty. (Barry)

Barry also believed that his volunteer work contributed to society, and that he received

respect and recognition from the work sphere. He reported that he had lost jobs in the

past for behaving according to his religious beliefs, and that he had been treated

disrespectfully, with the work sphere failing to recognise him because of his religion.

Therefore, gaining recognition and respect in the work sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003)

for pastoring and mentoring was very important to him.

Ken discussed his volunteer work in the Aboriginal community in the Redfern area:

> So … we hope to … assist in the finding of Aboriginal vocabularies which will
>
> help understand Aboriginal languages. … Aboriginal languages aren't too well
>
> spoken round this area any more. In fact, of the 250 Aboriginal languages, or
>
> thereabouts, only about twenty are still spoken in the country which is rather a
>
> great loss. (Ken)

Ken believed that he was making an important contribution to Australian society

through his work with Aboriginal languages. As a retired, middle-class male, he

believed that his work was important and that it provided him with respect and

recognition both within the Aboriginal community and within Australian society as a

whole. He accepted and believed in active ageing discourse and felt that he was a 'fairly

big and strong and fit guy'. Therefore, being healthy and vigorous and contributing to

society by working with Aboriginal languages not only gave him recognition and

respect, but it made a difference to how he was treated.

However, Naomi discussed volunteer work from a different perspective:

> there are some people in their mid-80s who are doing terrific volunteering work in the community in some of the things that I'm involved in … They take their place on the roster, … they've got to do exactly the same job, nobody … says … we'll come and help you, you can't manage on your own … they're not getting credit for that. (Naomi)

Naomi viewed volunteering as active engagement in society and did not believe that older age precluded anyone from contributing to society. However, she believed that because the contribution is unpaid, it is not considered valid, and that people who undertook volunteer work were not valued and did not receive the recognition and respect received by people who were paid to perform the same work. Honneth (Fraser & Honneth, 2003, pp. 141–142) discusses the intermeshing of recognition and paid work:

> The hegemonic, thoroughly one-sided valuation of achievement rather represents an institutional framework in which the criteria or principles for distributing resources in bourgeois-capitalist society can meet with normative agreement. This additional consideration gives rise to what Richard Munch has rightly called the intermeshing of payment and respect in the capitalist economic sphere.

This has been noted and discussed in Chapter 1. There is a status and hierarchy (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) associated with achievement in the work sphere, and this status is based on the normative view of the middle-class, mid-life male (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Naomi did not fit this stereotype; therefore, she felt that her work was undervalued.

Karen did not talk about volunteering specifically, but she discussed being physically active (which is an important part of the active ageing paradigm) and socially engaged, and she viewed this as having a positive effect on her life:

> We are close to the bush for bush walking and lots of us get together … but only some people avail themselves of what is going on. It's sad when they come into a village like this when they have all the activities going on … when I came here I thought I'm not of an age where I'm making many friends, but I've been surprised by how many friends I've made since coming here. That's good. Most of the friends I've made are in my age bracket. (Karen)

Being healthy and physically active was important to Karen, and it helped her to believe that she was not an older person, but that people who were 'in their eighties' could be classified as older people. Karen's activities and participation in various events enabled her to feel part of society:

> I still feel like I'm a member of society. I don't feel cut off from things that are going on around me. I still go out and socialise, I travel and I'm interested in computers … I'm trying to keep up with what's going on … I don't feel cut off from society. (Karen)

Active ageing and being physically active and therefore 'healthy' were an important part of Karen's feeling of being recognised, and therefore respected, by society (Honneth, 1990).

Georgia did not discuss volunteering for organisations or belonging to a club or a church, but she talked about volunteering to help less able-bodied friends, and she felt that this kept her actively involved in life:

I'm just grateful I can drive to the shops and take my friends shopping. I do take

friends who are younger but slightly disabled and have walking frames. I do find

the walking frame a bit of a thing. I never hesitate to ask a young person to help

and they are delighted to help and I've never found anyone that has not helped.

(Georgia)

Georgia felt that she made a positive contribution to her village and the lives of her friends, and that she received recognition and respect for the help she provided. As a result, she felt that she was not 'as old as' her friends who were younger than her and for whom she provides the help. Georgia believed that 'old' was a relative term that did not apply to her because she was in good health and was actively involved in contributing to her village. Georgia embraced active ageing discourse because it enabled her to hold a view of herself as being younger than less healthy people, and as having 'aged successfully'. She had a sense of achievement in having aged healthily, and this gave her a sense that she was recognised and respected by society.

7. Positive Engagement with Life versus Active Ageing

All the respondents had bought into active ageing discourse, including those who were suffering from ill health, disability or mobility problems. The respondents with health problems felt that they were blamed for their health problems because they had not been active enough when they were younger. All the respondents talked about being involved in 'work' in some way—even those who should have been resting and recuperating from health conditions. No one was willing to talk about resting and relaxing and enjoying leisure activities.

Active ageing discusses 'successful' ageing, which suggests that there is an 'unsuccessful' way to age. Pamela summarised the respondents' attitudes towards those

who suffered from health and mobility problems: 'I can't do it that way, but I want to be part of life please'. All the respondents wanted to be recognised as being positively engaged in life, and they had to create their own 'active ageing' paradigms.

However, I recommend changing the discourse to 'a positive engagement in life', 'positive ageing' or 'engagement with life throughout the life course'. This would remove blame and the fear of being regarded as a 'failure' at ageing. Further, discourse around 'positive engagement with life' would give older people the choice to rest and relax or to engage in exercise and work. Discourse about 'a positive engagement with life' would allow older people to exercise autonomy and agency, and it would recognise them as participating in life.

8. Conclusion

The interviews with the respondents were one-off interviews that occurred at a specific time in their life. Further research could be undertaken in the form of a longitudinal study, which would provide more information about how respondents are treated by society when they are not suffering from health-related problems, and how growing older and becoming less healthy influences their feelings of being respected. Further, as a qualitative study, the number of participants in this study was limited, and the demographics of the participants were very similar.

This chapter argued that all the respondents accepted active ageing discourse and policy as the 'successful' way to age, and that people who choose to rest and relax, or who suffer from ill health or disability, are therefore 'failures'. The respondents who suffered from ill health or disability felt that they were blamed for their poor health, and that they had to discuss their work and how active they were. The respondents also believed that older people who suffered from ill health or mobility problems were not

recognised or respected. It was therefore argued that active ageing is a form of symbolic violence against older people. Thus, I recommended changing the discourse to 'a positive engagement with life'.

Although all the respondents (except one) reported that they felt respected by their family and friends, there were also many reports of disrespectful and ageist treatment, as well as infantilisation. The people who were in good health reported few incidents, while those who experienced ill health and related difficulties reported the majority of incidents of disrespectful treatment.

Most of the respondents were involved in volunteer work of some description, or they held memberships in clubs or churches. The respondents believed that they contributed to society through their volunteer work, and that this was part of the reason why they received respect within their intimate spheres and from the meso level of society. It was argued that they bought into the idea that if they stayed active, fit and healthy, they could have the same status and be regarded in the same way as those who were in mid-life. Further, they were 'Linking successful ageing to health, independence and productivity' without understanding that it has 'discriminatory effects on those who do not meet these criteria' (van Dyk, 2014, p. 96). Older people accepted active ageing policies and believed that those who suffered from ill health had not been responsible adults. However, this does not mean that active ageing policy is positive for older people, or that those who suffer from age-related illness or disability are failures or responsible for their ill health. Further, active ageing policy denies older people the right to enjoy their retirement through rest and leisure, and the respondents used the same kind of discourse about their own lives.

I recommend changing the discourse from 'active ageing' to 'a positive engagement in life', 'positive ageing' or 'engagement with life throughout the life course'. This would remove blame and the fear of being regarded as a 'failure' at ageing. Further, discourse around 'positive engagement with life' would give older people a choice to rest and relax or engage in exercise and work. Discourse about 'a positive engagement with life' would allow older people to exercise autonomy and agency, and it would recognise their participation in life.

Conclusion

> Without a doubt the 21st Century will see a revolution in terms of the
> relationship between older people and other age groups and the way society
> views the status and position of older people. Why is this? Older people are
> devalued and discriminated against. They will not tolerate this treatment for
> much longer, especially given that they are growing in numbers and have the
> potential to be an influential activist group. (Minichiello & Coulson, 2005, p. 1)

Since the twentieth century, the relationship between older people and other age groups
has changed, as has the way that society views the status and position of older people.
The relationships reported by the respondents in this study were based on mutual
recognition (Honneth, 1990). However, the results showed that the active ageing
discourse discriminates against older people.

Although the literature highlights ageism as a problem that is experienced by older
people (e.g., AHRC, 2013; Biggs, 1993; Butler, 1969; Featherstone, 1982; Hockey &
James, 1993; Palmore, 1999; Powell, 2001; Powell & Longino, 2001; Walker, 2009;
Wilkinson & Ferraro, 2004), the respondents in this study did not feel that they
experienced ageism. This was because their positive sense of self was high due to
recognition in intimate, work and legal spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) which relate
to micro, meso and macro levels of society, and they did not take misrecognition
personally. Further, they did not have to contend with ageist attitudes, although they
believed that other older people may experience these problems. In contrast, some of
the protagonists in The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), RED (2010) and The Grand
Budapest Hotel (2014) experienced ageism. The literature also discusses abuse of older
people, finding that 6% of older Australians have suffered some form of egregious

abuse, and that older people in other countries also suffer from egregious abuse (e.g., Kurrle & Naughtin, 2008; Kurrle et al., 1997; Sadler, 1992; Sung et al., 2010; WHO/IPNEA, 2002). However, the respondents in this study did not experience this kind of issue. The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) suggested that one of the protagonists was being abused, but none of the other films alluded to abuse. Although Minichiello and Coulson (2005) suggest that older people may become an influential activist group, the respondents in this study did not see a need to form an activist group because they felt they were receiving recognition from intimate (micro level), work (meso level) and legal (macro level) spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003).

Figure 1 Occurrences of codes in interviews (N=14)

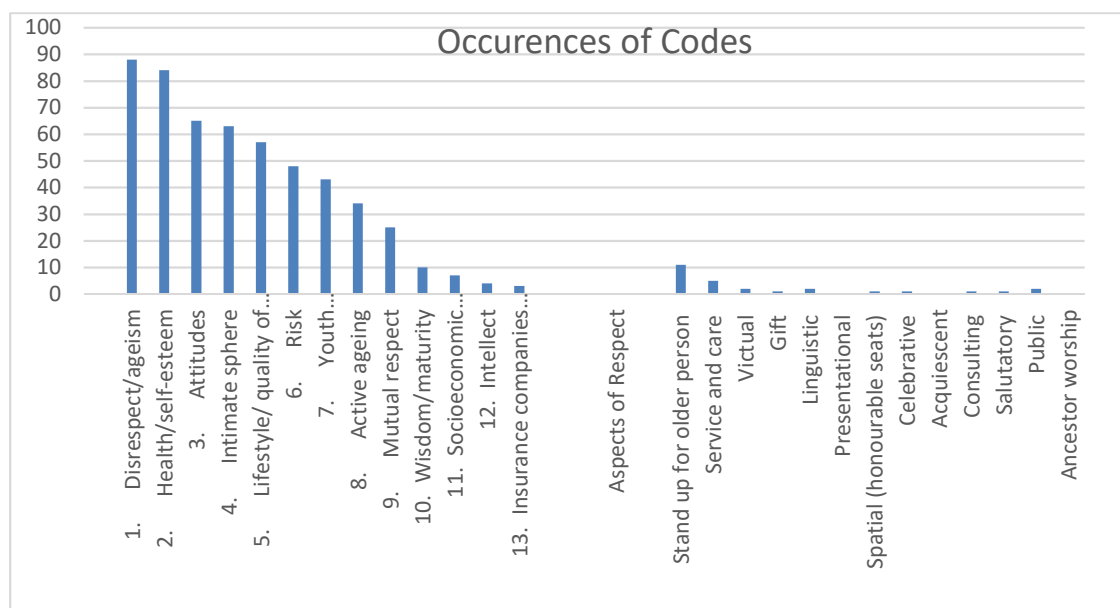Figure 1 provides a view of the codes collected and analysed from the interviews [N=14]. The main topic of discussion as respect or disrespect [88 occurrences] but many other themes emerged from the analysis of the interviews. For example, health and self-esteem [84 occurrences], people's attitudes towards their own lives and how they interact with other people [65 occurrences], the intimate spheres [this included a

discussion of families and friends and there were 63 occurrences] lifestyle and quality of life [57 occurrences] were important themes which indicated how the respondents felt they were being viewed and treated by society.

There appears to be a more respectful view of older people in popular culture than was the case in the twentieth century and the first few years of the twenty-first century. Although the five movies chosen as the sample for analysis is a fragment of a whole, it is useful for analysing the social issues experienced by older people. The protagonists' experiences were similar to those reported by the respondents in this study. For example, the respondents obtain a positive sense of self through recognition in their intimate relationships (Fraser & Honneth, 2003), the work sphere (especially around active ageing) and at the meso level of society. The respondents also reported experiences of invisibility and discussed active ageing in depth, and this is reflected in the movies.

The movies showed that older people should receive respect. However, some of the movies vigorously support the active ageing paradigm and, again, this is regarded as misrecognition of older people because respect should not be regarded as being earned by working (Honneth, 1990). If respectful relationships are only derived from work, then people who are unable or unwilling to participate in work would not be deemed worthy of respect. Honneth (1995) defines respect as simply recognising another person as a human being.

All five movies portray active ageing, and RED (2010), The Holiday (2006) and The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) espouse this paradigm as the only appropriate way to age successfully. In contrast, The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) and The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) portray active ageing as one way among many to age

successfully. Both The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) and The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) suggest that older people can be positively engaged in their lives in whatever way they desire. This is a much more positive view of ageing because it does not suggest that 'successful' ageing depends on particular behaviours and that those who do not engage with those behaviours are therefore 'unsuccessful'.

Although the movies present active ageing as benign and positive for older people, the discourse suggests that older people who choose to rest and relax, or who have health-related difficulties, are not ageing successfully and are thereby failures. The Holiday (2006) portrays the older protagonist as having caused his own health problems by not engaging in exercise. The protagonist is infantilised when he needs the younger protagonist, Iris, to make important decisions (including health decisions) for him. The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) also portrays and supports the active ageing paradigm. The movie shows that older people who do not engage in work are not 'worthy' of respect. However, according to Honneth's (1990) theory of recognition, recognition is not about the individual being 'worthy' of recognition; rather, recognition of a person should be normative. Therefore, active ageing, which fails to recognise older people who choose to rest and relax, is ageist, and although it appears to be positive for older people, it is far from benign.

All five films portray and strongly critique varying forms of disrespectful treatment of older people, and they propose that disrespect of older people is a societal norm that needs to be analysed and addressed through better treatment of older people. RED (2010) and The Holiday (2006) suggest that it is acceptable to replace respect with affectionate disrespect, while The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012), The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) and The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) portray respectful

treatment of older people through recognition (Honneth, 1990) as the appropriate societal norm. The films show that older people's positive sense of self can be seriously affected and diminished by disrespectful treatment (Honneth, 1990). Further, The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) shows that there can be a breakdown in personality as a result of disrespectful treatment from people in the older person's family (Honneth, 1990). The respondents in this study did not experience this kind of abuse.

All the films, except The Holiday (2006), show that the core institutions of the state (only in Britain in The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel, 2012) fail to recognise older people. However, The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (2012) and The Holiday (2006) show that the older protagonists receive recognition from the legal sphere (core institutions of the state), the work/achievement sphere and the intimate spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) and thus the micro, meso and macro levels of society. Further, the interplay of recognition from all three spheres gives them high self-esteem and a positive sense of self (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). RED (2010) shows that the protagonists do not receive recognition from the legal sphere, but they receive recognition from their intimate and achievement spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003); therefore, their positive sense of self is intact. The respondents in this study felt they received recognition in all three spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) and therefore at micro, meso and macro levels of society.

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) explores respect and older people, and it deconstructs stereotypes of older people in depth. It shows the older people and their relationships within their intimate and work spheres, and how recognition from these two spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) helps them maintain a positive sense of self. There is a mutual lack of recognition between the dwarves and the council in the legal sphere, but this does not cause any harm, as each side can see the other's viewpoint, and

they receive recognition from their intimate (love) and work/achievement spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). For the dwarves, being recognised in the two spheres outweighs the negative effect of the lack of recognition in the legal sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014) conveys the concept that older people and people with a disability suffer intensely from invisibility (Sennett, 2003), which is lack of recognition (Honneth, 1990). Further, some of the respondents, especially those suffering from a disability, reported invisibility; one from her intimate sphere or micro level of society.

This study found that the respondents experience recognition in their intimate spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) or micro level of society and at the meso level of society (related to Honneth's work sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003)). In Australia, the *Age Discrimination Act 2004* is part of Australia's anti-discrimination policy (AHRC, 2015); thus, older people in Australia have been recognised in the legal sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) or macro level since 2004. The *Age Discrimination Act 2004* makes it illegal to discriminate against someone in the workplace due to his or her age (AHRC, 2015), and coupled with recognition of older people through pensions and superannuation (Workplace Info, 2015), this means that older people in Australia are recognised in the work or achievement sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Thus, through legislation, Australia recognises older people in both the legal and work/achievement spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). The respondents felt that they were recognised in their intimate spheres; therefore, they did not feel that they experienced social injustice (Honneth, 1990), although they believed that other older people might have different experiences. All the respondents (except one) reported that they felt respected by their family and friends; however, there were some reports of disrespectful and ageist treatment, as well as infantilisation. The respondents who reported disrespect mainly

put it down to the individual's poor behaviour or 'bad day', or because the disrespectful person was suffering from information overload due to their positive sense of self acquired through recognition in all three spheres (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Older people who were in good health reported few incidents, while those who were experiencing ill health and related difficulties reported the majority of incidents of disrespectful treatment.

The respondents felt that they were vital and productive members of society, and they felt recognised and respected. Most respondents contributed to society as members of volunteer groups and clubs, and all the respondents discussed the activities they were engaged in that contributed positively to other people and/or the environment. They linked this activity with the recognition they received. By discussing volunteer work in this way, the respondents showed that they contributed through the work/achievement sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003), including the respondent who was in a nursing home. However, older people should be allowed to rest and relax if that is their choice. It was argued that the respondents all believed that active ageing discourse was an important part of their experience of growing older. They strongly believed that if they participated in active ageing, they could self-stereotype as being in mid-life (including the 92-year-old respondent). The respondents also believed that older people who suffered from ill health or mobility problems were not recognised or respected, and that they were 'Linking successful ageing to health, independence and productivity' without understanding that it has 'discriminatory effects on those who do not meet these criteria' (van Dyk, 2014, p. 96). Further, older people who chose to rest and relax felt shamed and blamed for being inactive, and they felt that they were blamed for any health issues they experienced. It was therefore argued that active ageing is a form of symbolic violence against older people. I recommend changing the discourse to 'a

positive engagement with life'. Policy makers and researchers believe that it is best for older people to continue to work and engage with exercise. However, this lack of recognition of older people's autonomy and agency, as well as their ability to make appropriate choices for themselves, infantilises them.

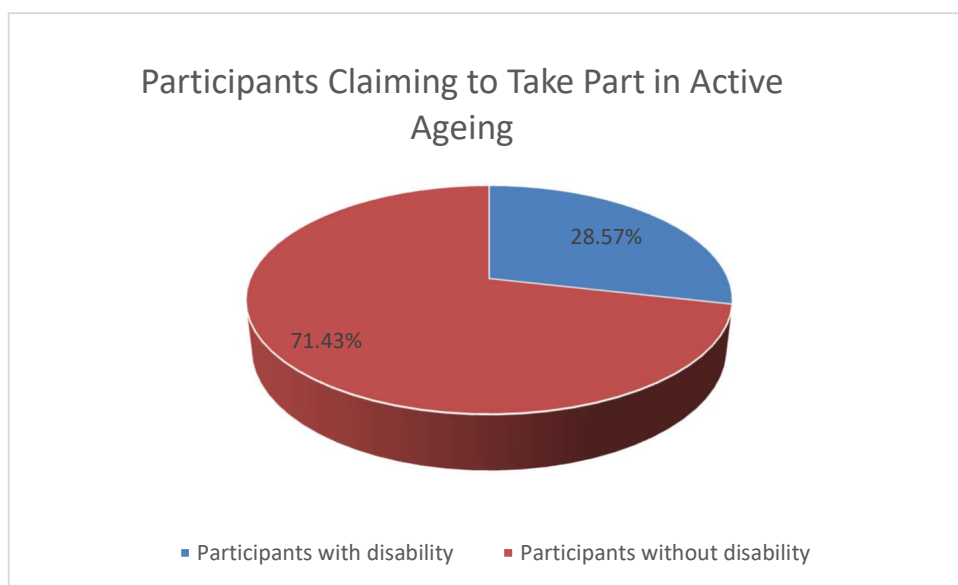**Figure 2** Participants Claiming to Take Part in Active Ageing by disability status

Figure 2 shows that all participants, including those with a disability or ill health reported taking part in active ageing (four participants experienced disability or ill health, ten participants self-reported as healthy).

Figure 3 Active Ageing as correlated with feelings of shame and blame for ill health among participants who reported disability or ill health
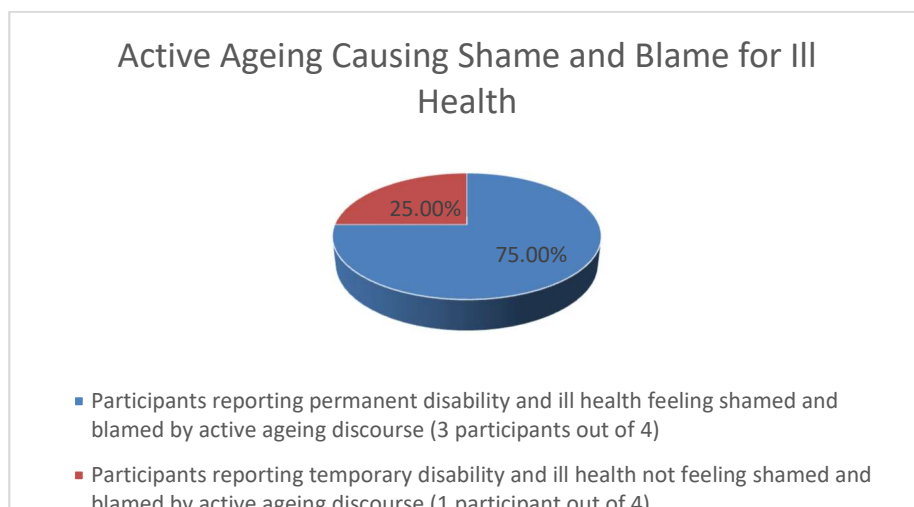
Figure 3 only includes the participants who reported disability or ill health. It shows that 75% [n=3] of the respondents reporting disability and ill health [n=4 & 28.57% of total N=14] also felt that they were blamed for their ill health and they felt shamed by active ageing discourse. The 25% [n=1] of respondents who did not feel shamed and blamed were not permanently disabled but had suffered temporary disability.

The discourse about active ageing is 'attaining widespread influence in official, professional and popular discourses' (Minichiello et al., 2005, p. 25), and the WHO is starting to emphasise prevention of disease as opposed to disability (Minichiello et al., 2005). However, I recommend changing the discourse to 'a positive engagement in life', 'positive ageing' or 'engagement with life throughout the life course'. This would remove blame and the fear of being regarded as a 'failure' at ageing. Further, discourse around 'positive engagement with life' would give older people the choice to rest and relax or engage in exercise or work. Discourse about 'a positive engagement with life' would allow older people to exercise autonomy and agency, and would thereby recognise them as participating in life.

The interviews with the respondents were one-off interviews that took place at a specific time in their life. Further, as a qualitative study, the number of participants was limited, and the demographics of the participants were very similar. Further research could be undertaken in the form of a longitudinal study, which could provide more information about how the respondents feel they are treated by society when they are not suffering from health-related problems, and how growing older and becoming less healthy influences their feelings of being respected. Further, research into institutional disrespect of older people is recommended to determine whether the general population of older people in Australia have similar experiences to the respondents in this study, and whether the findings of this study apply to the general population of older people.

While encouraging older people to work and exercise may be beneficial, it is also important to recognise their autonomy and agency. Discussing 'successful' ageing alludes to the concept of 'unsuccessful' ageing by association; therefore, researchers need to be aware that this can create blame and shame for people who are not being 'classified as successful'. Through interviews with older people and the analysis of films with older protagonists, this study found that older people in Australia experience recognition and respect in their intimate spheres (micro level) and at the meso level or work sphere of society (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). The study also found that older people in Australia experience recognition from the legal sphere (macro level) and the work or achievement sphere (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) due to anti-discrimination legislation (AHRC, 2015). However, this may not be the case in other parts of the world, as demonstrated in the analysis of the movies.

The participants in this study strongly believed in active ageing, and even those who suffered from health-related difficulties reported being involved in active ageing,

although they felt that they were blamed for their health problems. Further, the healthy respondents felt that they aged more 'successfully' than people who had health-related difficulties, and that because they were healthy they could not be regarded as older people. Therefore, active ageing was found to be a form of symbolic violence. Although active ageing appears to be a benign ageing discourse, it infantilises older people and shames those who choose to rest and relax, or who are unwell. Changing the discourse to 'a positive engagement in life', 'positive ageing' or 'engagement with life throughout the life course' would remove the blame and the fear of being regarded as a 'failure' at ageing.

Changing the discourse from active ageing to 'positive engagement with life' would give older people a choice to rest and relax or engage in exercise or work. This is new discourse and would require some changes to policies (AHRC, 2013) and to active ageing discourse. Discourse about 'a positive engagement with life' is a new concept which would allow older people to exercise autonomy and agency, and would thereby grant them appropriate recognition.

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Appendix: Ethics Clearance Letter

From: LYNETTE RYAN [mailto:lynette.ryan@students.mq.edu.au]
Sent: Monday, 10 March 2014 12:20 PM
To: lyn.ryan28@bigpond.com
Subject: Fwd: Approved- Ethics application- Ryan (Ref: 5201100930)

Application

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: **Ethics Secretariat** <ethics.secretariat@mq.edu.au>
Date: Thu, Apr 5, 2012 at 2:27 PM
Subject: Approved- Ethics application- Ryan (Ref: 5201100930)
To: A/Prof Michael Fine <michael.fine@mq.edu.au>
Cc: Ms Lynette Anne Ryan <lynette.ryan@students.mq.edu.au>

Dear A/Prof Fine

Re: 'Respect and elderly Australians: How does the media impact the respect elderly people receive in contemporary Australian society' (Ethics Ref: 5201100930)

Thank you for your recent correspondence. Your response has addressed the issues raised by the Human Research Ethics Committee and you may now commence your research.

The following personnel are authorised to conduct this research:

Chief Investigator- A/Prof Michael Fine
Co-Investigator- Ms Lynette Anne Ryan

NB. STUDENTS: IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP A COPY OF THIS APPROVAL EMAIL TO SUBMIT WITH YOUR THESIS.

Please note the following standard requirements of approval:

1.   The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).

2.   Approval will be for a period of five (5) years subject to the provision of annual reports. Your first progress report is due on 05 April 2013.

If you complete the work earlier than you had planned you must submit a Final Report as soon as the work is completed. If the project has been discontinued or not commenced for any reason, you are also required to submit a Final Report for the project.

Progress reports and Final Reports are available at the following website:

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics/forms

3.   If the project has run for more than five (5) years you cannot renew approval for the project. You will need to complete and submit a Final Report and submit a new application for the project. (The five year limit on renewal of approvals allows the Committee to fully re-review research in an environment where legislation, guidelines and requirements are continually changing, for example, new child protection and privacy laws).

4.   All amendments to the project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee before implementation. Please complete and submit a Request for Amendment Form available at the following website:

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics/forms

5.   Please notify the Committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or of any unforeseen events that affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project.

6.   At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the guidelines established by the University. This information is available at the following websites:

http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics/policy

If you will be applying for or have applied for internal or external funding for the above project it is your responsibility to provide the Macquarie University's Research Grants Management Assistant with a copy of this email as soon as possible. Internal and External funding agencies will not be informed that you have final approval for your project and funds will not be released until the Research Grants Management Assistant has received a copy of this email.

Please retain a copy of this email as this is your official notification of final ethics approval.

Yours sincerely
Dr Karolyn White
Director of Research Ethics
Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee

Appendix: Consent Form

Name of Project: **Respect and Elderly Australians: How does the media impact the respect elderly people receive in contemporary Australian society?**

You are invited to participate in a study of older Australians' experiences of respect in their daily lives.

The study is being conducted by Lynette Ryan to meet the requirements of the Doctor of Philosophy under the supervision of Dr Michael Fine, of the Department of Sociology, Macquarie University NSW 2109. (email: michael.fine@mq.edu.au, ph: 9850 8037).

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to have a conversation with Lynette Ryan about how you feel people who are older than sixty-five years old, such as yourself, are portrayed in the media and treated today. Lynette will use an audio recorder to record the conversation and will then transcribe the conversation later. We expect this conversation to last for approximately one hour. We can provide you with a copy of the transcription.

Any information or personal details gathered in the course of the study are confidential (except as required by law). No individual will be identified in any publication of the results. Only the researchers will have access to the data. A summary of the results of the study can be made available to you on request.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to participate and if you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without consequence.

Please provide your best email or postal address if you would like to receive a summary of the research findings.

If an interview results in distress this will be immediately reported to an appropriate person of your choosing or either all or at least one of the following persons: Julie Matthews, Minister Rev. Dr Douglas Purnell, and Pam Walker from Uniting Care.

I, _____ have read *(or, where appropriate, have had read to me)* and understand the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research, knowing that I can withdraw from further participation in the research at any time without consequence. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

Participant's Name:

(block letters)

Participant's Signature: _____ Date:

Investigator's Name: LYNETTE RYAN

(block letters)

Investigator's Signature: _____ Date:

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Director, Research Ethics (telephone (02) 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix: Interview Questions

The following questions are intended as *guiding prompts only* for conversation-style, semi-structured interviews.

1. Do you feel that the media depicts people over the age of 65 differently to the way they were depicted thirty years ago?

2. Do you feel that the media impacts the respect you receive from people in Government organisations or businesses or shops you contact?

3. Do you feel that the media impacts the respect you receive from people you come across in the street/park/shopping centres/public transport/ train stations/bus stops?

4. Do you feel that the media influences the way young people speak to you today?

5. Do you feel differently now from the way you felt thirty years ago?

6. What is different about the way you think today from the way you thought thirty years ago?

7. What do you feel are the differences between the way you are treated today and the way you were treated thirty years ago?

8. What kinds of language/ words are used by the people around you that make you feel you are regarded differently today from the way you were regarded thirty years ago?

9. How do you feel society treats you today?

10. How is that different from thirty years ago?

11. How do you feel you are regarded by your grandchildren and their friends?

12. What do you feel is different about how safe you feel when you are at the shops today from how you felt thirty years ago?

Appendix: Results of Interviews

Interviews and Coding

I produced provisional concepts that fit the data I had acquired (Strauss, 1987) and produced many codes that appeared to fit in with the interviews and the information that the older people wanted to convey. However, after a few weeks of coding and investigating codes as analytically as possible, I found that many of the original codes that had been produced were subsets of other codes and thus the number of codes was reduced. Table 1, below, shows the initial codes produced.

Coding Interviews

Table 1

1. Health	57
2. Life styles/ changes in life style	53
3. Attitudes/ helpful	50
4. Risk averse/ precautions/ safety/ Don't provoke/ avoid areas or people/ be aware	48
5. Intimate sphere	38
6. Youth culture/language	36
7. Respect/disrespect	32
8. Mutual respect	25
9. Volunteer work/Contribution/Work	19
10. Self-esteem/confidence/insecurity	18
11. Invisibility	17
12. Positive ageing/active ageing	15
13. No complaints/perspective	15
14. Dependence/independence	14
15. Friendships	13
16. Infantilisation	12
17. Ageism	11
18. Wisdom/maturity	10
19. Stand up for older person	9
a. Insult (older person)	1
b. embarrassment (younger person)	1
20. Body image	8

21. Faith/religion	8
22. Technology	7
23. Socioeconomic status	5
24. Quality of life	4
25. Memberships of clubs or churches	4
26. Intellect	4
27. Oddity/ Curio	2
28. Insurance companies	2
29. Sexism	2
30. Identity	1
Aspects of Respect	
Service and care	5
Victual	2
Gift	1
Linguistic	2
Presentational	
Spatial (honourable seats)	1
Celebrative	1
Acquiescent	
Consulting	1
Salutatory	1
Public	2
Ancestor worship	

Axial codes were checked against the individual interviews several times. Analysis of the codes and the number of times each code occurred was undertaken, only after the validity of the codes was assured by thorough checking and analysis.

The results are shown in the table 2 below:

Table 2: Merged Codes

Coding Interviews: Merged codes	
1. Disrespect/ageism	88
2. Health/self-esteem	84
3. Attitudes	65
4. Intimate sphere	63
5. Lifestyle/ quality of life	57
6. Risk	48
7. Youth culture/technology	43
8. Active ageing	34
9. Mutual respect	25
10. Wisdom/maturity	10
11. Socioeconomic status/sexism	7
12. Intellect	4
13. Insurance companies causing problems	3
Aspects of Respect	
Stand up for older person	11
Service and care	5
Victual	2
Gift	1
Linguistic	2
Presentational	
Spatial (honourable seats)	1
Celebrative	1
Acquiescent	
Consulting	1
Salutatory	1
Public	2
Ancestor worship	

Appendix: Film Information

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel **(2012): Box Office Information and Cast**

Total Lifetime Grosses

Domestic:	**$46,412,041**	**33.9%**
+ Foreign:	$90,424,115	66.1%

= **Worldwide:** **$136,836,156**

Domestic Summary

Release Dates: **May 4, 2012** (limited)

May 25, 2012 (wide)

Limited Opening Weekend: **$737,051**

(#16 rank, 27 theatres, $27,298 average)

Wide Opening Weekend: $6,383,203

(#8 rank, 1,233 theatres, $5,177 average)
% of Total Gross: 13.8%

Widest Release: 1,298 theatres

Close Date: October 25, 2012

IMDb.com, Inc. (2015)

The Players

Director: John Madden

Producer: Jeff Skoll (executive)

Cast	Birthdate	Character
Judi Dench (78)	9 December 1934	Evelyn Greenslade
Tom Wilkinson (64)	5 February 1948	Graham Dashwood
Bill Nighy (63)	12 December 1949	Douglas Ainslie
Penelope Wilton (66)	3 June 1946	Jean Ainslie
Maggie Smith (78)	28 December 1934	Muriel Donnelly
Ronald Pickup (72)	7 June 1940	Norman Cousins
Celia Imre (60)	15 July 1952	Madge Hardcastle
Dev Patel (22)	23 April 1990	Sonny Kapoor

(IMDb.com, Inc. 2015)

RED (Retired Extremely Dangerous) 2010: Box Office Information and Cast

Total Lifetime Grosses

Domestic:	**$90,380,162**	**45.4%**
+ Foreign:	$108,626,225	54.6%
= **Worldwide:**	**$199,006,387**	

Domestic Summary
   Opening Weekend: $21,761,408
(#2 rank, 3,255 theatres, $6,686 average)
      % of Total Gross: 24.1%
Widest Release: 3,349 theatres
Close Date: February 3, 2011
In Release: 112 days / 16 weeks

(Box Office Mojo, 2015)

The Players
   Director: Robert Schwentke
   Writers: Erich Hoeber
         Jon Hoeber

   Producers: Lorenzo di Bonaventura
         Mark Vahradian
   Composer: Christophe Beck

Cast	Birthdate	Character
Bruce Willis (55)	19 March 1955	Frank Moses
Mary-Louise Parker (46)	2 August 1964	Sarah Ross
Morgan Freeman (73)	1 June 1937	Joe Matheson
Helen Mirren (65)	26 July 1945	Victoria
John Malkovich (57)	9 December 1953	Marvin Boggs
Brian Cox (64)	1 June 1946	Ivan Simonov
Karl Urban (38)	7 June 1972	William Cooper
Ernest Borgnine (93)	24 January 1917	Henry, The Records Keeper
Richard Dreyfuss (63)	29 October 1947	Alexander Dunning

(IMDb.com, Inc. 2015)

The Holiday (2006): Box Office Information and Cast

Total Lifetime Grosses
Domestic: **$63,224,849**   **30.8%**
+ **Foreign**: $141,910,475   69.2%

= **Worldwide:**   **$205,135,324**
Domestic Summary
   Opening Weekend: $12,778,913
(#3 rank, 2,610 theatres, $4,896 average)
         % of Total Gross: 20.2%

Widest Release: 2,698 theatres
Close Date: January 28, 2007
In Release: 56 days / 8 weeks

(Box Office Mojo, IMDb.com Inc., 2015)

The Players
   Director: Nancy Meyers
      Writer: Nancy Meyers

   Producer: Nancy Meyers
Composer: Hans Zimmer

Cast	Birthdate	Character
Cameron Diaz (34)	30 August 1972	Amanda
Kate Winslet (31)	5 October 1975	Iris
Jude Law (34)	29 December 1972	Graham
Jack Black (37)	28 August 1969	Miles
Eli Wallach (91)	7 December 1915	Arthur
Bill Macy (84)	18 May 1922	Ernie (Arthur's friend)
Shelley Berman (81)	3 February 1925	Norman (Arthur's friend)

(IMDb.com Inc., 2015)

The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012): Box Office Information and Cast

Total Lifetime Grosses			The Players
Domestic:	**$303,003,568**	**29.7%**	Director: Peter Jackson
+ **Foreign:**	$718,100,000	70.3%	Writers: Philippa Boyens

= **Worldwide:** **$1,021,103,568**

The Players

Director: Peter Jackson

Writers: Philippa Boyens
  Guillermo del Toro
  Peter Jackson
  Fran Walsh

Domestic Summary
  Opening Weekend: $84,617,303
(#1 rank, 4,045 theatres, $20,919 average)
       % of Total Gross: 27.9%
Widest Release: 4,100 theatres
Close Date: April 25, 2013
In Release: 133 days / 19 weeks

Producers: Peter Jackson
  Fran Walsh

Composer: Howard Shore

2012 Academy Awards®
Nominated for Three Oscars.

(Box Office Mojo, IMDb.com Inc., 2015)

Cast	Birthdate	Character
Ian McKellen (73):	25 May 1939	Gandalf (11,000 years old)
Martin Freeman (41):	8 September 1971	Bilbo Baggins (50 years old)
Richard Armitage (41):	22 August 1971	Thorin Oakenshield (195 years old)
Ken Stott (60):	1955	Balin
Graham McTavish (51):	3 January 1961	Dwalin
William Kircher (54):	23 May 1958	Bifur
James Nesbitt (47):	15 January 1965	Bofur
John Callen (66):	4 November 1946	Oin
Mark Hadlow (55):	1957	Dori
Ian Holm (81):	12 September 1931	(Old) Bilbo
Hugo Weaving (52):	4 April 1960	Elrond
Cate Blanchett (43):	14 May 1969	Galadriel (11,000 years old)
Christopher Lee (90):	27 May 1922	Saruman (11,000 years old)
Sylvester McCoy (69):	20 August 1943	Radagast (11,000 years old)
Barry Humphries (78):	17 February 1934	Great Goblin

(IMDb.com, Inc. 2015)

The Grand Budapest Hotel (2014): Box Office Information and Cast

Total Lifetime Grosses

The Players

Domestic: **$59,100,318**   **33.8%**

Director: Wes Anderson

+ **Foreign:** $115,500,000   66.2%

Writer: Wes Anderson

= **Worldwide:**   **$174,600,318**

Producers: Wes Anderson
            Steven M. Rales

Domestic Summary

Release Dates: **March 7, 2014** (limited)
                 March 28, 2014 (wide)

                   Scott Rudin

Composer: Alexandre Desplat

Limited Opening Weekend: **$811,166**

(#17 rank, 4 theatres, $202,792 average)

Wide Opening Weekend: $8,539,795

(#6 rank, 977 theatres, $8,741 average)

% of Total Gross: 14.4%

Widest Release: 1,467 theatres

Close Date: August 28, 2014

2014 Academy Awards®

Nominated for Nine Oscars, Including Four Wins.

(Box Office Mojo, IMDb.com Inc., 2015)

Cast	Birthdate	Character
Ralph Fiennes (51)	22 December 1962	M. Gustav
F. Murray Abraham (74)	24 October 1939	Zero Moustafa (Older)
Willem Dafoe (58)	22 July 1955	Jopling (the assassin)
Jeff Goldblum (61)	22 October 1952	Deputy Kovacs (lawyer)
Harvey Keitel (74)	13 May 1939	Ludwig

Jude Law (41)	29 December 1972	Young author
Bill Murray (63)	21 September 1950	M. Ivan
Edward Norton (44)	18 August 1969	Henckels (policeman)
Saorise Ronan (20)	12 April 1994	Agatha
Tilda Swinton (54)	5 November 1960	Madame D. (character aged 84)
Tom Wilkinson (66)	5 February 1948	Older Author
Tony Revolori (18)	28 April 1996	Young Zero Moustafa

(IMDb.com Inc., 2015)

Appendix Significance: This Research is about the Lives of Large Numbers of People

The following table provides comparative figures for total populations aged 60 years and over for 1950, 2010 and projects data for 2030 and 2050.

Table 1. Proportion of Total Population aged 60 or over

		1950	2010	2030	2050
Africa	**Population (m)**	**12.1**	**55.4**	**104.9**	**212.8**
	Pct of total				
	population	*5.3*	*5.4*	*6.9*	*10.6*
Asia	**Population (m)**	**94.5**	**413.6**	**821.2**	**1236.1**
	Pct	6.7	9.9	16.7	23.7
Europe	**Population (m)**	**66.3**	**160.9**	**211.7**	**236.4**
	Pct	*12.1*	*22.0*	*29.3*	*34.2*
South America	**Population (m)**	**6.3**	**40.4**	**80.3**	**125.3**
	Pct	*5.6*	*10.3*	*17.5*	*26.0*
Northern					
America	**Population (m)**	**21.3**	**64.6**	**105.1**	**124.7**
	Pct	*12.4*	*18.4*	*25.6*	*27.8*
Oceania	**Population (m)**	**1.4**	**5.5**	**9.3**	**12.2**
	Pct	*11.1*	*15.4*	*21.0*	*23.9*
India	**Population (m)**	**20.1**	**91.7**	**184.6**	**315.6**

	Pct		*5.4*	*7.5*	*12.4*	*19.6*
World	**Population (m)**	**204.9**	**759.1**	**1370.4**	**2008.2**
	Pct		*8.1*	*11.0*	*16.5*	*21.9*

Source: Michael Fine - calculations based on United Nations Secretariat, World Population Prospects: 2008 Revision, Medium variant, http://esa.un.org/unpp, January 05, 2011.

Between 1994 and 2014, the proportion of Australia's population aged 15-64 years remained fairly stable, decreasing from 66.6% to 66.5% of the total population …. Conversely, the proportion aged under 15 years decreased from 21.6% to 18.8%

(ABS, 2014b)

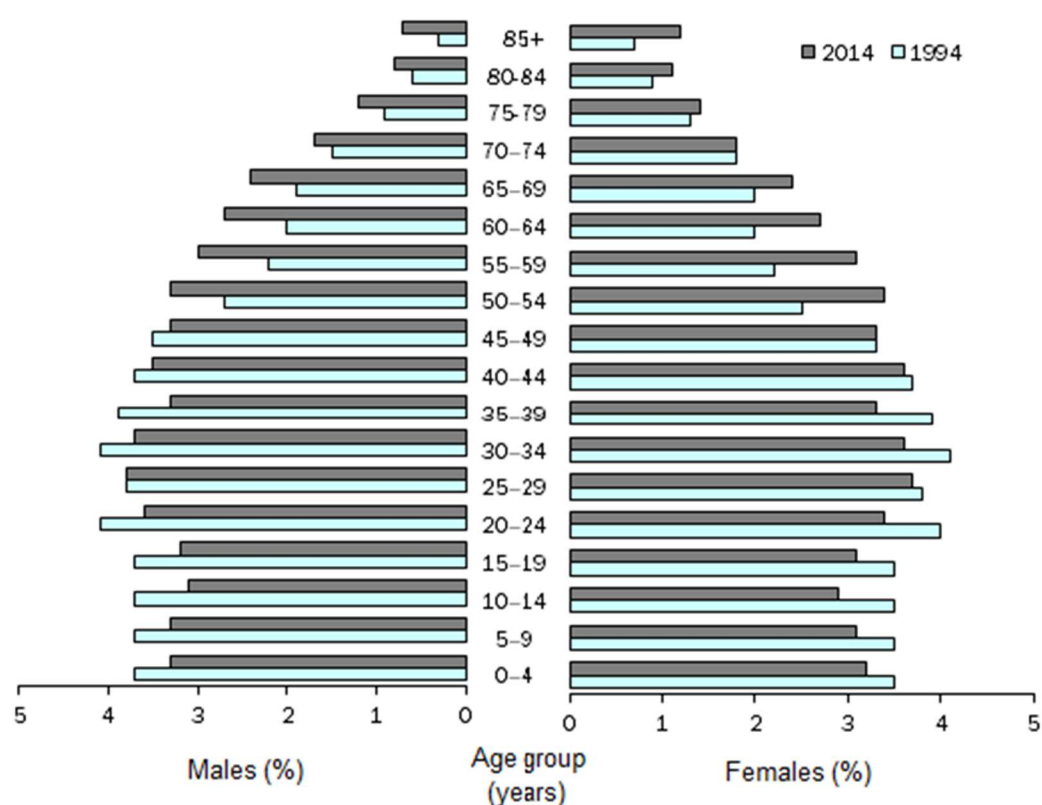**Projected age distribution of population (a) -** 30 June 2050
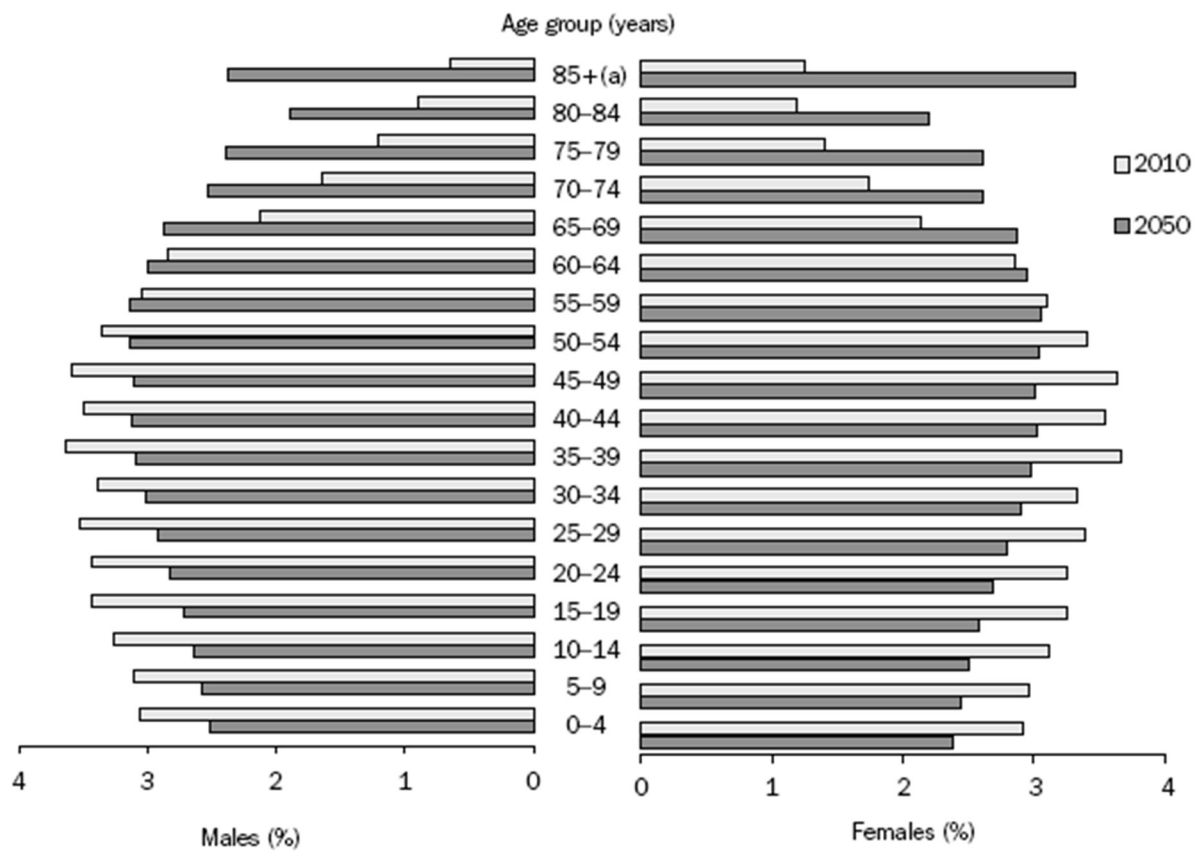
(a) The 85+ age group includes all ages 85 years and over and is not directly comparable to the other five-year age groups.

Source: Population Projections, Australia (3222.0).

This table is in direct contrast to the ageing population table from 1994 to 2014

Population Structure, Age and sex - Australia - 1994 and 2014


Source: ABS 2011 Census QuickStats

Age	2011 Number	2011 % of Population	2006 Number	2006 %
65-69 years	919,319	4.3	757,385	3.8
70-74 years	708,090	3.3	616,052	3.1
75-79 years	545,263	2.5	543,604	2.7
80-84 years	436,936	2.0	404,478	2.0
85 years and over	402,681	1.9	322,849	1.6
Totals	**3,012,289**	**14**	**2,644,368**	**13.2**

Source: ABS 2011 Census QuickStats

Over the twenty years between 1994 and 2014, the proportion of the population aged 65 years and over increased from 11.8% to 14.7%. This group is projected to increase more rapidly over the next decade, as further cohorts of baby boomers turn 65 (there are currently only three years of baby boomers aged 65 years and over).

In the 12 months to 30 June 2014, the number of people aged 65 years and over increased by 118,700 people, representing a 3.6% increase.

Proportion of population aged 65 years and over
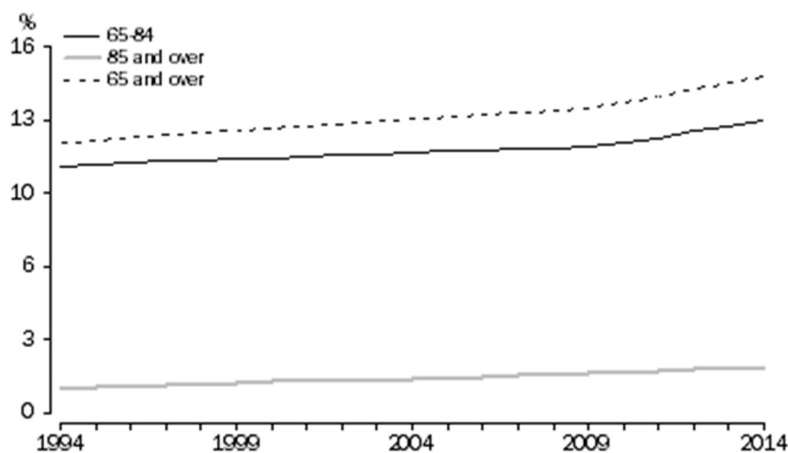
2.1 PEOPLE AGED 85 YEARS AND OVER

Over the past two decades, the number of persons aged 85 years and over increased by 153%, compared with a total population growth of 32% over the same period.

In the year ending 30 June 2014, the number of people aged 85 years and over increased by 19,200 people (4.4%) to reach 456,500. There were almost twice as many females (291,600) as males (164,900) in this age group which reflects the higher life expectancy for females.

2.2 PEOPLE AGED 100 YEARS AND OVER

Over the past two decades, the number of centenarians increased by 263%, reflecting an increase in life expectancy for both males and females during the period.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2014, the number of centenarians increased by 490 people (13.8%) to reach 4,000. There were almost four times as many females (3,200) as males (880) in this age group which reflects the higher life expectancy for females (ABS, 2014b; ABS 2014c)