Over the past few months, I have been assembling a bibliography on elder abuse that will soon be published on the Web site of the Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (www.onpea.org). I brought to this inquiry the tools I developed a decade ago during a sabbatical I spent developing subject-literature expertise in gerontology. That study was focused exclusively on the print literature. Today, however, no bibliography would be complete without addressing the multifaceted nature of communication. Not only is there the traditional “hard copy” bibliography, there are videos, the Internet, and even the telephone. (Phone Busters, operated by the Ontario Provincial Police, does research on telemarketing scams and seniors.) I should emphasize this bibliography is not meant to be comprehensive, but a “brief bibliography” along the lines of the excellent series published by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education. I do intend to keep updating it and to reflect the Canadian and Ontario milieu as much as possible.

My particular interest was to determine the extent to which elder abuse fit the conceptual overview of gerontological literature discussed in an article I wrote at the conclusion of my sabbatical.¹ Marta Dosa had earlier pointed out that gerontological information originates from the society-wide spheres of policy, research, practice, advocacy, and education.² To this model, I added the category of narrative literature or experimental source literature by the aged themselves, noting that reminiscence, autobiography, and life review were increasingly being seen as an important means of self-affirmation. The narrative literature has grown impressively in the years since I made that observation. Writers are even describing their journey into Alzheimer’s Disease. The striking exception is elder abuse, where critical reflection remains sparse. Perhaps the social stigma attached to abuse could explain this “silence.”

Turning to the reference literature, there are several standard works that have definitions of abuse. The newly published four-volume Encyclopedia of Aging edited by Dale Ekherdt (MacMillan Reference, 2002) contains an excellent article by Margaret F. Hudson that includes a taxonomy and theoretical definitions of abuse.

Annotated bibliographies and literature reviews are still a valuable means of detecting the currents of the field. The Handbooks on Aging published by Academic Press contain


comprehensive literature reviews of all aspects of aging. But it is interesting to note that not until the fifth edition (2001) of the Handbook of the Psychology of Aging that a review essay finally appeared on abuse, co-authored by Kathleen Wilber and Dennis P. McNeilly. The standard Canadian work is Ben and Rachel Schlesinger’s Abuse of the Elderly: Issues and Annotated Bibliography, published in 1988. At Laurentian University, Schlesinger is used to introduce our first-year gerontology students to the field. Another, more recent, Canadian bibliography is Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults in Community Settings, by Charmaine Spencer, Maureen Ashfield and Anne Vanderbilj, which appeared in 1996.

The core indexes to the journal literature on abuse are Abstracts in Social Gerontology, which annually compiles 1,000 abstracts and 1,000 bibliographic citations. Ageline, published by the American Association for Retired Persons in Washington, D.C., is a free online index of 300 age-related journals geared to consumers, educators, practitioners, and researchers. The most important journal is, of course, the Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect. First published in 1989, it was edited by Rosalie Wolf, an eminent figure in the field until her death in 2001. One of the most frequently cited of all its publications is the Canada-wide survey done in 1990 by Elizabeth Podnieks, Karl Pillemer, and others, subsequently published by Podnieks as “National Survey on Abuse of the Elderly in Canada” in the Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect in 1992.

The Butterworth series on individual and population aging in Canada that appeared in the 1980s and early 1990s included books on abuse (by P. Lynn McDonald) and crime and victimization (by Yves Brillon). Twenty-seven Canadian authors contributed to Abuse and Neglect of Older Canadians, edited by Michael J. MacLean. Published in 1995 by the Canadian Association on Gerontology, it discusses practice, education, policy and research in the field, and includes a 20-page bibliography. An excellent recent publication is Elder Abuse Work: Best Practice in Britain and Canada, edited by Jacki Pritchard. Eleven Canadians contributed to this book, including the Schlesingers, Podnieks, Spencer and Maxine Lithwick, who is one of the leaders of the elder abuse network in Québec.

As the representative of the northern node of ONPEA network, I have been especially concerned with finding material on aboriginal seniors. The reality is there is little information and, in the case of elder abuse, it is particularly sketchy. The only published survey which says there are some indications of abuse was a 94-page study of the needs and concerns of aboriginal seniors in 1993 by the Ontario Advisory Council on Senior Citizens. The most valuable contact I made was with the Za-geh-do-win Information Clearinghouse in Naughton, Ontario, which has a catalogue of resources on health, healing and family violence for aboriginal communities in Ontario. The Clearinghouse sent me a packet of photocopies as well as items loaned from its collection; this service is available free of charge to Ontario residents.

Professional memberships are of great assistance in maintaining currency with the literature. For instance, the American Society on Aging’s bimonthly publication Aging Today often discusses abuse issues, and its quarterly Generations had a special issue on elder abuse in 2000; and the Toronto-based Advocacy Centre for the Elderly published in 2001 its second edition of Long-Term Care Facilities in Ontario: The Advocate’s Manual. Of the range of
newsletters I receive from various aging centres, advocacy groups, and government agencies, the best is *GRC News*, published by the Gerontology Research Centre at Simon Fraser University. *The Caregiver*, published by Karen Henderson in Toronto, also had a bibliography on caregiving, end of life, and elder abuse in its Fall-Winter 2001 issue.

With respect to videos, the 13-program series “Aging and Caregiving” with June Callwood and Irvin Wolkoff that was issued in 1998 included a show on elder abuse. The National Film Board also made a program on elder abuse in 1987, entitled “A House Divided.” But the most recent best work is being done in the U.S., notably by Terra Nova Films in Chicago, a nonprofit organization that since 1981 has made a number of award-winning films on aging. It has over a dozen programs on elder abuse, such as “When Help was There: Four Stories of Elder Abuse.” (Terra Nova Executive Director James Vanden Bosch has also advised me that plans are underway for a new video on abuse to be called “Final Treatment.”) The University of Maryland Video Press makes videos on aging for field professionals. Its program, “Abuse: The Resident’s Perspective,” was praised in *Aging Today* earlier this year, as was “Elder Abuse and Neglect,” produced in 2001 by Marion and Mike Karpinski of Healing Arts Communications in Medford, Oregon.

Last but not least there are the Web sites. Among “the usual suspects” are the various networks for the prevention of elder abuse, Canada’s National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, Health Canada’s Division on Aging and Seniors, Ageinfo in the U.K., and the National Center on Elder Abuse in the U.S. The U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging has extensive coverage and links. The Law Commission of Canada has published a number of papers on abuse. ALMA France, the leading French agency on elder abuse, has an impressive bibliography of French-language titles through to 1999. Also noteworthy are Charmaine Spencer’s sites on alcohol and seniors, and social and legal issues of seniors. Bev McKay’s Families Allied to Influence Responsible Elder Care is an Alberta advocacy group with links. And of local interest is the recently published “Abuse of Older Adults: Projects and Committees in the Province of Ontario,” which has descriptions and contact information for projects in 26 Ontario communities.

As mentioned already, elder abuse does figure in the first-year curriculum for Gerontology at Huntington College. It is also highlighted in a course taught on aging and ethics, and students in upper-year courses also prepare subject-literature reviews. In general, however, the program emphasizes the wellness and care dimensions of aging. The most recent additions are care for the dementia patient, nutrition and aging, and mental health and aging. Laurentian University’s four-year B.A. and Certificate programs in Gerontology have thrived in the decade since they were first offered. The core courses are given at Huntington College, a federated college of Laurentian, located on the Laurentian campus in Sudbury, Ontario. Articulation agreements have also been signed with four Ontario community colleges for fast-track entry of their gerontology students into Laurentian’s program. With these institutions, we also now offer a Diploma in Clinical Gerontology. We are also the only Canadian university that has a three-year B.A. in Gerontology through distance education.
Elder Abuse:
A Partially Annotated Bibliography

Encyclopedias


Bibliographies and Literature Reviews


Indexes and Abstracts

Ageline. Published by the American Association of Retired Persons. Essential search tool for the journal literature. Indexes with abstracts for items in the AARP library as well as 300 magazines and journals pertaining to aging. There were 1,049 “hits” in the database with using the search term “elder abuse” on Nov. 15, 2002. [http://research.aarp.org/ageline/access.html](http://research.aarp.org/ageline/access.html).

Monographs


Brogdan, Mike. 2001. Geronticide : killing the elderly. London : Kingsley. 221 p. An exploration of the political economy of elderly homicide and euthanasia, including the “bureaucratization of death” in care institutions as well as the Shipman case in Great Britain.


Clough, Roger. 1996. *The Abuse of care in residential institutions*. London: Whiting and Birch, 206 p. This British publication “contains perhaps the best current analysis of the state of knowledge of this abuse, and makes a significant contribution to understanding and action. The authors, a mix of academics, experienced practitioners, consultants and policymakers, understand and care about practice in residential and nursing homes” (publisher’s blurb).


MacLean, Michael J., ed. 1995. *Abuse and neglect of older Canadians : strategies for change.* Ottawa, Ont.: Canadian Association on Gerontology. 200 p. Twenty-seven Canadian authors contributed to this important study which analyzes practice, education, policy and research in the field. Includes a 20-page bibliography.


McDonald, P. Lynn, ed. 1991. *Elder abuse and neglect in Canada.* Toronto, Ont.: Butterworths. 134 p. Published in the early 1990s as part of the Butterworth series, this study is still indispensable for its Canadian perspective.


Poirier, Donald. 1999. *Why is it so difficult to combat elder abuse and, in particular, financial exploitation of the elderly?* Ottawa, Ont.: Law Commission of Canada.


**Newsletters**

*ACE Newsletter.* Toronto: Advocacy Centre for the Elderly. 23 Carlton Street, Suite 701, Toronto ON M5B 1J3.  [www.utoronto.ca/lifecourse/onpea_projects/ace.html](http://www.utoronto.ca/lifecourse/onpea_projects/ace.html)

*The Caregiver.* Published by Karen Henderson. 561 Avenue Road, Suite 606, Toronto ON M4V 2J8. Founder, Caregiver Network.  [www.caregiver.on.ca](http://www.caregiver.on.ca)

*Concerned Friends.* Toronto: Concerned Friends of Ontario Citizens in Care Facilities. 140 Merton Street, Second Floor, Toronto ON M5S 1A1

**Journals**


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Web Sites


*Aging in Canada.* By Charmaine Spencer. Gerontology Research Centre, Simon Fraser University. Spencer is a lawyer and research associate of the Gerontology Research Centre at Simon Fraser University. Describes social and legal issues pertaining to seniors. http://www.canadianelderlaw.ca/


Canada. Health Canada. National Clearinghouse on Family Violence. A variety of fact sheets and papers, all available online. Most recent publication is the Directory of services and programs addressing the needs of older adult victims of violence in Canada. [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/familyviolence/abuseof.htm](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/familyviolence/abuseof.htm)

Canada. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Departmental library has studies on aboriginal family violence. [http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/index_e.html](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/index_e.html)


Families Allied to Influence Responsible Elder Care. Bev McKay, Founder/President, Box 969, Cochrane, AB T4C 1B1. Advocacy group. Well maintained, up-to-date site with links. [www.faireldercare.org](http://www.faireldercare.org)

International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse  Founded in 1997, this site is hosted in Great Britain and introduces the international network, including the United Nations. Includes an incomplete bibliography for elder abuse with publications up to the mid-1990s. Covering authors from whose surnames begin with the letters A-K only. [www.inpea.net](http://www.inpea.net)

Québec. CLSC Réné Cassin / Institute of Social Gerontology. The leading agency in Québec for elder abuse. Addressed to field professionals in Québec, the site includes some of its recent publications. [http://www.geronto.org/firstpage.htm](http://www.geronto.org/firstpage.htm)

United Kingdom. Ageinfo. Published by the Library and Information Service of the Centre for Policy on Ageing, Ageinfo is an information service about old age and ageing. The bibliographic database, which for non-members can only be searched one catalogue record at a time, contains 40,000 records for books, articles and reports from the collection held at the Centre for Policy on Ageing. Detailed information about over 4,000 organizations. [http://www.cpa.org.uk/ageinfo/ageinfo.html](http://www.cpa.org.uk/ageinfo/ageinfo.html)

United States. National Institute on Aging. The leading federal government research agency.  
http://www.nia.nih.gov/

United States. Senate. Special Committee on Aging. Extensive coverage of elder abuse issues.  
http://aging.senate.gov/committe/

Za-geh-do-win Information Clearhouse. Based in Naughton, Ontario, this clearinghouse has an online catalogue of information about health, healing and family violence for aboriginal communities in Ontario. Provides free loans and photocopies to all Ontario residents.  
http://www.za-geh-do-win.com

Videos

http://www.mavc.com/mavc/mavc_v03/MAVC_home/index.asp

“Abuse: the resident’s perspective.” 2001. Baltimore, MD: The University of Maryland Video Press. Length: 19 minutes. Video Press produces and distributes video programs for professionals and students in the fields of geriatric health care, pediatrics and education. They have been doing this for 15 years and over 5,000 clients use our programs nationally including nursing homes, hospitals, universities, community colleges, hospice programs, home health programs, public schools, libraries and Alzheimer organizations.  
http://www.videopress.org.

“Elder abuse and neglect.” 2001. Caregiving Series, vol. 7. Medford, OR: Healing Arts Communications. Healing Arts Communications was founded in 1995 by Marion Karpinski, R.N., and videographer Mike Karpinski. Summary: “This program defines the complexities of elder abuse and presents signs and symptoms for each form of abuse. The video is intended to give the professional or family caregiver an understanding of how to identify the various forms of elder abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional/psychological, and financial abuse, as well as neglect and abandonment. Interviews with experts on elder abuse provide additional information about this important national concern and what you can do to prevent it.” Length: 28 min.  
http://homecarecompanion.com/
“A house divided: caregiver stress and elder abuse.” 1987. Written and directed by Lyn Wright; produced by Silva Basmajian. Length: 71 min. Montreal, Qué.: National Film Board of Canada. Summary: “[P]ortrays the emotional complexity of family relationships that can lead to abuse for the elderly, as well as the anguish and isolation of victims and the tremendous need for community understanding and support.”

“I’d rather be home: the story of Norman.” 2001. Chicago, IL: Terra Nova Films. 30 minutes. Summary: “This video follows, over a period of seven years, the case of Norman, an older man repeatedly abused by one of his adult sons. The son lives at home (along with Norman's wife and other adult son). Since Norman is unwilling to take legal action, the situation seesaws for years with Norman leaving home for short periods of time and then returning, hoping his son will change. Eventually, after a severe beating, Norman ends up in a nursing home, has a mild stroke and is placed under state guardianship.” Founded in 1981 by James Vanden Bosch, Terra Nova Films specializes in issues inherent in growing older. “Out of this,” according to Terra Nova’s vision statement, “grew a vision to challenge stereotypes about elderhood, to re-imagine aging and to re-affirm the value and meaning of later life.” Planning is currently underway for a new video on abuse called “Final Treatment.”

“When help was there: four ethnically diverse stories of elder abuse.” 2001. Chicago, IL: Terra Nova Films. Produced by The Goldman Institute on Aging, San Francisco Consortium for Elder Abuse. Summary: “This new video takes an ethnically diverse look at elder abuse. Four separate cases of either physical, emotional or financial abuse are presented: a Hispanic mother threatened by her son; an African American woman physically abused by her husband; an Asian couple put out on the street by their son-in-law; a Caucasian man defrauded of possessions and bank accounts by a friend. The video also tells how each of these individuals was helped and supported by a network of services - legal interventions, support groups and social services.”