Chapter 12

A Historical Perspective on Ageing and Capability

Ulrika Lagerlöf Nilsson and Helene Castenbrandt

12.1 Introduction

I am a soldier's widow, 60 1/2 years old, I do not enjoy any pension, but have housing until I die. By helping a bachelor with his household, I get food for myself. I receive some poor relief (1/2 cord of wood). Otherwise, I am very sick. Will I get a pension this year? How much? Do I need to pay a fee? Answers are most gratefully apprehended in your honourable newspaper's local edition. *Soldier's Widow*. (Stockholmstidningen, 5 March 1914 [This quote is translated from Swedish and the language has been adjusted to aid the readability])

This letter was posted in a Swedish newspaper when a universal pension system was being implemented in 1914, more than 100 years ago. At that time, several newspapers ran 'Questions and Answers columns' related to the new pension reform. A lot of people, like the soldier's widow in this letter, seemed to see the new law as an opportunity to improve their well-being, lifting them out of their often poverty-stricken circumstances. Moreover, this reform can be seen as a change in the functionings with which society found it reasonable to provide its citizens, marking a shift in the state's responsibility for the well-being of older people.

Historians in general are interested in studying continuity and change at the macro-, meso- and micro-levels and they ask questions such as: How has development at a societal level affected the living conditions of individuals? Are there patterns and lines that can be followed throughout history? By trying to understand

U. Lagerlöf Nilsson (✉)

Department of Historical Studies, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden

Centre for Ageing and Health – AgeCap, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden

e-mail: ulrika.lagerlof.nilsson@history.gu.se

H. Castenbrandt

Centre for Ageing and Health – AgeCap, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden

Department of Economic History, Lund University, Lund, Sweden

e-mail: helene.castenbrandt@ekh.lu.se

© The Author(s) 2022

H. Falk Erhag et al. (eds.), *A Multidisciplinary Approach to Capability in Age and Ageing*, International Perspectives on Aging 31, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-78063-0_12

how development has taken place during the past, and by focusing on continuities and changes, we gain knowledge about how these have been dealt with and how dilemmas have been resolved. One could then argue whether or not the changes throughout history should be viewed as progress or a reversion, whether they have been fast or slow, and which groups have benefited or become disadvantaged through these developments. Such changes are sometimes obvious, but at other times they are almost imperceptible, and historians seek to explain and understand the driving forces behind these developments.

The aim of this chapter is to explore the usefulness of the capability approach within historical research on age and ageing. As historians, we investigate phenomena that are important for today's society that have occurred throughout history. Studies can then explore questions such as: How have the processes of caring for older people been organised in the past? What changes can be observed over time? How have these changes been argued for? For example, how was an 'older person' defined in the past, what changes can be noted, and how can such changes be explained? What activities are seemingly embedded in human society or more governed by rapid change? These are all questions that drive historical research. In this chapter, we ask how the capability approach fits into questions involving historical transformations. The main question is thus: what does capability mean in different times and spaces? One reason for exploring the usefulness of the capability approach in our historical analyses is that it enables conversations between scientific disciplines. Using the same theoretical framework dissolves the obstacles created by the differences between our disciplines and enables us to hold a dialogue around the common goal of our research: to better understand the living conditions of older people in the past and present, and how such issues can be addressed in the future.

Since Amartya Sen framed and developed the theoretical framework around the capability approach during the 1980s and 1990s, it has been widely debated and theorised (Sen, 1979, 1985, 1989, 1999). At the political scale, Sen's work has influenced the design of the Human Development Index (HDI), in which key capabilities, such as access to health and education, are used as indicators of well-being, displaying a practical implementation of the theory (Stanton, 2007). A very tangible implementation of the HDI is the United Nations Human Development Report, which has been published annually since 1990 with the aim of increasing human well-being by shifting the focus from econometric measures to human life in itself (United Nations Development Programme, n.d.). Still, researchers have found it difficult to operationalise the theoretical framework of the capability approach into distinct methodological tools (Robeyns, 2006; Alkire, 2005). Even so, the empirical applications are increasing, and several books have been published trying to demonstrate, with empirical examples, the applications of the capability approach in several different research areas (Ibrahim & Tiwari, 2014; Kuklys, 2005; Stoecklin & Bonvin, 2014; Robeyns, 2005).

The main point of the capability approach is to analyse well-being in broad terms, taking into account a number of indicators to create a multi-dimensional approach (Robeyns, 2005; Kremakova, 2013; Ibrahim, 2014). It is also a

normative framework, which incorporates distinguishing factors, such as poverty, equality and well-being for individuals in groups and society. However, as Ingrid Robeyns emphasises: ‘The capability approach is not a theory that can *explain* poverty, inequality or well-being; instead, it provides concepts and a framework that can help to *conceptualize* and *evaluate* these phenomena.’ (Robeyns, 2005, 2006: 353; Kremakova, 2013: 404; Zimmermann, 2006.) The rest of this chapter gives a short introduction to the usage of the capability approach in historical research, followed by examples, where we use the capability approach to explore the different, and changing, capabilities of older people during the early twentieth century in Sweden.

12.2 The Capability Approach and Historical Studies

Capability can be broadly understood as an individual’s ability to achieve good well-being and live a good life. The capability approach aims to focus on material goods and services, as well as the functionings and capabilities that a person needs to live a life they value as good. What this means depends on ideas that are widespread in society, as well as the individual’s own perceptions. These ideas and perceptions differ over time and space, due to society’s view of certain groups (e.g. older people or children), as well as individual opportunities and limitations in terms of finances, resources and interests (Robeyns, 2005).

When we take a historical perspective to try to understand the lives people have lived, there are some basic factors we need to take into account in order to understand the past. Sweden, like most other countries, has experienced major changes to its population structure. The group of older people has increased tremendously; at the turn of the twentieth century, the number of people aged 70 or over had almost tripled since 1850, while the population as a whole had increased by around 50% during the same period (Statistiska centralbyrån, 1969, 68). This development was explosive, and the Swedish healthcare system had just begun to be publicly bureaucratically organised and institutionalised. There was still a long way to go before it was available to everyone. The groups who suffered most were older people and children (Odén, 1982: 29). Furthermore, a person’s living conditions were entirely based upon who they were and where they lived. This meant that class, geographical domicile and gender were crucial factors impacting upon the life you were going to live, and had consequences for how life developed as you got older.

It has been argued that one of the weaknesses of the capability approach is handling changes over time (Srinivasan, 1994). What people value changes over time, making it difficult to evaluate and compare the well-being of different generations throughout history. However, rather than recognising it as a weakness, changes in people’s abilities and what they value can be used to capture the evolving opportunities for individuals. This notion has led other scholars to state that it is this openness and breadth of the capability approach that makes it applicable to historical and sociological studies (Robeyns, 2005; Kremakova, 2013). Moreover, Ingrid Robeyns

argues that the cross-disciplinary use and highly developed theoretical framework around the capability approach make it a useful theoretical approach as well as a methodological one (Robeyns, 2005, 2006). By this, Robeyns means that it is absolutely necessary to know the circumstances in which a person has been living if we are to determine which functionings that person can attain. She states:

The capability approach takes account of human diversity in two ways: by its focus on the plurality of functionings and capabilities as the evaluative space, and by the explicit focus on personal and socio-environmental conversion factors of commodities into functionings, and on the whole social and institutional context that affects the conversion factors and also the capability set directly. (Robeyns, 2005: 99)

Thus, if a historical perspective were included, it would be possible to understand, for example, why some resources can be functionings and while others are not. Everything must be related to and understood in a wider context, not least in relation to the past. Then, using a capability approach in historical studies, combined with other perspectives and/or theories, can give a better understanding of how social structures, human sociality, collective living and the meaning of social action have developed over time and across place (Kremakova, 2013: 413).

The Swedish historian Maria Ågren has claimed that the capability approach in Sen's interpretation needs to be expressed in a way that helps people today to understand what well-being and a good society are and what 'to have capability' meant in the past. She claims that 'translation work' is needed to avoid any misunderstanding of how a good development should be characterised and understood from a historical perspective (Ågren, 2012). Ågren proposes talking about a 'good society', rather than 'good development'. It is only possible to interpret and understand what characterises a good society relative to contemporary time and space. She writes: 'Considering how central work was for people in early modern Sweden, it seems extremely relevant to ask how the possibilities and difficulties of work affected people's situation, their identity, their actions and their image of what a good society meant' (Ågren, 2012: 63).

The transition from working life to preparing oneself for old age provides an example of how historians can make use of a capability approach in order to study individual preconditions and society's expectations of its older citizens. This is an area where there has been continuous change, in the past as well as the present. Work is a phenomenon that can reflect several different functionings. Depending on the perspective of the study and the research question, work could be analysed as goods or as factors that could be explored as achieved functionings or something that enables evaluating capability (Robeyns, 2005: 101). Taking work as a starting point makes it possible to study perspectives on work and well-being, and how their *meaning* has changed over time.

With a focus on senior citizens, we have to ask ourselves: what capabilities have older people valued and what capabilities has society found it reasonable that they should have? How can we access such information about past generations? Historical information about which capabilities people, or groups of people, have valued at a certain time and place can be analysed through sources such as newspapers, biographies, diaries, letters and novels. By examining government reports, newspapers,

parliamentary debates etc., it is possible to gain an understanding of the capabilities that societies have valued for older citizens over time. Moreover, it is also feasible to study how certain functionings have changed for a given group of individuals. In that sense, we can capture not only what people valued, but how they actually lived their lives, and how this has changed over time. Again, when considering older people, functionings like life expectancy, health, housing, social interactions and agency (viewed through work, living conditions and finances) would give us a sense of how the well-being of older people has changed over time, even though it cannot capture how they valued these functionings themselves.

When it comes to studies about age and ageing, it is important to be aware that ‘being old’ is not a definite or fixed stage in a person’s life; instead, the definition of an old person differs across context, time and space (Thane, 2003: 98). In historical times, a person’s ability to influence their lives depended on the social stratum of society to which they belonged. Birgitta Odén has therefore argued that the interesting historical question is how, despite their varying social and economic conditions, people tried to prepare themselves for old age, and how society, through its laws, institutions and organisational arrangements framed a person’s available space to act (Odén, 1982: 28). Answers to such questions frame the functionings that society found it reasonable for older people to have, as well as what capabilities individuals valued.

12.3 Capabilities Among Older Women in the Early Twentieth Century

When historical studies are conducted to identify and evaluate the conditions that affected people’s lives, a number of factors, such as gender, civil status and economic conditions, must be taken into account. Western families were in general structured around marriage, with nuclear families being the norm, even though intergenerational co-residence was fairly common (Ruggles, 2010: 15–16). There were more widows than widowers, because women often married younger and lived longer, while men more frequently remarried. These cultural and demographic structures left many widows in a difficult economic position (Blom, 1991: 192–195). Since it is well known that the history of women and their living conditions has traditionally been less thoroughly explored than that of men, we argue that it is valuable and beneficial to provide examples of the living conditions of older women in the early twentieth century. Through these examples, we aim to provide an understanding of how women in different social strata dealt with ageing, how their economic and marital status affected their opportunities, or lack thereof, and what freedoms they had to make choices as an older person.

In the first example, we introduce Selma Lagerlöf (1858–1940), who was (and still is) one of the most famous of all Swedish authors. In 1909, she was the first woman to be awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. Lagerlöf’s life and old age provide an excellent example, demonstrating how her life-story influenced her life

as an old person. Selma Lagerlöf grew up in a family that had to deal with constant economic crises, and her father had alcohol problems. Early on, Lagerlöf wanted to get an education and she did receive support and encouragement, which enabled her to go to Stockholm and train at the Higher Teachers' Seminary. In this way, she was able to earn her own living. Lagerlöf had problems stemming from a hip injury sustained during childhood, and therefore had physical limitations. Her life took on completely different opportunities after she had forged a career as an author. After receiving the Nobel Prize, she was able to buy back the farm where she had grown up: Mårbacka, located in Värmland in the western part of Sweden. It had previously been sold at an executive auction due to her father's debts. She had the manor house rebuilt and modernised the farm's agriculture. She was eager to learn about how agriculture could be made more efficient and became a patron at Mårbacka (Palm, 2019). Lagerlöf was a prominent figure in the Swedish women's movement during the first decades of the twentieth century. As part of the large group of unmarried women, Lagerlöf, and many others in her situation, had to find a way of making a living on their own (Stenberg, 2018).

Selma Lagerlöf is a good example of a woman who made choices and decisions that resulted in a good life that supported her in her later years. It was far from clear what capabilities she would have as an old, unmarried woman. Her limited physical mobility, which for instance gave her a limp when walking, reduced her physical flexibility and made it difficult for her to perform hard physical work. This, in turn, meant that if she had not been financially independent due to her author status, she would have ended up either in the village's poor-house or as part of the parish's maintenance responsibility. During this time, in order to make a decent living, you had to be able to work without physical limitations. When analysing Lagerlöf's biography, we can see how the decisions she made throughout her life signify how she valued her capability. This was superior to everything else, because she had the freedom of choice due to being financially self-sufficient. She valued being independent, but to be so she had to work hard and struggle against the values and social order that were dominant at that time. Marriage was the legal order that ensured both support and financial security when a woman grew old, provided that she was part of a social group that enjoyed financial security. In contrast to Lagerlöf, we will also give some examples of women who did not have the same education or social background. These women had rather different experiences, which limited their capabilities as they reached old age.

Selma Lagerlöf had assets, both money and land, enabling her to live the life she wanted for herself as she aged. As previously mentioned, Lagerlöf was an important voice in the women's movement. She worked hard for the suffrage of women and for women to have their own rights and independence. Suffrage was at that time seen as the optimal consequence and functioning of the capability to gain the freedom to decide over one's own life. This was far from a matter of course for women at this time. The women who were active in the suffrage movement during the first decades of the twentieth century were driven to influence their own lives and to live the lives that they considered valuable for themselves. Not least, this concerned how they could continue to live as independent women even during the later years of life.

Although Selma Lagerlöf, like many women in the women's movement and Swedish suffrage movement, struggled and worked hard to achieve her life's work, she still belonged to a privileged group who had the options and freedom to think and hope for a long and healthy life. Hopefully, that would also mean a life with some economic security. But what about less fortunate women, like the soldier's widow quoted in the introduction? What could they hope for in later life, and what capabilities did they possess to aid them in their hopes? At the turn of the twentieth century, Sweden was still a poor country. Its great industrial breakthrough had just taken off, and a large part of the population still lived on the margins. Rising proletarianisation, a growing number of industrial workers, urbanisation and many people finding themselves in small, rented lodgings were all developments that made the need for some kind of pension system ever more apparent. The question had been debated in parliament for decades, but an agreement between political parties had proven difficult to achieve.

Throughout Europe, various different types of pension systems had been implemented and it was difficult to agree on what would be best for Sweden. Which groups should be included, on what grounds the pension should be granted and how it should be financed were all questions that were discussed (Elmér, 1960, 1972, 1986). Eventually, a law granting a universal pension was passed in 1913. This was made up of two parts. One part was based on individual contributions and was obtainable at the age of 67. However, this part was insignificant during the first few decades because one needed to contribute during an entire working life in order to receive the maximum amount. The second, state-funded, part was based on invalidity assessments and available to anyone over 15 years of age who could prove themselves permanently unable to work (Aldén, 1914). Even though this second part was small, and in line with the average level of poor relief, it was an important milestone in terms of self-determination and civil rights for those granted this pension. For the first time, Swedish citizens received an income transfer to poor groups that did not imply a restriction on civil rights, as poor relief did. Accessing the second part of the pension was function-dependent, because the important issue was not age, but a person's inability to perform a job. For most people, this meant that, even with the new pension system, they could not imagine themselves enjoying a time when they still had health and strength and would be able to draw an income without working. However, after a change in the law in 1935, a proper old age pension was eventually created, making both parts of the pension available to anyone over 67, regardless of invalidity status (von Schulzenheim, 1935).

When the implementation of the pension system was investigated, a survey of income and invalidity was conducted, covering everyone in Sweden over the age of 60. Questionnaires were sent to all the municipalities in Sweden asking them to fill in information on all the individuals in their area, and 93% were returned with sufficient information. This material provides information on the conditions and capabilities of unmarried women, in a way that is seldom visible in other data. The answers revealed that 60 percent of unmarried women over the age of 60 were receiving support for their livelihood in 1907. As close relatives had a dependency obligation, a majority (60%) were supported by relatives, often adult children, while

the rest received municipality poor relief. Of those who received support, 95% were listed as unable to work, meaning that there was a large group of unmarried women who had to rely on support from others for their livelihood and to maintain their basic capabilities (Ålderdomsförsäkringskommittén & Lindstedt, 1912). This group of older, worn-out women did not have much choice about how to live their lives. They were fully dependent on what others could offer them, and what little help they could provide in return. For these women, the new pension reform offered a way of restoring their sense of value.

In 1913 and 1914, one of the large newspapers ran a 'Questions and Answers' column in relation to the new pension reform. It ran for nine months, and many people sent questions related to whether or not they could receive a pension (*Aftonbladet* November 1913–July 1914). Those who wrote were of all ages, and many were in some way or another unable to earn a living due to invalidity. Those of younger ages were often living with their parents. This was the case for a 47-year-old unmarried woman who had been bedbound for 3 years and was living with, and nursed by, her 73-year-old mother (*Aftonbladet* 16 January 1914). Another example is a 22-year-old woman who was partially paralysed after suffering from polio and was therefore unable to make a living, and had no one but her poor elderly parents to rely on (*Aftonbladet* 27 December 1913). The older people who sent questions were mostly poor and had no strength left to make a living. One example was a 66-year-old widow who was unable to work and for a long time had been supported by her children (*Aftonbladet* 26 February 1914). Another example is an incurably ill 64-year-old widow whose store had gone bankrupt in 1912. Since then, she had managed by renting out one or two rooms and by borrowing from friends. Having no strength left, she had no means of subsistence (*Aftonbladet* 18 December 1913). Judging by their letters, these people valued the basic security that a small pension would provide in their lives. In most cases, they had no income and no way of supporting themselves. Instead, they were dependent on the support of close relatives or municipality poor relief, and were at risk of ending up in a poor house. For them, the possibility of receiving a small, but steady, pension would gain them the opportunity, not to choose what life to live, but to be of some value to the relatives who supported them. For those who were living on poor relief, a pension might restore their pride as citizens.

As society changed, and new forms of support were needed, so it created a new structural support system that enabled those who had lost a key capability, namely the ability to support themselves through work, to uphold their sense of dignity. It no longer seemed reasonable that people who had struggled, but could no longer provide for themselves, should have to rely on stigmatising poor relief, or to be a heavy burden on their often impoverished relatives.

These examples have shown how differently the economic conditions and opportunities for women from different social groups influenced how they were able to live their lives as older people. This thus influenced their capability and how they valued their functionings.

12.4 Discussion

The aim of this chapter was to explore and discuss the usefulness of the capability approach within historical research on age and ageing. In this analysis, we have focused on gender and class, two fundamental factors influencing the capabilities that people value as they prepare for old age. These factors, along with many other parameters, are important in order to fully understand the differences in achieved capabilities and why a person values his or her life in the way that they do. The preconditions for the values of factors and goods are constantly shifting and are always dependent on context. In historical studies, it is therefore necessary to identify people's social background, the available preconditions and also society's contemporary expectations of the individual. Currently, both over recent decades and in the future, gender and class seem to be factors that (will) influence and determine the opportunities for self-determination and the ability to achieve capability. It seems that, ultimately, the practical application of legislation and regulations always becomes individual and is influenced by a person's unique conditions, assets and opportunities.

By focusing on which functionings society has been able to provide for its older citizens in different historical times and environments, it could become clear which capabilities older people value. How this is expressed may differ depending on the time and place in which the phenomenon occurs. It is also necessary to be aware of the importance of focusing on the three different societal levels: macro, meso and micro, in order to fully comprehend the opportunities to use functionings as a way to achieve a person's capability to live a good life, or at least a life that they value as good.

During each historical period, as well as today, a fundamental priority in life has been to fulfil a person's basic needs: to have food, somewhere to live and social connections with others. The authorities at different levels have the responsibility to support their citizens by removing the obstacles preventing them from fulfilling these basic needs. This in turn leads to the other factor that we have highlighted through our given examples. People, whether they are rich or poor, want to feel self-respect. They also want to have a sense of dignity and pride as citizens. Regardless of gender, financial or social status, people want to feel valued as human beings. It is clear that those impoverished women who had lost their main capability to support themselves through work welcomed the basic security and sense of value that the new universal pension could provide for them. However, the same need for human value is also clear in the example of Selma Lagerlöf, one of the many women who fought for independence and respect. The road to get there was a difficult one when the social order stipulated something else. A woman should be married and depend on her husband, be responsible for her children and take care of the home. The women who wanted to live a different life, and wanted to achieve other forms of capabilities, needed to find alternative ways to reach their goals. Sometimes their functionings, supported by society and government institutions, could help them, but at other times the support and tools were few or non-existent.

It is in these latter cases that it is interesting to examine in more detail the strategies and approaches that women used to achieve the goal that they believed constituted a dignified life.

The range and uses of the capability approach are many. It is most desirable in large collaborations when different research areas are studying the same question from different perspectives (see e.g. Alkire, 2005). The framework of the capability approach demands multidisciplinary studies, and Robeyns stresses that there is a need for ‘multidimensional empirical analysis’ to underpin and operationalise the capability approach (Robeyns, 2006: 371). She argues:

To fully understand the importance of groups, the capability approach should engage more intensively in a dialogue with disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, history, and gender and cultural studies. Disciplinary boundaries and structures make this kind of dialogue difficult, but there is no inherent reason why this could not be done. (Robeyns, 2005: 109–110).

This underlines the importance of a multidisciplinary volume like this, where different scientific fields frame the use of this theoretical and methodological approach. Moreover, scholars have claimed that the capability approach is neither a theory nor a method. It has also been stated that the approach is difficult to use to make comparisons over time. There seems to be a reason why historians have not used the capability concept or even characterised their research approach as a capability approach. We want to argue that historians can benefit from using this approach. It could be used to conceptualise and evaluate phenomena that give a deeper, hopefully better, understanding of human circumstances, regardless of time and space. Capability is about interpreting different living conditions, and it illuminates continuity and change, similarities and variations. By making these patterns visible, we gain an understanding of the past, can better understand our present-day, and thus might be better able to prepare ourselves to handle the future. In this chapter, the capability approach has been demonstrated to be a good tool for visualising historical patterns, and therefore supports the claim that this approach is feasible to be used to a greater extent in historical research.

References

- Aftonbladet*. (November 1913–July 1914), <https://tidningar.kb.se>. Accessed 5 Apr 2020.
- Ågren, M. (2012). Genus och arbete i det tidigmoderna Sverige. *Historisk tidskrift*, 132(1), 55–64.
- Aldén, G. A. (Ed.). (1914). *Lagen om allmän folkpensionering av den 30 juni 1913* (6th ed.). Hökerberg.
- Ålderdomsförsäkringskommittén, Lindstedt, A. (1912). *Ålderdomsförsäkringskommittén 2 Kostnadsberäkningar*. Stockholm.
- Alkire, S. (2005). Why the capability approach? *Journal of Human Development*, 6(1), 115–135. <https://doi.org/10.1080/146498805200034275>
- Blom, I. (1991). The history of widowhood: A bibliographic overview. *Journal of Family History*, 16(2), 191–210. <https://doi.org/10.1177/036319909101600206>

- Elmér, Å. (1960). *Folkpensioneringen i Sverige. Med särskild hänsyn till ålderspensioneringen*. Gleerup.
- Elmér, Å. (1972). *Från Fattig Sverige till välfärdsstaten. Sociala förhållanden och socialpolitik i Sverige under nittonhundratalet* (5th ed.). Aldus.
- Elmér, Å. (1986). *Svensk socialpolitik* (16th ed.). Liber.
- Ibrahim, S. (2014). Introduction: The capability approach: From theory to practice –rationale, review and reflections. In S. Ibrahim & M. Tiwari (Eds.), *The capability approach: From theory to practice* (pp. 1–28). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ibrahim, S., & Tiwari, M. (2014). *The capability approach: From theory to practice*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kremakova, M. (2013). Too soft for economics, too rigid for sociology, or just right? The productive ambiguities of Sen's capability approach. *European Journal of Sociology*, 54(3), 393–419. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975613000210>
- Kuklys, W. (2005). *Amartya Sen's capability approach: Theoretical insights and empirical applications*. Springer.
- Odén, B. (1982). Demografi. En introduktion. In L. Tornstam, B. Odén, & A. Svanborg (Eds.), *Äldre i samhället. Förr, nu och i framtiden. D. 2, Probleminventeringar* (pp. 27–39). Liber Förlag.
- Palm, A. (2019). 'Jag vill sätta världen i rörelse'. En biografi över Selma Lagerlöf. Albert Bonniers förlag.
- Robeyns, I. (2005). The capability approach: A theoretical survey. *Journal of Human Development*, 6(1), 93–114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/146498805200034266>
- Robeyns, I. (2006). The capability approach in practice. *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 14(3), 351–376.
- Ruggles, S. (2010). Stem families and joint families in comparative historical perspective. *Population and Development Review*, 36(3), 563–577. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1728-4457.2010.00346.x>
- Sen A (1979) *Equality of what? The Tanner Lectures on human values*. Delivered at Stanford University (Publication no. https://tannerlectures.utah.edu/_documents/a-to-z/s/sen80.pdf.) Accessed 12 Mar 2018.
- Sen, A. (1985). *Commodities and capabilities*. North-Holland.
- Sen, A. (1989). *Development as capability expansion*. <http://www.masterhdfs.org/masterHDFS/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Sen-development.pdf>. Accessed 14 Mar 2018.
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. Oxford University Press.
- Srinivasan, T. N. (1994). Human development: A new paradigm or reinvention of the wheel? *The American Economic Review*, 84(2), 238–243. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2117836>. Accessed 8 Feb 2018.
- Stanton, E. (2007). *The Human Development Index: A history*. https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1101&context=peri_workingpapers. Accessed 8 Feb 2018.
- Statistiska centralbyrån. (1969). *Historisk statistik för Sverige: Del 1. Befolkning* (2nd ed.).
- Stenberg, L. (2018). *Selma Ottilia Lovisa Lagerlöf*. <http://www.skbl.se/sv/artikel/SelmaLagerlof,Svensktkvinnobiografisktlexikon>. Accessed 21 Sept 2020.
- Stockholms tidningen. (1914, March 5). <https://tidningar.kb.se> Accessed 2 July 2020.
- Stoecklin, D., & Bonvin, J. M. (2014). *Children's rights and the capability approach: Challenges and prospects*. Springer.
- Thane, P. (2003). Social histories of old age and aging. *Journal of social history* 37(1), 93–111.
- United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.) *About human development*. Retrieved from <http://hdr.undp.org/en/humandev> Accessed 8 Feb 2018.
- von Schulzenheim, H. (1935). Den nya lagen om folkpensionering. In *Svensk Sjukkassekalendar 1936: Uppslagsbok för sjukkassefolket* (pp. 9–19).
- Zimmermann, B. (2006). Pragmatism and the capability approach: Challenges in social theory and empirical research. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 9(4), 467–484. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368431006073014>

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.