Preface

This book is the outcome of what for me was a fortunate combination of circumstances. For the last two years, I have been working along with other European researchers on the topic of intergenerational relationships in families within the context of the EU-funded EQUALSOC network of excellence. In 2006, the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB) offered me a research professorship in Demographic Development, Social Change and Social Capital. This gave me the unique opportunity to put the members of the EQUALSOC group in contact with a larger group of scholars who, in recent years, have broken new ground in the area of intergenerational relations. In March 2007, a conference was organised in Berlin, where researchers from both groups presented papers and shared details of their ongoing work. This book is the follow-up to that conference. Although its individual chapters – each of which has been fully reworked for publication – represent only a selection of the papers presented in Berlin, its general quality has benefited enormously from the discussions initiated there.

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2008