



Mittwoch, 05.05.2010, 17.00-18.30
SR 35.K1, Merangasse 18/Keller

Deborah Chambers
(Newcastle University, UK):



Media Representations of Ageing Femininity in Celebrity Culture

The talk will explore ways in which celebrities are portrayed within representations of ageing femininity in the Western popular media. It will contribute to cultural debates about representations of age and femininity in the media. Focusing on the role of 'soft news' including newspapers, lifestyle magazines and internet gossip websites about the lives of celebrities. The lecture will identify ways in which dominant representation of age as physical decline are produced and challenged. Celebrities are used by the media to endorse a consumer culture in which youthful appearance is revered and ageing is problematized. The ageing female celebrity is a troubled sign, exploited as a spectacle of physical decline within a global consumer ideology that supports the marketing of anti-ageing cosmetics and neutralizes cosmetic surgery.

Mittwoch, 19.05.2010, 17.00-18.30
SR 35.K1, Merangasse 18/Keller

Margaret Morganroth Gullette
(independent scholar, USA):



Toward An Agewise America

In the United States, people are suddenly taking ageism more seriously. Being "too old" for employment in the ongoing economic meltdown can't be ignored. A Hollywood movie about a man hired to fire people, *Up in the Air*, shows the outraged and shattered unemployed as mostly people in their middle years, some with white hair. In the 1990s and 2000s, decline vocabulary is leaking more and more into people's heads: "over-qualified," "deadwood," "greedy geezer." Like sexist epithets, bizarre age-epithets emerge from purpose-driven decline ideology. "Burden" is not a term our grandparents used about themselves. Morganroth Gullette states: "When my father-in-law said to us youngsters, "I've forgotten more than you'll ever know," it was a boast." The term "senior moment" didn't taint my parents' sixties. Since the 1960s, the public in the U.S. has been told how secure old age is, but the supports may be becoming more fragile. Ageism is finally worrying not only gerontologists but also ordinary people. The unprecedented assault on the midlife and the life course is one of the urgent under-reported stories of our time.

Mittwoch, 26.05.2010, 17.00-18.30
SR 35.K1, Merangasse 18/Keller

Emma Domínguez Rué
(University of Lleida, Spain):

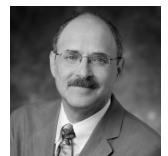


True Ladies and Real Women: Ageing and the Cult of True Womanhood in Ellen Glasgow's Fiction

This session will try to explain how reaching middle age has devastating consequences for some of the female characters in three of Ellen Glasgow's most outstanding novels. According to psychologists in the first decades of the twentieth century, ageing was inevitably associated with physical as well as mental decline. Middle age certainly posed a conflict to writers and artists, for they feared it would entail a loss in their creative powers. At the time Ellen Glasgow wrote *Barren Ground*, though, as she recalls in her autobiography, "my imagination was more vital and urgent than it had ever been . . . I felt younger at sixty than I had felt at twenty" (WW 270-272).

Mittwoch, 16.06. 2010, 17.00-18.30
SR 35.K1, Merangasse 18/Keller

Tom Cole
(University of Texas, Houston, USA):



The Dirty Old Man: Philip Roth and Aging in Contemporary American Culture

This lecture will suggest that Roth's characters are not as foreign or deviant as one might assume. These old men deserve a sympathetic reading: in exaggerated form they express fears and desires that are commonly experienced but rarely articulated. They raise the question, though, of where an old man can look for identity and integrity in commercialized, ageist, secular culture where values of performance, health, and physical functioning crowd out larger moral and spiritual meanings.



CONTACT & INFORMATION

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