



INTERDISCIPLINARY
DOCTORAL SYMPOSIUM

Age and
Care

UNIVERSITÄT GRAZ
UNIVERSITY OF GRAZ
Center for Interdisciplinary Research
on Aging and Care (CIRAC)



Age and
Care
Research
Group
Graz

 Forschungsnetzwerk
Heterogenität und Kohäsion

February 25th, 2021

Welcome

Assoz.-Prof. Dr. Ulla Kribernegg

*Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Aging and Care (Director) &
Age and Care Research Group Graz (Chair)*

Assoz.-Prof. Dr. Klaus Wegleitner

Age and Care Research Group Graz (Executive Board)



February 25th, 2021

Panel 1

Nina Habe, Maja Hadner, Vera Gallistl

Panel 2

Mariana Cruz, Roxana Schweighart, Martin Schmidt

Discussion



February 26th, 2021

Panel 3

Anna-Christina Kainradl, Amal Shafek, Yorik Josua Berta

Panel 4

Christian Perwein, Katharina Zwanzger

Panel 5

Alekszandra Rokvity, Tine Riis Andersen

Discussion



Tine, what excites you about your research?

The English Professor, Josie Billington, believes that a book can have thoughts that humans cannot have. With that in mind I think it would be very interesting to investigate how literary texts in the context of ‘Shared Reading’ can work as a container and catalysator for deep reflection – a kind of ‘literary thinking’ which I believe might help cancer patients to put words to existential and difficult thoughts.

Presentation title:

“Assessing the therapeutic benefits of Shared Reading on recently diagnosed cancer patients”

Tine Riis Andersen
PhD candidate

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Yorick Josua Berta

PhD Candidate/Research
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Yorick, what excites you about your research?

The biggest motivation for my work is the opportunity to combine the study of aesthetically and theoretically extremely fascinating artworks with ethical issues I deeply care about, such as the appreciation of processes of decay and/as an acceptance of living in a multispecies lifeworld.

Presentation title:

“Contagious Vanity: The Aesthetics of Decaying Art”

Mariana, what excites you about your research?

Literature has always been my preferred medium to interpret and make sense of the world. So, when the institutionalization of an elderly person became a reality in my own family, generating conflicted emotions in all of us, I felt the urge to use my work as a researcher in the field of Cultural and Literary Studies to try and understand how fiction has problematized and reimagined the nursing home environment. It has been fascinating to analyze its role in constructing and challenging our dominant views and fears regarding the fourth age.

Presentation title:

“Aging in Neverland: Reimagining the Space of the Nursing Home in Leonora Carrington’s *The Hearing Trumpet*”

Mariana Cruz
PhD Student

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Vera Gallistl

Post-Doctoral Researcher

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Vera, what excites you about your research?

As a sociologist, I have always been interested in how the doing and undoing of social phenomena shape the experiences of age and ageing. Drawing upon theories and concepts from critical and cultural gerontology, I look at age and ageing from an everyday-perspective, exploring i.e. how digital technologies change the lives of older people or how older residents of Vienna experience public spaces. In my PhD thesis, I conducted an ethnographic study on ageing in the cultural field, interviewing older artists and culture-enthusiasts about their imaginaries of age/ing to understand how age is being done in the cultural field.

Presentation title:

Nina, what excites you about your research?

In order to identify and enable the possibilities of a long, autonomous life in old age, a target group analysis was carried out in the form of a survey. These results are compared with the urban planning aspects in order to identify parameters for independent living.

Presentation title:
“Autonomous Lifestyle in Old Age in Smart City Districts”

Nina Alisa Habe
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Maja Hadner
PhD Candidate

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Maja, what excites you about your research?

As a geographer, I am interested in the key contents of Social Geography: people (social groups), the functioning of social groups in space, and the social space that emerges from activities of social groups. I find it interesting to observe and get to know the lives of the elderly who live in different environments, the places they often visit, and their activities in these spaces.

Presentation title:
“Social Space of the Elderly”

Anna, what excites you about your research?

Central ethical topics are omnipresent in our daily life. I love to explore their use, implications, history, and consequences as well as their application to organizations and societal structures especially within the fields of Healthcare, Medicine, and Care. The discourses around Ageing and Migration raise questions about some of these topics such as justice and autonomy in a very condensed and radical way. The variety of insights and learnings, also for other fields of research, inspires my research and keeps fascinating me.

Presentation title:

“Aging, Migration and the Question of Justice”

**Anna-Christina
Kainradl**
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Christian Perwein

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Christian, what excites you about your research?

Throughout my academic career I have been interested in interdisciplinary research at the borders between the sciences. As such, diving into such a diverse topic as transhumanism in science fiction, and all this entails, is incredibly exciting and demanding at the same time. By bringing together the humanities with other areas of research I hope to add a little perspective to areas as important as aging.

Presentation title:
“The Elderly Cyborg in Transhuman Fiction”

Alekszandra, what excites you about your research?

When I was a little girl, I wanted to be a writer and an artist. Since my teenage years, I've been an avid volunteer and activist for human rights. As an adult, I've discovered a passion for the academia. My entire life, I've been plagued by endometriosis. My doctoral project allows me to finally reconcile all my interests: research, art, activism, and education. What makes me excited about my work is not only the feeling of personal fulfillment, but the feeling of making an actual contribution to the world and making a difference in women's lives.

Presentation title:

“Medical Humanities: Endometriosis and Aging”

Alekszandra Rokvity
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Martin, what excites you about your research?

As a Geriatric Nurse, I experience every day that decent home care of people with dementia can only go through the well-being of their caring relatives. Therefore, I find it astonishing how little adequate support they receive, considering that they are the “largest care provider” due to the subsidiarity of the German welfare state. My research on how relatives cope with the particularly stressful losses - of identity, shared past, and relationship - aims to support them in their coping process and benefits not only the age demented relatives but all of us.

Presentation title:

“Coping with Losses in Family Caregiving of People with Senile Dementia”

Martin Schmidt
Master’s Student

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Roxana Schweighart
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Roxana, what excites you about your research?

People and their mental health have always been of interest to me, which is why I am now working as a social worker in a counseling center for people with mental health problems. If you look at the elderly population, you soon realize that especially seniors living in nursing homes are increasingly affected by depressive symptoms. I would like to bring these people into focus and examine what wishes and needs these people have and with whom they talk about it.

Presentation title:
“Needs and Wishes of Nursing Home Residents with Depression”

Amal, what excites you about your research?

Even though my research focuses on trauma and memory, my focus on food awards the material body a tangible path to healing. In my critical and creative work, I examine the relationship between food and sex within the framework of feminist thinking. My interest is to use food as a medium to diffuse notions of shame and sin, and to assert and reclaim pleasure.

Presentation title:

“Memory and Food: Toward a Feminist Representation of Trauma”

Amal Shafek
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Katharina Zwanzger
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Katharina, what excites you about your research?

As PhD candidate at the Linguistics Department at the University of Graz, I am working on the analysis of personal narratives of residents of an Irish nursing home. Using a mixed-methods approach, I investigate the residents' experiences of the move to and their lives in the nursing home. What intrigues me most about my research is how aging is conceptualized in the speakers' stories.

Presentation title:
“Aging Identities: the Role of Personal Narratives”

Conference Board

Eva-Maria Trinkaus & Luana Bechstein (Conference Chairs)

Teresa Hartinger & Urša Marinšek (Panel Chairs)

Anna-Christina Kainradl & Katharina Zwanzger (Co-Hosts)

Concept & Organization

Age and Care Research Group Graz &
Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Aging and Care
University of Graz, Austria



Conference Chair

Luana Bechstein

PhD Candidate at the University of Art and Design Linz and member of the Age and Care Research Group Graz, Austria

Luana, what excites you about your research?

As a scholar of cultural studies and as an artist it has always been important to me that I stay close to everyday life – both in my theoretical work and in my art: On the one hand, art is my individual way to deal with age/ing, e.g., to put in artistic “words” my experiences with my very old grandmother with severe dementia. On the other hand, as a researcher, I’m interested in the sensual experiences of aging through art as a source of affective-aesthetic knowledge about aging, which I want to test out with other sciences, because age/ing affects us all.



Conference Chair

Eva-Maria Trinkaus

PhD Candidate & University Assistant Center for Interdisciplinary Research on
Aging and Care and Age and Care Research Group Graz, University of Graz,
Austria

Eva-Maria, what excites you about your research?

I have always been intrigued by the idea that food can do more than 'just' evoke a sense of taste and smell in literary texts, and therefore started to look at it from a spatial perspective in my dissertation. I believe that spaces in literary texts that are created through foodways, food practices, and eating overall can open up a variety of discourses around age/ing and intergenerationality; thus my focus on aging and "literary foodscapes."



Panel Chair Symposium Day I

Urša Marinšek

PhD Candidate & Academic Project Assistant

Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Aging and Care, University of Graz,
Austria

Urša, what excites you about your research?

In my research I focus on drama; written plays and theatre performances, along with translations of plays. I like to follow characters along their stories to see how they develop and what influences their actions. Older characters are always interesting to observe. Firstly, from a meta perspective, to see how they are “made” to be older, and secondly, how they are behaving and how the environment reacts to them. There are stereotypical and non-stereotypical representations of aging and old age, along with the aging process, which often is not the main focus in plays with older characters, but it is connected to whole array of issues (like care, social responsibility, money etc.).



**Panel Chair
Symposium
Day II**

Teresa Hartinger

PhD Candidate & Academic Project Assistant Center for Interdisciplinary
Research on Aging and Care, University of Graz, Austria

Teresa, what excites you about your research?

Literature can take the reader into the inner world of strangers and enables us to see the world through their eyes and to share their fears and thoughts. In addition, literature and culture on the one hand reflect the current age discourses of a society at a certain point in time, but on the other hand, they also create narratives and media productions that consequently contribute to a generally manifested idea of old age. Therefore, in my research I am concerned with the representation and conception of age(ing) in Contemporary Austrian Literature and explore the diverse representations of this phase of life in order to answer the question of how old age is constructed in literary texts.



The First Virtual Interdisciplinary Doctoral Symposium on Aging and Care in Graz

Based on the concept of 'aging' as a cultural construct according to Margaret Morganroth Gullette, and the understanding of 'care' as form of living together interdependently in the sense of Joan Tronto, this **doctoral symposium** brings together **upcoming scholars** in the field of **Aging and Care**, and provides a **platform to discuss** aspects of their **dissertations** and ongoing bodies of work. The [Age and Care Research Group Graz](#) appreciates the academic involvement of emerging scholars and supports the interdisciplinary exchange on a global scale. Thus, this symposium offers its participants a space that allows for an interdisciplinary discussion and supports the foundation of a **global pre-doctoral network** at an early career stage.

The symposium is organized by the Doctoral Student Group of the Age and Care Research Group Graz and will be held twice a year, one symposium held in the Spring, and the second one in the Fall. By collaborating with partners outside the research group, the symposium offers young researchers a networking platform at an early stage of their academic work. It also makes current and ongoing research at the four universities in Graz visible and offers an early-career-platform within the Age and Care Research Group Graz.



The First Interdisciplinary Doctoral Symposium on Aging and Care was organized by the **Age and Care Research Group Graz** together with the **Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Aging and Care** and the Heterogeneity and Cohesion's **Aging, Demography, and Care** research network.

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Imprint:

Editing, Layout, Illustration: Eva-Maria
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