

Echoes of Age: Relational Dynamics in an Intergenerational World

XIII Graduate Conference in Culture Studies | 3–4 April 2025

Keynote Speakers

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In a time of rapidly evolving technology, cultural norms and economic conditions, interactions and (dis)identifications across generations have become more significant and increasingly complex. The distinctions between biological, emotional, and physical age are now blurred, challenging the traditional linear view of ageing. This affects how ageing is perceived, experienced and portrayed, from the human body to the evolution of cities and cultural practices. In the digital age, the anti-ageing discourse demands an examination of social media's influence on ageing perceptions, the commercialization of anti-ageing products, and the effects on self-esteem and societal expectations.

Key questions arise: How do cultural objects and practices shape behaviours and representations of ageing? How do literature, film, music, and the visual arts depict the ageing process? Or how does culture construct ageing by setting standards on what it is to be a child, a teenager, or an elder? It is also crucial to shed light on the different representations of ageing, whether from childhood (Ariès 1965) to youth (Savage 2007) or adulthood to old age (Swift and Steeden 2020). This also impacts the study of generational clashes, examining how different age groups interact and conflict within various cultural contexts and how this has been discussed in literature and media (Gardner and Macky 2012).

Moreover, representations of ageing are often gendered, with negative connotations for women. Feminist perspectives are crucial in redefining “successful ageing” and exploring how beauty standards affect both younger and older generations. Age and identity are closely linked, with generations defined by shared historical experiences. In the workplace, age diversity introduces both conflict and cooperation, with five generations cohabiting the workforce—Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z.

This conference aims to address what Simone de Beauvoir termed the “conspiracy of silence surrounding ageing,” examining biases and strategies to overcome intergenerational disparities. *How can we foster respect and understanding among generations? How can we overcome generational gaps to promote social innovation and resilience? In what ways do generational differences present both challenges and opportunities for societal cohesion?* We invite contributions discussing the multifaceted concept of ageing and intergenerational dynamics, with topics including, but not limited to:

- Cultural representations and creations of ageing
 - Memory: practices of remembering and developing
 - Feminism and ageing
- Environmental sustainability and ageing
 - Longevity and quality of life
 - Elderly care and social support systems
 - Older people as the Other
 - Planetary grief and ageing



- Indigenous knowledge and perspectives on ageing
- Generational clashes and solidarity
- Western obsession with youth / Youth culture as city culture
- Media and music expressions / Media portrayal of age / Social media and anti-ageing
- Technological and economic changes / Technological integration
- Death calls, death wish, and life beyond
- Workforce diversity and ageing
 - Age, Identity, cultural shifts
 - Healthcare and ageing populations
 - Intern at 70, peaking at 20
- Age friendly cities and urban planning
 - Aesthetics, accessibility, and inclusion (bodies that matter – Sara Ahmed Being in question) / Technological integration
 - Metaphors and cognitive assumptions
 - Life-cultures and practices / Life, death, and everything in between and after (Anzaldua)
 - Youth culture as city culture
 - Health and well-being services

About the conference

- The working language of the conference is English.
- Individual paper presentations will be allocated 15 minutes for presentation and 15 minutes for questions.
- We invite abstracts for individual or joint papers and presentations as well as alternative interventions including artistic interventions, co-creative workshops, reading groups and more. Please specify any needed materials in your abstract.
- Abstract (approximately 250 words) and short biography (100 words) should be sent by email to echoesofage.conference@gmail.com no later than **6 January 2025**.
- Notification of acceptance will be sent on **7 February 2025**, at the latest. After acceptance of abstracts, participants will be asked to register for the conference and to provide some personal details to this end.

Registration fees

The registration fee includes coffee breaks and conference materials.

- Early bird (from 10 to 16 February 2025): €85
- Regular registration (from 17 February to 4 March 2025): €110
- CECC researchers are exempted from registration fees but must register.

Vernissage for Exhibition to be announced soon.

Contact: To read the longer version of the call, visit our website www.echoesofage.wordpress.com or email echoesofage.conference@gmail.com