



Call for contributions for an upcoming special issue:

AGEING WITH DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: FROM THEORY TO AGENCY AND PRACTICE

Guest Edited by MAGDALENA KANIA-LUNDHOLM (Dalarna University College, Sweden) & HELEN MANCHESTER (University of Bristol, UK)

Scholars agree that information technologies, digital devices and mediated systems of communication have profoundly shaped societies on all levels and later life is no exception. However, to date, the majority of scholarship addressing old age and digital technologies has focused either on issues pertaining to inequalities and digital divides or on the use and impact of those technologies on older people's well-being and health. These studies are often informed by a celebratory, techno-deterministic approach to digital technologies and/or are characterized by an interventionist logic that positions the networked, digital technologies themselves as major solutions to the 'problems' of aging.

There is a small but growing body of research that challenges these dominant assumptions. These scholars suggest that aging and technology are not separate realms but are co-constituted and need to be studied together. Here digital technologies are seen as embedded in particular social contexts and are often used in creative or unexpected ways. This approach emphasizes the agency of older people, who are seen as competent agents actively participating and (dis)engaging with technologies in multiple ways, rather than incompetent and frail laggards who require assistance and support. From that perspective ageing and technology are examined as broad phenomenon embedded and located in specific material contexts, temporalities and spaces.

The task of this special issue is to provide a counter-narrative to dominant accounts of ageing and technology. Its main focus is on critical engagements with ageing and technology, questions of old age, design and use. We look for contributions that shed light on the 'messiness of practice' emerging from, sometimes unexpected, encounters which involve questions of subjectivity, agency, digital (dis)engagement and technology non-use.

We welcome proposals from scholars working across a variety of locations and disciplines. In line with IJAL's aims and scope we particularly welcome contributions that advance the conceptual and theoretical debates on ageing and later life in relation to digital technologies. We welcome international contributions, especially those coming from the Global South.

Contributions may address and expand to following topics, but are not limited to them:

- Critical engagement and conceptualizations of aging and technology
- Theory / practice and agency
- The 'messiness' of practice of aging and technology
- Creativity / technology non-use
- Critical engagement with design (and co-design) of technologies
- Agency, aging and technology
- Subjectivity, aging and technology
- Sex, gender, race, old age and technologies (intersectional approach)

Guest editors:

Dr Magdalena Kania-Lundholm is a Senior Lecturer in sociology at the School of Health and Social Studies, Dalarna University College, Sweden. Her research focuses on the intersections between culture, power and technology; it combines sociology of communications and media, cultural sociology, critical internet studies, social theory and qualitative methods. She focuses on, among others, the questions of digitalization, technology (non) use among older people and digital inclusion.

Magdalena's work was featured in journals such as Sociology Compass, Journal of Aging Studies, Media Culture & Society, Digital Media & Society and others.

Dr Helen Manchester is a Reader in Digital Inequalities and Urban Futures at the University of Bristol. She works at the intersection of design sociology, science and technology studies and cultural studies. Helen is interested in digital literacies and digital inclusion, co-design processes and material cultures. She develops methodologically innovative approaches to research in collaboration with artists, technologists, civil society organisations and policy-makers. Helen has led a number of Research Council UK funded projects, working with older people, including Tangible Memories: Community in care and Tangible Memories: Parlours of Wonder.

DEADLINE FOR ABSTRACT SUBMISSION: 31ST AUGUST, 2020

Please submit a max. 500-word abstract by email to Magdalena Kania-Lundholm at mkd@du.se and ijal@ep.liu.se by August 31, 2020.

A selected number of abstracts based on scientific quality and relevance for this Special Issue will be invited to full manuscript submission with deadline December 15th 2020.

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

August 31, 2020 - deadline for abstract submission

December 15, - full manuscript submission

January- May 2021 - reviewing process

Fall / Winter 2021 - Expected publication of the Special Issue

For more information on this special issue, contact the guest editor at mkd@du.se

<https://ijal.se>