



BSA Ageing,
Body and
Society
Study Group

Embodiment and Dementia PROGRAMME AND DELEGATE LIST

26th March 2010
Bradford University
Bradford

In association with



Futures of Ageing: Science, Technology and the Body Monday 19th July 2010

You are warmly invited to the 3rd Annual Conference of the *Ageing, Body and Society* study group. We are delighted that the British Library, London, are our co-hosts for this conference, that enables us to present our research in a very special, prestigious and engaging venue, close to the centre of the London.

Co-Convenors: Dr Wendy Martin (Brunel University) and Professor Julia Twigg (University of Kent)

Keynote Address: Professor Simon Williams (Warwick University, UK)
How Old is Your Brain?: Neuroculture, Active Ageing and Cognitive Decline

Plenary Panel: Technogenarians: Studying Health and Illness through an Aging, Science, and Technology Lens.

Participants include: Dr Kelly Joyce (College of William and Mary, USA); Dr Meika Loe (Colgate University, USA); Professor Barb Marshall (Trent University, Canada); Louis Neven (University of Twente); Katie Brittain (Newcastle University, UK)

Call for Abstracts and Invitation to Delegates

Science and technologies are becoming increasingly significant to people's experiences of growing older; innovations and developments that are likely to influence the context, nature, experiences and understandings of ageing and embodiment. This one day conference seeks to bring together researchers, academics and practitioners whose work explores and highlights the diverse ways in which science and technologies interconnect with and influence our ageing bodies. We encourage researchers to share their perspectives on science, technologies and ageing bodies and welcome abstracts on different theoretical and methodological approaches, different disciplines, emergent ideas, work in progress, practitioner perspectives, and empirical findings.

We invite abstracts for presentations that will be 15 - 20 minutes in length, please see www.britisoc.co.uk/events/ageing for further details, the abstract deadline is **Friday 23rd April 2010** and registration will be open by the end of February 2010.

WELCOME

BSA Ageing, Body and Society Study Group Conference Embodiment and Dementia

There has been an increasing interest in the biological, cultural and social dimensions of our bodies as we grow older. Whilst the body and dementia is a growing area of intellectual activity and gaining significance within dementia care, there has been less work that has explicitly addressed the nature of embodiment in relation to dementia. In particular, there have been few opportunities for researchers, academics and practitioners to explore and highlight these issues.

The aim of this one day conference is to bring together researchers, academics and practitioners to explore the diverse ways in which the body and embodiment is part of the experience of dementia and its implications for care and practice. By drawing on a number of different disciplines – including philosophy, sociology, psychology, arts and the humanities, medicine and social work – this conference will further highlight the complex and multifaceted nature of the body in dementia and dementia care.

The conference is co-hosted by the University of Bradford, an internationally recognised expert in dementia, and the British Sociological Association (BSA) Ageing, Body and Society study group. This conference will therefore inform and integrate these research themes explicitly.

Wendy Martin and Julia Twigg

BSA Ageing, Body and Society Study Group Convenors

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As always many people have helped with organising the conference, thanks go to the BSA office for their support. Thanks also go to Professor Murna Downs, Chair in Dementia Studies and Head of Group and her colleagues at Bradford University for their support of this event.





**BSA AGEING, BODY AND SOCIETY STUDY GROUP
2010 CONFERENCE
EMBODIMENT AND DEMENTIA**
Friday 26th March 2010
Bradford Dementia Group, Bradford



DRAFT OUTLINE PROGRAMME

The BSA Ageing, Body and Society Study Group Conference 'Embodiment and Dementia' is hosted by the Bradford Dementia Group and will take place at Bradford University. The conference starts at 10:00 on Friday 26th March 2010 and ends with the conference wine reception at 16:45.

The **keynote address** will be by **Pia Kontos**, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, University of Toronto, Canada who will speak on **Friday 26th March at 10:40**.

Friday 26th March 2010

10:00 – 10:30	Coffee and Registration	Escalate Centre
10:30 – 10:40	Conference Welcome: Professor Murna Downs (University of Bradford and Conference Chair); Professor Julia Twigg and Dr Wendy Martin (Co-Convenors of BSA <i>Ageing, Body and Society</i> study group)	Escalate Centre
10:40 – 11:40	Keynote address: Dr Pia Kontos: <i>Artistic and literary representations of Alzheimer's disease: Philosophical reflections on embodiment and selfhood</i>	Escalate Centre
11:40 – 12:00	Break	Escalate Centre
12:00 – 12:30	Professor Julia Twigg: <i>Clothing and Embodiment: A Neglected Dimension of Dementia</i>	Escalate Centre
12:30 – 13:00	Dr Richard Ward: <i>Dementia, Hair and Body Work</i>	Escalate Centre
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch	Escalate Centre
14:00– 14:30	Dr Wendy Martin: <i>Embodied Vulnerabilities, Sleep and Care</i>	Escalate Centre
14:30 – 15:00	Dr Richard Coaten: <i>Going by Way of the Body in Dementia Care</i>	Escalate Centre
15:00– 15:20	Break	Escalate Centre
15:20 – 16:00	Professor Julian Hughes: <i>Seeing Suffering – how do we do it?</i>	Escalate Centre
16.00 – 16.40	Roundtable: <i>Embodiment and Dementia; Current and Future Agendas</i>	Escalate Centre
16.45 – 18:00	Wine reception	Escalate Centre

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Dr Pia Kontos

“Artistic and literary representations of Alzheimer’s disease: Philosophical reflections on embodiment and selfhood”

Explicit in much of the literature on Alzheimer’s disease is the assumption that with dementia there is a steady erosion of selfhood with advancing cognitive impairment. This presumed existential loss can be traced to the positivistic philosophy of Descartes, the primary features of which are the separation of mind and body, the subordination of body to mind, and the associated dominance of cognition. In contrast to the Cartesian mind/body dualism that permeates the discourse on Alzheimer’s disease, theories of embodiment offer a critical perspective from which to challenge assumptions about existential loss with advancing cognitive impairment. I articulate a perspective on embodiment that disentangles selfhood from the cognitive categories upon which it is presumed to depend, and that underscores the ways in which selfhood is produced and reproduced non-discursively through the body. I will take as my focus select artistic and literary accounts of the experience of Alzheimer’s disease, the narratives of which will render taken-for-granted categories and claims to loss of selfhood vulnerable to displacement and deconstruction. I shall explore these accounts in the context of the notion of embodied selfhood in order to theoretically capture the corporeal dimensions of selfhood and the indeterminacy of the experiences of Alzheimer’s disease that the accounts powerfully illustrate. I will argue that incorporating the body into a rethinking of the nature of the self can resuscitate a vital source of selfhood that is debased by the Cartesian moorings of modern science.

Dr. Pia Kontos holds a PhD from the University of Toronto in Public Health Sciences. She is a Research Scientist at Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, and Assistant Professor at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto. Her work on aging takes its bearings from the humanities (biographical, performative, fictional and narrative perspectives), philosophy (existential phenomenology, embodiment), and the social sciences (ethnographic, critical, emancipatory, and theories of the body). Her current research focuses on bridging the work she does on selfhood in Alzheimer’s disease with clinical practice in dementia care. To do so her research relies on research-based theatre, improvisational drama, and film as innovative pedagogical strategies for knowledge translation. She has published articles in numerous journals including *Journal of Aging Studies*, *Ageing and Society*, *Qualitative Research*, *Qualitative Health Research*, *Sociology of Health and Illness*, *Dementia*, *The Gerontologist*, *Implementation Science*, and *Philosophy in the Contemporary World*. She has also contributed to several edited volumes: *Old Age and Agency*; *Ageing and Place: Perspectives, Policy, Practice*; *Thinking About Dementia: Culture, Loss and the Anthropology of Senility*; and *Contesting Aging and Loss*.



Twigg, J.

University of Kent

Clothing and Embodiment: A Neglected Dimension of Dementia

Clothing is central in our everyday experience of embodiment, part of how present ourselves in embodied form and of how we experience the world in our immediate bodily surroundings. Dress is central to identity and selfhood; and has been widely analysed in these terms in mainstream sociology. But it has received relatively little attention in studies of dementia. The presentation, which addresses questions of the body, identity and selfhood, will argue - against the dominant understanding - that clothes are of significance in the lives and wellbeing of people with dementia. Drawing on theorising that emphasises the embodied nature of selfhood, it will explore the role of clothing in the maintenance of identity; its nature as the 'environment closest in'; its significance in social interaction; and its potential character as an agent of control and normativity. Clothing and dress offer a potentially interesting field through which we can explore the nature of personhood in dementia, in ways that offer insights into forms of response through which individuality and selfhood can be recognised, maintained and enhanced.

Ward, R.

University of Manchester

Dementia, hair and body work

Hairstyles play an integral role in the visual coding and response to old age but little is currently known of how individuals with dementia construct self-image through routines such as hairstyling, and how this is negotiated in the context of impairment and frailty and current conditions in care settings. These conditions have been characterised recently by increasing efforts to personalise care through greater choice and control, however the pattern for dementia care remains one of tightly defined and regulated task-based forms of support. One challenge posed by this tension is how to enhance the relational, expressive and social dimension to routine care-based encounters. This paper will consider how aesthetic labour fits into this wider picture of care and support and will take account of both the semiotic and embodied dimensions to hairdressing and hair-care, set within a context of the practical and economic considerations that shape the provision of this service and access to it. Existing research on institutionalised care has signalled the importance attached by caring organisations and individual workers to the appearance and presentation of residents with grooming argued to serve as an indicator of good care. Presentational work has also been approached by care workers as a means to counter the stigma attached to dementia. Key questions raised by this work concern the different purposes and interests served by aesthetic labour in care and how to better understand its role in promoting positive outcomes for service users.

Martin, W.

Brunel University

Embodied Vulnerabilities, Sleep and Care

While the social aspects of dementia have been increasingly researched over the past decade, there has been little focus on sleep and its significance to older people with dementia within the context of care. This paper explores the experiences of sleep among older people with dementia and the perceptions of family carers and care staff in different care settings. The paper is drawn from a larger research project that explored the empowerment of older people with dementia, and involved 18 in-depth interviews with older people with dementia and 8 focus groups with health and social care staff and family carers.

The discourses of the older people with dementia and family carers, emphasised vulnerabilities associated with sleep, thematically represented as: (1) interconnections between health, care, the body and sleep; (2) memory loss and perceptions of sleep, time and place; and (3) a sense of vulnerability around night-time, sleep and safety. The sleep discourses of the older people with dementia and their family carers focused on meanings associated with experiential dimensions of sleep and were closely connected to their social identities and roles. The key concern for the health and social care staff was the organisation of sleep, including: (1) temporal management of sleep and sleep practices, and (2) management of sleep across public/private space: safety, surveillance and privacy. The sleep discourses of the health and social care staff predominately focused on sleep practices and environmental dimensions of sleep. These different perspectives denote varying positions and concerns in relation to sleep between waking conscious actors and dormant bodies, thereby highlighting the social significance of power relations and vulnerabilities within the context of care for older people with dementia. This paper will conclude by reflecting on how interconnections between dementia and sleep offer important insights into our embodied vulnerabilities and ageing bodies.

Going by Way of the Body in Dementia Care

This focuses on describing the details of a recently completed empirical study of 'embodiment' involving movement, dance, music, song and reminiscence, undertaken in an NHS facility involving four people with dementia and a small group of care-staff in training. The study observed effects on well/ill-being, identified embodied practices used and their impact on people with dementia; coupled with the impact on care-staff of a single Dance Movement Psychotherapy (DMP) session. DMP is defined as: 'an interdisciplinary treatment medium: a hybrid of the art of dance and the science of psychology adapted to human service' (Goodill, 2005: 21). The study used DCM, VTR, Questionnaires, Laban Movement Analysis and found, within a participant-observation methodology that observed 'well-being' increased for session duration. Embodied practices contributed to improved mobility; affirmed identity: supported affective communication and extended range and quality of care relationships.

Implications for care-staff mean their being better informed psychologically about how to engage, how to 'build bridges of understanding' (Coaten, 2009) between the 'known' and the 'not-yet-known'. A challenging formulation is presented here that people with dementia threaten those around them by being different; this represents a challenge to care-staff to open up to this 'difference' and 'otherness', better able to create more meaningful and emotionally congruent relationships as a result. 'Otherness', is often expressed non-verbally by way of the body, and it is our responsibility as care professionals to be better able to make sense of and respond to, what has also been called 'embodied selfhood' (Kontos, 2005) in dementia care.

'Seeing suffering – How do we do it?'

In this paper I shall use the issue of pain in severe dementia to discuss embodiment and our understanding of the body in dementia.

I shall start by looking at some research on pain in severe dementia. From this I want to draw out something about the nature of our understanding of the body in people with severe dementia. Part of the issue here is what the body is – for any of us and particularly for those who cannot express their wishes or feelings – and how it cannot be understood simply as the body. There is a background to our understanding of the body. I shall discuss this background, which gives rise to intuition, and the extent to which it can be articulated. It may be that the background, our intuitions, cannot be fully set out. The knowledge we have is, perhaps, tacit. The way we see things reflects this quiet background understanding. In which case, there is something that cannot be said about the human body.

The importance of this is felt when we return to practical issues concerning how we decide that someone with dementia is suffering. The notion of tacit knowledge has relevance in a broader field too: how do we, quite generally, interpret bodily gestures in severe dementia? And further: how do we make judgements about a person's best interests? Seeing the body properly requires an appreciation of the background from which we perceive.

BSA Ageing Body & Society: Embodiment & Dementia Conference

DELEGATE LIST

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We look forward to welcoming you to our 42nd Annual Conference.
In addition to two high profile plenary speakers, the 2010 conference will celebrate our international links with a Canadian symposium.

Presentations will be structured around streams that include:

1. Cancer
2. Embodiment and Emotion
3. Ethics
4. Ethnicity
5. Experiences of Health and Illness
6. Gender
7. Health policy, service delivery & organisation
8. Health technologies and genetics
9. Individual, collective and global risk
10. Inequalities
11. Lay-professional interface
12. Lifecourse: Reproductive Health; Chronic conditions; ageing; death and dying
13. Mental Health
14. Methods
15. Preventive Health
16. Social Movements and Health
17. Theory
18. Open Stream

We welcome abstract submissions for oral presentations, poster presentations, workshops and symposia

Further details and abstract submission form available from: www.britisoc.co.uk/events/medsoc and bsamedsoc@britsoc.org.uk

Please direct any enquiries regarding symposia to L.Lewis@bathspa.ac.uk and any administrative or general abstract

2nd BSA FOOD STUDY GROUP INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

'FOOD, SOCIETY AND PUBLIC HEALTH'

Monday 5th and Tuesday 6th July, 2010
The British Library Conference Centre, London

Confirmed plenary speakers: Claude Fischler, CNRS, Paris
and Harriet Friedmann, University of Toronto, Canada



BRITISH
LIBRARY

The aim of this 2nd conference is to further explore the *interface* between food, society and public health through a sociological lens. Understanding patterns of food consumption, food acquisition or food production offers wider insights into social class, ethnicity, self-identity and the life course and the implications for national and global inequalities.

Further details and conference programme available from:
www.britisoc.co.uk/events/food or

Please direct any academic enquiries to w.j.wills@herts.ac.uk and any administrative enquiries to conference@britsoc.org.uk



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