

ENGLISH SUMMARIES

Kristina Grünenberg & Line Hillersdal: “The Nordic Model”. Travelling Visions of Welfare Care for the Elderly in Denmark and South Korea

To pre-empt the economic challenges imagined to be the outcome of an aging society, in recent years major changes have taken place in the ways in which care for the elderly is organized in Denmark. Against this backdrop, innovation models and know-how that address these challenges have become commodities and investment objects for both private companies and the national health sector that also brands itself and exports internationally through the promotion of such innovative solutions. The article is based on fieldwork focusing on the exchange of visions and solutions for future eldercare in South Korea and Denmark. Through observations, interviews with employees in living labs, politicians, and health care practitioners working in elder care, we have followed the exchange of visions for eldercare between Denmark and South Korea, more specifically between strategic investments in digitalization on the Danish island Ærø and visions for a reorganization of eldercare in Busan, South Korea. We argue that these visions and solutions are embedded in notions of a “Nordic model” and that they are scaled in a way that is directed both inward – towards actors in the Danish healthcare system and outward – towards an international market. At the same time, we conclude that these “socio-technical imaginaries” are deeply connected to economic logics and agendas, and that local practices and frictions related to their scaling are invisibilized in the process, but that these imaginaries may also constitute resources for local actors. The article contributes knowledge on how health innovation and welfare state eldercare develops through the exchange between expertise, technology, and visions on a local as well as a global level.

Keywords: aging societies, welfare state, the entrepreneurial state, branding, innovation, socio-technical imaginaries, scaling, the Nordic Model

Kamilla Nørtoft & Amalie Eising Bentholt: Love as Value and Care Practices in Nursing Homes in Greenland

In this article, we explore how love is expressed as a value and in care practices in nursing homes in Greenland. Many care workers perceive love as a natural element of their work, but at the same time an element that is very different from practical care tasks. In several nursing homes, love is identified as a fundamental

value in the institutional care work. In practice, the love between employees and nursing home residents can be seen in the physical contact between them and is expressed in words and reflections of the care workers as well. The employees compare the love they feel and express for the residents to the love they feel for family. To them, love is connected to reciprocity between generations and seems to be an ethical approach to their way of practicing care work.

Keywords: Greenland, aging, care, love, nursing homes

Nete Schwennesen & Loa Kristine Teglgard Christensen: “Is it Possible to Write an Obituary for a Dog?” Animal Bordering Human in Care for the Elderly

The paper unfolds the case of “Basse” – a much-loved nursing home dog who lived most of his life as a “common” dog in a Danish nursing home until he passed away in autumn 2020. Based on a “multispecies anthropological” analytical lens, the authors follow how the dog creates new possibilities for becoming-with; for the dog as well as for the manager, the residents and volunteers engaged in running the nursing home. The authors show how the dog emerges as an entity on a continuum between the human and the non-human. On the one hand, Basse appears to possess (extra-ordinary) human qualities when it acts as a caregiver in relational interactions with residents. On the other hand, Basse appears as radically different from humans, when it emerges as a symbol and managerial instrument of change and at the end of Basse’s life, when aging sets in and it becomes frail and not able to attune its behavior to caregivers. The authors argue that Basse’s position on the border of humanity creates multiple opportunities for becoming-with-Basse, which makes it a particularly valuable co-resident at the nursing home. Finally, the article discusses how a “multi-species anthropological” analytic raises attention to aging as a phenomenon that humans share with other species which gives rise to existential vulnerability and reflect on the new ethical and political questions, that this perspective gives rise to – particularly with respect to humans obligation to act responsively and caring towards the multiple forms of (human and non-human) life that we as human beings live with, become with, and grow older with.

Keywords: multi-species anthropology, dogs, nursing home, aging, care

Anne Mia Steno & Alexandra Ryborg Jønsson: “I Thought this Would be Freedom, but it Turns Out to be Nothing but Rules”. Time, Space and Authenticity in Municipal Senior Residences for Lonely Elders

This article examines time and space as defining factors in respect to what kind of activities and relations might take place in senior living communities for lonely elderly people in Denmark. The article draws on the concept of authenticity in the theoretical discussion on why some older people experience not being met and acknowledged as authentic selves. Hence, the notion of authentic self is coupled with the notions of time and space in order to open up a discussion on how the particular temporal and spatial design and structuring at the senior housing facilities risks maintaining the elderly in loneliness.

Keywords: aging, loneliness, authenticity, time, space

Mikka Nielsen: Aging, Loneliness and Social Navigation. Dropping Anchor in New Relations

Based on an ethnographic study of a cross-municipality initiative to prevent depression among the elderly, I investigate partly how perceptions of depression and loneliness are entangled in the municipality initiative and partly how the elderly targeted in the intervention experience lack of close relations. With an analytical onset in social navigation and anchoring, the paper illustrates that the elderly, even in late life, may often establish and engage in new relations requiring strong abilities in navigating changing relations and call for many considerations as to how such relations are established, used, nursed and spared to avoid them being drained. The paper discusses, how establishing new relations, e.g. through municipal-driven activities to prevent depression, may add meaningful activities in the elderly’s everyday lives, yet managing experiences of vulnerability, dependency, and despair require close mutual and often familial or long-standing relations.

Keywords: aging, loneliness, social relations, social navigation

Martin Lindhardt: “Out Here we Help Each Other but We Don’t Interfere in Each Other’s Life”. Aging and Autonomy in Rural Areas of Southern Denmark

This article explores how senior citizens in rural areas in southern Denmark navigate between an explicit ideal of autonomy, or of not being a burden to others, and an equally explicit ideal of helping each other within their localities. Senior

citizens who were interviewed for a research project expressed a certain stoic pride in not being dependent upon others. This was reflected in very low expectations to political solutions to infrastructural challenges, in the importance they attributed to a local grocery store, widely seen as instrumental for the survival and autonomy of villages, and finally in a repeated insistence that one should not be a burden to family members or friends. At the same time respondents unanimously emphasized that the community and the fact that people knew each other was the greatest benefit of living in rural areas/small villages. The article explores how the strong ideal of autonomy, combined with different kinds of social participation, becomes a source for maintaining stable self-identities during a stage of life that can be characterized by different kinds of change.

Keywords: ageing, rural areas, community, autonomy, place attachment

Stine Grønbæk Jensen: When the Dust Settles. The Home as an Existential Medium for Preparing Oneself for Death among the Oldest Old

Based on the assumption that the existential aspects of aging have fallen into the background both in society and in anthropological research on aging, the article sets out to examine how the elderly in Danish society handle the transition to old age and the end of life. The article highlights that life among the oldest old is often associated with changes and losses, as inner and outer forces gain ever more control towards the end of life. That makes old age a phase of life in which existence is often put at stake. From a life course perspective, the author points out, that culturally and historically constituted values and virtues play a central role in the elderly's efforts to deal with their situation. Analytically focus is therefore on the moral work of the elderly and their efforts to remain decent people who despite weakness and dependence continue to live a dignified life in compliance with their moral ground projects. Based on a phenomenological approach, the article also focuses on how this moral work is primarily carried out through everyday practices. Since the oldest old spend most of their time at home, and since a home can be seen as an extension of the self, the author argues that home is often an important medium in these endeavors. On the one hand, the home is often used by the elderly to create continuity in self-images and moral projects. On the other hand, the increasing dominance of the home also confront the elderly with their changed situation and often force them to face aging and death. The article is based on an anthropological study among 20 elderly people in Sorø, Denmark, who are approaching or have reached their nineties.

Keywords: aging, end of life, anthropology of home, moral work, existential anthropology

Amy Clotworthy: “The Majority of People I meet [...] They Step Aside for Me”. Adaptions of Life and Identity Among Aging Citizens During the Coronavirus Pandemic

“I don’t feel like I’m in a risk group, but I hear it from one or another – my kids make me aware of it: ‘Now, you take care of yourself, mom. You’re in the risk group’” (interview with Signe, age 83, April 16 2020). When the World Health Organization declared a pandemic in March 2020 due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, national governments worldwide decided to lockdown the usual movements of society. Like many countries, there was a call in Denmark to protect those who were considered to have a higher risk of developing serious consequences and possibly dying from infection; i.e., people with compromised immune systems or certain chronic illnesses (e.g., cardiometabolic disease, lung disease) as well as people age 65+ and especially age 80+. However, as Signe suggested, not all older people felt like it was accurate to designate them as part of this high-risk group. How did older people experience this new sociocultural context? To explore this, I draw upon semi-structured qualitative interviews conducted with people across Denmark during the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Taking inspiration from anthropologists Margaret Clark and Sharon Kaufman, I analyse the late-life adaptations and identity negotiations that were necessitated by a dramatic cultural discontinuity: the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, I describe the forms of cultural ageism that some people experienced, and how certain dynamics affected their perceptions of themselves as “old” and “at risk”. My analysis of this unique empirical material sheds new light on the interplay between cultural and societal assumptions and an older individual’s ability to negotiate relationships, subjectivities, and self-understandings.

Keywords: Covid-19, identity, lockdown, care, vulnerability

Lærke Møller Nielsen & Mikkel Rytter: A Mother in Denmark and a Mother in Afghanistan. Kinning and New Beginnings between Young Refugees and their Legal Guardians

A relatively large part of the asylum seekers that came to Denmark during “the long summer of migration” in 2015 were under the age of 18 and travelled without adult relatives. The numbers of unaccompanied minors from Afghanistan were 844 in 2015 and 527 in 2016. As minors they receive professional help, care and guidance in the in the asylum process, and are placed in special centers for minors. When they finally are granted temporary residency as refugees, they get a legal guardian, a volunteer Danish citizen that agree to help the youngsters establish a new life in the municipality they have been

assigned to. Inspired by Signe Howell's (2006) work on transnational adoption in Norwegian families this paper discusses the dynamics of kinning processes where unaccompanied minors and their legal guardians over time attempts to develop strong emotional ties. The bumbling transformation of "order of law" into "order of nature" not only constitute a new beginning of family relationships, but may also promote a future model for sustainable inclusion of refugees in Denmark.

Keywords: kinship, kinning, motherhood, refugees, Afghanistan