

For the time being - temporality, ethics, aging

Conversations between anthropology, art and philosophy

International Symposium // Aarhus
March 31st - April 2nd, 2020



For the time being – temporality, ethics, aging.

Conversations between anthropology, art and philosophy

Aarhus, March 31st – April 2nd, 2020.

Humans are time beings - beings who have perceptions of past, present and future. We care about time and we work on our experience of time. We plan, we hope, we regret, we reflect upon the past, we worry about the future, we cherish the moment, we lose track of time. With old age, do temporal horizons change and what kinds of 'time-work' do elderly engage in?

Humans tend to forget that everything is temporary – that what happens now is just 'for the time being.' We try to remind ourselves and others that things will change, but is it the case that experiences of impermanence and finitude increase with aging? In old age, one may be living with chronic diseases that have a certain stability, but one's body may also change dramatically. Frailty appears and disappears; people around you die – a reminder that living is temporary and that death is part of life and will come also to you.

Is there a gift 'for the time being' in old age – the experience of another way of being in time? A present of the present, a gift of time? Can we explore good old lives not as successful and active aging, but as meaningful decline without falling into romanticizing stereotypes? Might new forms of suffering that arise also fracture or destabilize earlier understandings of a meaningful life?

In this symposium, we ask: How do temporal perspectives on lived time and time left change with old age and what are the roles of inter- and intra-generational dynamics in elderly's perspectives on past, present and future life challenges and horizons? How does historicity play into experiences of lived time, worries about the future, and time-work in old age? And how may explorations of temporality, ethics and aging inform ongoing theoretical discussions in the anthropology of ethics and morality, philosophical anthropology and responsive and critical phenomenology?

The symposium is organized around the research project "Aging as a human condition – radical uncertainty and the search for a good (old) life" where philosophers, artists and anthropologists have been exploring four themes: the mindful body, home space, intimate others and lived time. In this symposium we explore the fourth theme – that of time. The uncertainties that emerge with old age are not only those of bodily function, financial means, and social and medical support, but that of time itself - how much is left, how to fill it, how to keep it moving ahead and how to live with human finitude.

The project is funded by VELUX FONDEN, with contributions from AU, AIAS and VIVE. The project exhibition "Growing Old" at Moesgaard Museum will be part of the symposium.

Invited speakers:

Joel Robbins (University of Cambridge), Anne O'Byrne (Stony Brook University), Robert Desjarlais (Sarah Lawrence College), Cheryl Mattingly (University of Southern California), Lawrence Cohen (UC Berkeley), Jason Danely (Oxford Brookes University), Susan Reynolds-Whyte (University of Copenhagen), Sverre Raffnsøe (Copenhagen Business School), Tine Rostgaard (VIVE – The Danish Center for Social Science Research), Thomas Schwarz Wentzer (Aarhus University), and Anne Marie Pahuus (Aarhus University).

The symposium is organized around the research project "Aging as a human condition – radical uncertainty and the search for a good (old) life" where philosophers, artists and anthropologists have been exploring four themes: the mindful body, home space, intimate others and lived time.

For more information and registration please visit <https://aias.au.dk/events/for-the-time-being-temporality-ethics-aging/>

Tuesday March 31

Venue: AIAS,
Høegh-Guldbergsgade 6B, 8000 Aarhus C

09.30 Registration & coffee
10.00 – 10.20 Opening Remarks

Session 1: TEMPORALITIES AND ETHICS

Chair: Rasmus Dyring, Aarhus University

10.20 - 11.05 **Joel Robbins, University of Cambridge**
On the Prospects for a Comparative Study of the Good: Beyond the Bad and the Ugly in Anthropological Relativism.

11.10 - 11.40 **Harmandeep Kaur Gill, Aarhus University**
Waiting for death. Temporal perspectives in the Life of an Elderly Tibetan Monk in Exile, India.

11.45 – 12.15 **Lone Grøn, VIVE - The Danish Center for Social Science Research**
Presents in Dementia – Exploring Temporality and Ethics at a Danish Dementia Ward.

12.15 – 12.45 Discussion

Lunch

The symposium is organized around the research project "Aging as a human condition – radical uncertainty and the search for a good (old) life" where philosophers, artists and anthropologists have been exploring four themes: the mindful body, home space, intimate others and lived time.
For more information and registration please visit <https://aias.au.dk/events/for-the-time-being-temporality-ethics-aging/>

Session 2: SPECTRAL AND IMAGISTIC TIME

Chair: Lotte Meinert, Aarhus University

13.45 – 14.15 **Robert Desjarlais, Sarah Lawrence College**

The times of a life: aging, memory, and multi-temporalities within an elderly woman's lifeworld.

14.20 – 14.50 **Maria Speyer, artist**

Drawing the Figure as Presence and Response.

14.55 – 15.25 **Maria Louw, Aarhus University**

Specters of possibility.

15.25 – 15.55 Discussion

Coffee

Session 3: DYSTOPIC TIMES

Chair: Teresa Kuan, Chinese University of Hong Kong

16.25 – 16.55 **Lawrence Cohen, Berkeley University**

Enemies: the estrangements of home in late life.

17.00 – 17.30 **Sverre Raffnsøe, Copenhagen Business School**

Coming of age and ageing. Human temporary existence in the Anthropocene.

17.30 – 18.00 Discussion

18.00 - Reception at AIAS

The symposium is organized around the research project "Aging as a human condition – radical uncertainty and the search for a good (old) life" where philosophers, artists and anthropologists have been exploring four themes: the mindful body, home space, intimate others and lived time.

For more information and registration please visit <https://aias.au.dk/events/for-the-time-being-temporality-ethics-aging/>

Wednesday April 1st

Venue: AIAS

Session 4: GENERATIONAL AND HISTORICAL TIME

Chair: Patrick McKearney, University of Cambridge

10.00 – 10.30 **Anne O'Byrne, Stony Brook University.**

Aging in Generational Time.

10.35 – 11.05 **Cheryl Mattingly, University of Southern California**

Time Interruptions: Misrecognition, Alterity and the Historical Social Self.

11.10 – 11.40 **Thomas Schwarz Wentzer, Aarhus University**

Ghosts from the past – German elders and the presence of World War 2.

11.45 – 12.15 Discussion

Lunch

Chair: Helle Wentzer, VIVE

The symposium is organized around the research project "Aging as a human condition – radical uncertainty and the search for a good (old) life" where philosophers, artists and anthropologists have been exploring four themes: the mindful body, home space, intimate others and lived time.

For more information and registration please visit <https://aias.au.dk/events/for-the-time-being-temporality-ethics-aging/>

- 13.15 – 13.45 **Rasmus Dyring, Aarhus University**
"Older than Being": For a Critical Phenomenology of Aging and Generationality.
- 13.50 – 14.20 **Susan Reynolds Whyte, University of Copenhagen**
Still Here: Age and Generational Time.
- 14.25 - 14.55 **Anne Marie Pahuus, Aarhus University**
Meaning of the Past in Human Interaction and Human Interdependency.
- 15.00 - 15.30 Discussion
- Coffee
- 16.00 Excursion to MoMu for those who want a tour of the exhibition
 "Growing Old" <https://www.moesgaardmuseum.dk/udstillinger/naar-jeg-bliver-gammel/>
- 19.00 Conference dinner at Restaurant Skovmøllen (speakers only).

The symposium is organized around the research project "Aging as a human condition – radical uncertainty and the search for a good (old) life" where philosophers, artists and anthropologists have been exploring four themes: the mindful body, home space, intimate others and lived time.

For more information and registration please visit <https://aias.au.dk/events/for-the-time-being-temporality-ethics-aging/>

Thursday April 2nd

Venue: AIAS

Session 5: INSTITUTIONAL TEMPORALITIES

Chair: Maria Louw, Aarhus University

09.30 – 10.00 **Jason Danelly, Oxford Brookes University**

Doing Time in Deviant Spaces: Aging and the Carceral Condition in Japan.

10.05 – 10.35 **Lotte Meinert, Aarhus University**

The ID Card and the Good Life? Enigmas about the Invention of 'Old Age' in the Ik Mountains.

Grab a Coffee

10.55 – 11.25 **Tine Rostgaard, Stockholm University**

Time and temporality in long-term care for older people in the Nordic Welfare states.

11.30 – 12.00 **Helle Wentzer, VIVE - The Danish Center for Social Science Research**

Timework in a Danish Rehabilitation Unit.

12.05 – 12.35 Discussion

12.35 – 12.45 Closing remarks

12.45 – 13.45 *Lunch – or grab a sandwich to go*

The symposium is organized around the research project "Aging as a human condition – radical uncertainty and the search for a good (old) life" where philosophers, artists and anthropologists have been exploring four themes: the mindful body, home space, intimate others and lived time.

For more information and registration please visit <https://aias.au.dk/events/for-the-time-being-temporality-ethics-aging/>