



Centre for the  
Humanities  
and Health



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# The Lifespan: Perspectives on Ageing and the Life Course from the Medical Humanities, the Health Sciences and Age Studies

Conference of SLSAeu

*European Society for Literature, Science and the Arts*

and

*The Sciences of Ageing and the Culture of Youth*

4–6 June 2025

The Great Hall, King's College London

## Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025

9.30-10.00	Registration Tea, Coffee, and Pastries available in the Great Hall
10.00-10.15	Welcome and Housekeeping Simon Tanner, Executive Dean (Interim), Faculty of Arts and Humanities, King's College London Martina Zimmermann, Director, Centre for the Humanities and Health, King's College London Aura Heydenreich, President, European Society for Literature, Science and the Arts (SLSAeu)
10.15-11.15	<b>Keynote</b> Sally Chivers (Trent University, Peterborough, Canada), Facing FOGO One Story at a Time Introduced by Aura Heydenreich (University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany)

<b>Break</b>	<b>Refreshments served in the Great Hall</b>
11.45-13.15	<b>Panels: Session 1</b> Panel 1 (K0.18): Relationships across Generations Panel 2 (K0.20): Reframing Ageing Panel 3 (S0.12): Ageing and Astrobiology: Evolutionary Time and Older Age in the 'Life Beyond Us' Science Fiction Anthology
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Served in the Great Hall</b>
14.15-15.45	<b>Panels: Session 2</b> Panel 4 (K0.18): Ageing and Care Relationships Panel 5 (K0.20): Global and Local Perspectives on Ageing Panel 6 (S0.12): Ageing in Science and Society: Constructing and Deconstructing Chronological Age
<b>Break</b>	<b>Refreshments served in the Great Hall</b>
16.15-17.15	<b>Keynote</b> Oliver Robinson (Imperial College London, UK), The Biomedical Perspective on Ageing: Insights from European Cohort Studies Introduced by Brian Hurwitz (King's College London, UK)
19.00-21.00	<b>Exhibition Viewing and Evening Reception at Science Gallery London</b> Introduction to <i>Lifelines: Rethinking Ageing across Generations</i> , with drinks and finger food

## Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025

9.00-9.30	Tea, Coffee and Pastries available in the Great Hall
9.30-10.30	<b>Keynote</b> Kavita Sivaramakrishnan (Columbia University, New York, US), Aging as Crisis and Aging in Times of Crisis in the Global South Introduced by Katsura Sako (Keio University, Tokyo, Japan)
<b>Break</b>	<b>Refreshments served in the Great Hall</b>

11.00-12.30	<b>Panels: Session 3</b> Panel 7 (K0.18): Socio-cultural Practices of Inclusion Panel 8 (K0.20): Literary Narrative at the End of Life – a Critical Interdisciplinary Exploration Panel 9 (S0.12): Rethinking Ageing: Integrating Humanistic and Scientific Knowledge
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Served in the Great Hall</b>
13.30-15.00	<b>Panels: Session 4</b> Panel 10 (K0.18): Perspectives on Ageing Well in Communities Panel 11 (K0.20): Agency and Intersubjective Perspectives Panel 12 (S0.12): Feminist Perspectives on Ageing
<b>Break</b>	<b>Refreshments served in the Great Hall</b>
15.30-17.00	<b>Panels: Session 5</b> Panel 13 (K0.18): Forever Young? Panel 14 (K0.20): Beyond the Doctor's Office: Conceptions of Health and Ageing in Contemporary Non-Clinical Narratives Panel 15 (S0.12): Intersectional Inequalities
19.00-21.00	<b>Evening Reading with Ulrike Draesner followed by Reception in the Great Hall</b>  Ulrike Draesner (University of Leipzig, Germany) reading from <i>Eine Frau wird älter</i> (translated)  In conversation with Heike Hartung (University of Potsdam, Germany)  Followed by drinks and light buffet

## Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2025

9.30-10.00	Tea, Coffee and Pastries available in the Great Hall
10.00-11.00	<b>Keynote</b>  Susan Pickard (University of Liverpool, UK), <i>Frailty and Other Myths of Old Age: Some Thoughts on the Enduring Roots of Ageism</i>  Introduced by Ulla Kriebner (University of Graz, Austria)
<b>Break</b>	<b>Refreshments served in the Great Hall</b>

11.30-13.00	<b>Panels: Session 6</b> Panel 16 (K0.18): I'm Fed Up with Life': Older Adults Who No Longer Feel Like Their Life Is Worth Living Panel 17 (K0.20): Narrative Identity: Resisting Chronological Trajectories Panel 18 (S0.12): Biological Ageing between Science and Literature
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Served in the Great Hall</b>
14.00-15.30	<b>Panels: Session 7</b> Panel 19 (K0.18): Ethical Perspectives: Ageing, Illness, Memory Loss Panel 20 (K0.20): Transforming Attitudes to Ageing: Self-care and Resilience Panel 21 (S0.12): Contested Lifespans: Evolutionary Biology and the Challenges of Ageing
<b>Break</b>	<b>Refreshments served in the Great Hall</b>
16.00-17.00	Roundtable and Pre-closing Remarks <b>Roundtable</b> chaired by Neil Vickers (King's College London, UK) Des O'Neill (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland) Aagje Swinnen (Maastricht University, Netherlands)
17.00	Close

## Panels in Detail

Each panel lasts 90 minutes. Each speaker has 20 minutes for their presentation, and all three presentations will follow directly after one another. Session chairs will be instructed to ensure that speakers keep to their allocated time. The final 30 minutes of each panel are allocated to discussion between panel members and with the audience.

**Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

**Session 1: 11.45-13.15**

### **Panel 1 (K0.18): Relationships across Generations**

Chair: Sarah Åkerman (Åbo Akademi University, Vasa, Finland)

Melanie Lalani (Public Health, University of Toronto, Canada), Exploring Caring through Story: Relationships between Children and People Living with Dementia in Long-term Care.

Roya Liu (English Studies, Stony Brook University, New York, US), Embracing the Old: Intergenerational Bonds and Media's Challenge to the Decline Narrative.

Garry Barker (Artist and Researcher, University of Leeds, UK), An Ageing Artist Working in an Ageing Community.

### **Panel 2 (K0.20): Reframing Ageing**

Chair: Emma Crossey (King's College London, UK)

Bethany Simmonds (Sociology, Aberystwyth University, UK), Precarity and risk in the fourth age: reframing the end of life using lifecourse and political economic theory.

Joyann Khosravi (Psychological Sciences, Christ (Deemed to be University), Bangalore, India), Reframing Ageing Through Caregiving Practices in India.

Luis O. Arata (Modern Languages, Quinnipiac University, Hamden, US), Ludic Narrative Opportunities in Third Age: Don Quixote, Borges, and I.

**Panel 3 (S0.12): Ageing and Astrobiology: Evolutionary Time and Older Age in the ‘Life Beyond Us’ Science Fiction Anthology**

Chair: João Paulo Guimarães (University of Porto, Portugal)

João Paulo Guimarães (Literary Studies, University of Porto, Portugal), Intergenerational Memory and Planetary Ethics in Eric Choi’s ‘Hemlock on Mars’.

Julie Nekola Novakova (Evolutionary Biology, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic), Patterns in the Stars: Intergenerational Connections in Renan Bernardo’s ‘The Dog Star Killer’.

Ana Meireles (Cultural Studies, University of Porto, Portugal), Uncharismatic and Anachronistic: Intersections between Ageing Studies and Astrobiology in ‘Spider Plant’.

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**Session 2: 14.15-15.45**

**Panel 4 (K0.18): Ageing and Care Relationships**

Chair: Daniel Hall-Flavin (King’s College London, UK)

Håkan Jönson (Social Work, Lund University, Sweden), Odd Relations in Home Care for Older Adults.

Keziah Florin-Sefton (Health Sciences, London School of Economics, UK), Relationships-Centred Care after Death in Care Homes.

Sruthi Madhu (English Studies, NIT Andhra Pradesh, Tadepalligudem, India), Ageing and Care: Understanding Carer and Care Receiver in Long-term Residential Care in ‘A Star Ain’t Nothin but a Hole in Heaven’.

**Panel 5 (K0.20): Global and Local Perspectives on Ageing**

Chair: Esther K. Bauer (Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, US)

Istikhar Ali (Ethnography, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India), Everyday Life of the Older Population and Their Lifestyle: An Ethnographic Perspective.

Katie Duffy (Epidemiology, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland), An examination of the male-female health-survival paradox using the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA).

**Panel 6 (S0.12): Ageing in Science and Society: Constructing and Deconstructing Chronological Age**

Chair: Katharina W. Peters (University of Regensburg, Germany)

Charlotte Rathjen (German Studies, University of Leipzig, Germany), Counting Life: Constructing and Deconstructing Numerical Age Markers in Literary Texts.

Jia Li (Social Work, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, China), Too Old To Start Over? A Qualitative Investigation on Lived Experience of Jobseekers Aged 50 and above in China.

David Spalding (Health Sciences, King's College London, UK), Strength, Vulnerability and Neurovisceral Integration: Effects of Anxiety on Older Adults' Cognitive and Physiological Regulation.

**Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

**Session 3: 11.00-12.30**

**Panel 7 (K0.18): Socio-cultural Practices of Inclusion**

Chair: Jade French (Loughborough University, UK)

Philip Egbule (Social Studies, University of Delta, Agbor, Nigeria), Caring for the Elderly: Revisiting Some Socio-cultural Practices in Southern Nigeria.

Emily Bradfield (Practitioner Researcher, University of Cambridge, UK), Museums for Life: developing inclusive practice with older adults.

Saskia Fürst (English Studies, University of The Bahamas), The Grandmother as Caregiver, Protector and Daughter in Gloria Naylor's 'Mama Day.

**Panel 8 (K0.20): Literary Narrative at the End of Life – a Critical Interdisciplinary Exploration**

Chair: Ieva Stončikaitė (Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, Spain)

Ieva Stončikaitė (Cultural Gerontology, Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, Spain) and Katharina Fürholzer (Interdisciplinary Studies, University of Koblenz, Germany), End-of-Life Narratives of Cognitive Decline: The Controversial Legacy of Gabriel García Márquez.

Moritz E. Wigand (Psychiatry, Kiel University, Germany), Samuel Beckett's 'Malone Dies' – The Limits of Storytelling at the End of Life.

Heike Hartung (English Studies, University of Potsdam, Germany), Life Writing as 'End-of-Life' Writing: Challenges to Genre and Lifecourse Perspectives.

**Panel 9 (S0.12): Rethinking Ageing: Integrating Humanistic and Scientific Knowledge**

Chair: Lina J Kuhn (Elon University, US)

Jonathan R. Goodman (Public Health, University of Cambridge, UK), Life history theory and the need for a synthesized understanding of ageing.

Chen-Hsiang Ding (Taiwan Studies, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic), Self-Positioning Through Knowledge: Lin Ling's Poetics of Ageing.



## **Session 4: 13.30-15.00**

### **Panel 10 (K0.18): Perspectives on Ageing Well in Communities**

Chair: Istikhar Ali (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India)

Kate Mattick (Global Health, Brighton and Sussex Medical School, UK), Co-creating a new community service to support healthy ageing in Zimbabwe.

Jade French (Literary Studies, Loughborough University, UK), Emotional atmospheres: Imagining the care home in 1960s British visual and literary culture.

Shalina Susan Mathew and Santhosh Abraham (Social Sciences, Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai, India), From Dwellings to 'Ageing in Community': Redefining Elderly Living in Kerala, India.

### **Panel 11 (K0.20): Agency and Intersubjective Perspectives**

Chair: Katharina Fürholzer (University of Koblenz, Germany)

Xinyi (Yee) Zhao (English Studies, Loughborough University, UK), Witnessing and Experiencing Age: Intersubjective Perspectives in Diana Athill's 'Somewhere Towards the End' (2008).

Tove Harnett (Social Work, Lund University, Sweden), Challenging Images of Passivity: Voice, Agency, and Loyalty in Older Adults' Home Care Experiences.

Esther K. Bauer (German Studies, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, US), The Desires of Middle-Aged Masculinity: Martin Walser's Novella 'Runaway Horse' and His Novel 'Breakers'.

### **Panel 12 (S0.12): Feminist Perspectives on Ageing**

Chair: Christopher Herzog (University of Salzburg, Austria)

Anna McFarlane (Literary Studies, University of Glasgow, UK) and Amelia DeFalco (Contemporary Literature, University of Leeds, UK), The Style Is the Substance: What Feminist Body Horror Offers Ageing Studies.

Wendy Sweet (Educator, Auckland, New Zealand), Does the Menopause Transition Need a New Lifestyle, Life-Course and Healthy Ageing Narrative?

Mehreena Manzoor Tak (Social Medicine, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India), Understanding Ageing Experiences of Kashmiri Elderly Widows through an Intersectional-Life Course Perspective.

## **Session 5: 15.30-17.00**

### **Panel 13 (K0.18): Forever Young?**

Chair: Anna McFarlane (University of Glasgow, UK)

Brian Hurwitz (Medical Humanities, King's College London, UK), Renaissance Visual Allegories of De-ageing.

Lina J Kuhn (English Studies, Elon University, US), 'Come to Me': Ambivalence Towards Ageing, Death, and Immortality in Robert Eggers's 'Nosferatu'.

Celia Brightwell (Digital Cultures, Dresden University of Technology, Germany), 'Deep, Unfortunate Runnels:' Speculative Narratives of (Anti) Ageing Science in Techno-Feminism.

### **Panel 14 (K0.20): Beyond the Doctor's Office: Conceptions of Health and Ageing in Contemporary Non-Clinical Narratives**

Chair: Virlana Shchuka (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, US)

Reece Carter (Medicine, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, US), 'It's Like the Stage Before Death': Reconsidering Life in Bed.

Isabel Spencer Landis Doss (English, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, US), Pro- and Anti-Natural Family Planning Narratives in Online Wellness Spaces.

Grace Brimacombe-Rand (Medical Humanities, King's College London, UK), 'Mirror Mirror': The Horror of Ageing in Mona Awad's *Rouge* (2023).

### **Panel 15 (S0.12): Intersectional Inequalities**

Chair: Jia Li (The Chinese University of Hong Kong, China)

Mengxing Joshi (Sociology, University of St Andrews, UK), Life Course Experiences of Social Capital Inequalities, Loneliness and Social Isolation among Immigrant Older Adults: A Narrative Case Study.

Brenda Ozeias Santos (Epigenetics, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland), Do Housekeeping Genes Mediate the Association of Socio-Economic Position with Health?

**Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

**Session 6: 11.30-13.00**

**Panel 16 (K0.18): 'I'm Fed Up with Life': Older Adults Who No Longer Feel Like Their Life Is Worth Living**

Chair: Elisa Van Wiele (University of Leuven, Belgium)

Elisa Van Wiele (Psychology, University of Leuven, Belgium), UNTOLD: Unravelling Tiredness of Life in Nursing Home Residents.

Hannah Thys (Public Health, University of Leuven, Belgium), Tiredness of Life among Nursing Home Residents: A Qualitative Exploration of Healthcare Practitioners Perceptions and Approaches.

Stefanie Meul (History, University of Leuven, Belgium), UNTOLD: Unraveling Cultural Historical Dimensions of Contemporary Experiences of Tiredness of Life.

**Panel 17 (K0.20): Narrative Identity: Resisting Chronological Trajectories**

Chair: Philippe Huneman (University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, France)

Laurie Lambeth (Creative Writing, University of Houston, US), 'A Day is a Year is a Lifetime': a Lyric Medicine Approach to Time in Thomas Von Steinaecker's and Barbara Yelin's Graphic Novel 'The Summer of Her Life'.

Samikhya Dash (English Studies, NIT Andhra Pradesh, Tadepalligudem, India), Metaphorical Ageing: Exploring Trauma and Narrative Identity in 'When Breath Becomes Air'.

Jake Beardsley (Philosophy, Ohio State University, Columbus, US), Toward an Account of Life-Stage Identity.

**Panel 18 (S0.12): Biological Ageing between Science and Literature**

Chair: Jonathan R. Goodman (University of Cambridge, UK)

Vid Mlakar (Genetic Psychiatry, King's College London, UK), Is Accelerated Ageing Linked to Cognitive Impairments in Schizophrenia?

Irene Stylianou (Epidemiology, University College London, UK), Risk Factors for Cognitive Decline and Dementia in Central and Eastern Europe.

Christopher Herzog (English Studies, University of Salzburg, Austria), 'The Very Essence of Being': Ageing, Brainhood, and Dementia in Abi Morgan's '27' (2011).

## **Session 7: 14.00-15.30**

### **Panel 19 (K0.18): Ethical Perspectives: Ageing, Illness, Memory Loss**

Chair: Håkan Jönson (Lund University, Sweden)

Sarah Åkerman (Social Policy, Åbo Akademi University, Vasa, Finland), The Alienating Experiences of Caring for a Spouse with Dementia in a Neoliberal Society – a Critical Analysis from a Care Ethics and Medical Humanities Perspective.

Ulla Kriebner (American Studies, University of Graz, Austria) and Heike Hartung (English Studies, Potsdam, Germany), Fighting the ‘Dementors’: Reconsidering (Culturally) Constructive Versions of Forgetfulness.

Katharina W. Peters (Medical Ethics, University of Regensburg, Germany), Functional Disorders across the Lifespan: A Call for Epistemic Humility – in Philosophy and in Diagnosis.

### **Panel 20 (K0.20): Transforming Attitudes to Ageing: Self-care and Resilience**

Chair: Grace Brimacombe-Rand (King’s College London, UK)

Kym Weed (English Studies, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, US), A Crisis of Care: Ageing among Antimicrobial Resistance in Eve Smith’s ‘The Waiting Rooms’.

Lis Boulton (Age UK), Transforming Attitudes to Ageing.

Katsura Sako (Literary Studies, Keio University, Tokyo, Japan), Ageing and Narratives of Walking.

### **Panel 21 (S0.12): Contested Lifespans: Evolutionary Biology and the Challenges of Ageing**

Chair: Jessica Lombard (University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, France)

Jessica Lombard (History and Philosophy of Science, University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, France), From Biological Perspectives to Ontological Horizons: Understanding the Limit of Death for Transhumanist Movements.

Philippe Huneman (History and Philosophy of Science, University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, France), Semantics of senescence: the equivocations that affect current ageing biology.

Clémence Guillermain (History and Philosophy of Science, Nantes University, France), To what extent is contemporary biology shaped by old prescientific ideas?