

embodied experiences of smiling. We make a case for looking at smiling as a set of material practices requiring maintenance and upkeep, particularly if we are to age successfully. We argue for the importance of an interdisciplinary approach in understanding the contexts and practices of smiling and of oral care, but also critical diversities impacting on those practices. An everyday, interactional gaze illuminates vicissitudes of growing older usually overlooked in mainstream oral health research.

S16.3 -

Materiality, Assistive Technologies and Everyday Life

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Abstract

There has been increasing recognition of the significance of material culture, including the role of objects and technologies, in health and social care. Objects that are central to our mundane habitual everyday lives, are often experienced as taken-for-granted and unnoticed, with the objects embodied and embedded in our tacit and daily routines. Assistive technologies as objects can either be very small (glasses and hearing aids) or much larger in size (walking sticks, wheelchairs). Assistive technologies can become central to people's daily routines and be experienced as mundane, taken-for-granted and invisible. Alternatively, assistive technologies can feel ever-present and highly visible within personal and social worlds. Assistive technologies are moreover imbued with sociocultural and emotional meanings. The aim of this paper is to: (1) draw attention to the materiality of assistive technologies as objects; and (2) explore the use of assistive technologies as material objects in the research process. Our research involved six focus groups – 4 with older adults and 2 with younger adults – to explore different and diverse perspectives around assistive technologies. We conclude by highlighting how a material approach can illuminate interconnections between the body, emotions, objects and the sociocultural context; the in/visibility of assistive technologies in everyday life; and the ways narratives around assistive technologies interconnect with positive and negative images of ageing.

S16.4 -

The Evening of Life and the Cohering Transition of Personal Objects into New Contexts. An Ethno-gerontological Perspective

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Abstract