

Course Title: Seminar on Literary and Cultural Gerontology

Instructor:

Susan Jung Su

Introduction:

Population ageing has been emerging as a global issue ever since the late twentieth century. Japan and other western developed countries foresaw its patent crisis earlier than the rest of the world because population ageing in these countries tends to appear as a slower, gradual process. Accordingly, governments or academia of these countries have more time to ruminate on problems caused by ageing before making policies. The unprecedentedly rapid speed of population ageing in Taiwan, compared with the above areas, strikes one as a rare case. The need to cope with its impacts is thus even more pressing. This course aims to equip the students with the essential knowledge of ageing studies from the disciplines of literary and cultural studies. We will guide students through the new terrain of literary and cultural gerontology by a perusal of several critical scholarly works. Apart from studying the still-evolving, ever-changing critical discourses of literary and cultural gerontology, we will also incorporate a few literary and cinematic texts into our exploration of the subject. It is hoped that through excavating several significant works of contemporary ageing studies from the perspectives of literary and cultural studies, this course can prepare the students for the coming of a super-aged society, which demands not only a wise, perceptive mind but also an emphatic, benevolent heart.

Goal:

1. To explore and investigate how contemporary emerging ageing population may bring forth questions and problems never experienced or envisioned in the previous century and ponder on their critical significance
2. To help students reflect on the emerging issues of ageing and quipped them with the sufficient knowledge of ageing and a keen mind to discern between ageist discourse and hospitality.
3. To critique, interrogate, and redefine the conception of ageing in order to foster the students' capability of confronting the coming of a super-aged society.

Textbooks & course organization:

A tentative syllabus based on the reference listed below will be provided in the first class meeting and may be slightly revised after discussion.

Week	Assignments
1	Introduction
2	<i>Cambridge Handbook of Age and Ageing</i>
3	<i>The History of Sexuality: An Introduction.</i>
4	<i>Bodies That Matter</i>
5	<i>Notes toward a Performative Theory of Assembly</i>
6	<i>Notes toward a Performative Theory of Assembly</i>
7	“The Coming of Age of Literary Gerontology.” “Amour”
8	Invited Speaker (topic: TBA)
9	<i>Ageing and Its Discontents</i>
10	<i>Ageing and Its Discontents</i>
11	<i>Uncanny Subjects</i>
12	<i>Uncanny Subjects</i>
13	A field trip to an elderly community
14	<i>Routledge Handbook of Cultural Gerontology</i> “Venus”
15	<i>Routledge Handbook of Cultural Gerontology</i> “The Intern”
16	Recapitulation
17	Final paper proposal presentation
18	Individual Conference Final paper Due: * * *

Teaching method:

The course will be run as a seminar combined with lectures.

Grading Policy:

attendance, participation, oral presentations 50%

Final paper proposal 10%: (a one-two page proposal of your final paper)

Final paper 40%: (a well-organized scholarly paper; the ideal length of the paper will be 10-15 pp for MA students and 15-20pp for PhD students)

Suggested Readings:

Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter: on the Discursive Limits of "Sex."* New York: Routledge, 1993.

Butler, Judith. *Notes toward a Performative Theory of Assembly.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 2015.

Cole, Thomas. *Cambridge Handbook of Age and Ageing.* UK: Cambridge UP, 2005.

DeFalco, Amelia. *Uncanny Subjects: Ageing in Contemporary Narratives.* USA: The Ohio State UP, 2010.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction.* Vol. 1. Trans. Robert Hurley. NY: Vintage, 1990.

Grau, Maira Vidal & Núria Casado Gual, eds. *The Polemics of Ageing as Reflected in Literature.* Lleida, Catalunya, Spain: Universitat de Lleida, 2004.

Hepworth, Mike. *Stories of Ageing.* Buckingham, UK: Open UP, 2000.

Twigg, Julia & Wendy Martin, eds. *Routledge Handbook of Cultural Gerontology.* New York: Routledge, 2015.

Woodward, Kathleen. *Ageing and Its Discontents: Freud and Other Fictions.* Bloomington and Indianapolis, USA: 1991.

Wyatt-Brown, Anne M. "The Coming of Age of Literary Gerontology." *Journal of Ageing Studies* 4.3 (Autumn 1990): 299-315.