

ENAS & NANAS joint conference **Sept 29 - Oct 1, 2022, Bucharest, Romania** **(Virtual Conference)**

<http://enas.comunicare.ro/>

Narratives and Counter-Narratives of Aging and Old Age: Reflexivity in Aging Studies

Organizational Committee: Loredana Ivan, Dragoş Farmazon, Dumitriţa Hîrtie

Academic Committee: Kate de Medeiros, Loredana Ivan, Ulla Kriebner, Raquel Medina, Maricel Oró Piqueras, Aagje Swinnen, Eva-Maria Trinkaus,

‘Narrative’ is a travelling concept (Mieke Bal, 2002) that is also used by scholars collaborating in the field of Aging Studies. A ‘cultural force to be reckoned with’ (Bal, 2010:10), it is alive and active in the humanities and arts as well as in the social sciences. As Aging Studies scholars rooted in different disciplines, we examine the experience of aging through stories of others, real or imagined, stories that link us to our own aging. Such narratives include life stories and other first-person accounts as well as all sorts of cultural representations including literature, film, photography and other modes of representation that also narrate – such as numbers and figures in surveys, algorithms, and big data. Bringing together the multiplicity of understandings of what master narratives and counter-narratives of age and aging mean to us, this conference aims at looking at the different interpretations in order to discuss what narrative as a transdisciplinary mode can actually do. This conference will ask scholars to contribute with their understanding and analysis of ‘narrative’ to facilitate discussion on theoretical and methodological approaches. Together, we aim at challenging some of the prevalent perspectives on aging and old age such as the continuation of seeing aging as a social problem, or the old master narrative of frailty and dependency. What is the power of narrative in encouraging new perspectives focusing on older people’s diversity, their value to, and their role in society? As aging is the future for all of us, the conference will provide a ground for more appreciative perspectives on aging and later life created through the reflection on and challenge of existing structures.

We encourage participants to address:

- "truth" in narratives about aging (whose truths matter, what constitutes a "truthful" telling; power dynamics in narratives; and narratives from underrepresented groups)
- narratives around age and longevity;
- narratives about care;
- narratives about old age during the COVID-19 pandemic/during lockdown;

- reflections on cultural narratives, processes and strategies;
- ageist portrayals of older people in cultural and media texts, as well as in advertising and technology;
- intergenerational narratives of solidarity and conflict (climate change, care, welfare systems, etc.);
- narratives bridging social practices;
- identities and representations across different ages;
- aging in data: older adults in a datafied society (the absence of older people from some data and ageist data bias)
- narratives of algorithms;
- narratives about younger and older people;

In particular, we welcome research that investigates the different concepts and methods used in multiple disciplines as they attempt to give shape to future narratives of aging processes. Studies with the aim of bringing together different disciplines in approaching topics related to aging, and of developing new research tools and methodologies are encouraged to be presented at the ENAS & NANAS conference.

Plenary sessions, panels and individual papers: The online conference will consist of plenary sessions, symposia, and panel presentations organized virtually by the *National University of Political Studies and Public Administration's* Communication Department (www.snsps.ro), Bucharest, Romania.

Contributors of papers should plan to present their papers virtually for 15 minutes, allowing for 5-10 minutes of discussion.

Proposals for panels: of up to 4 papers, each should include the title of the panel, an abstract of 800 words referring to each of the papers including the paper titles, a 5-line biography of the panel chair(s) and of each of the other contributors, and contact details of the chair(s) and contributors.

Proposals for papers: should include the title of the paper, an abstract of 250 words, a 5-line biography of the presenter, and contact details

Both ENAS and NANAS strongly encourage researchers early in their careers to submit proposals and share their work in progress.

The deadline for submitting abstracts is March 31, 2022

Conference Contact: contact@comunicare.ro **(Please submit your abstract/ panel proposals using this email address)**

*** ENAS: www.agingstudies.eu *** NANAS: www.agingstudies.org