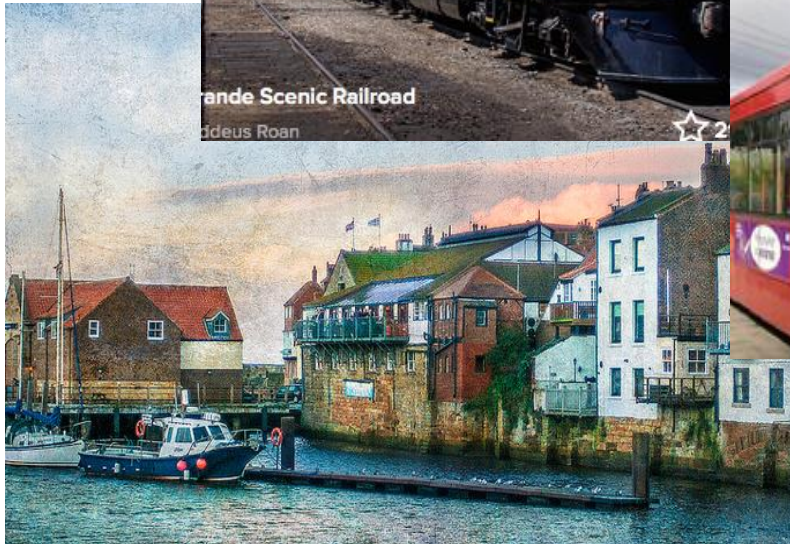


Critical occupational perspectives on societal issues: Reframing the problems of ‘population aging’

ISOS Session, October, 2014

Elizabeth A. Townsend, Debbie Laliberte
Rudman, Charles Christiansen

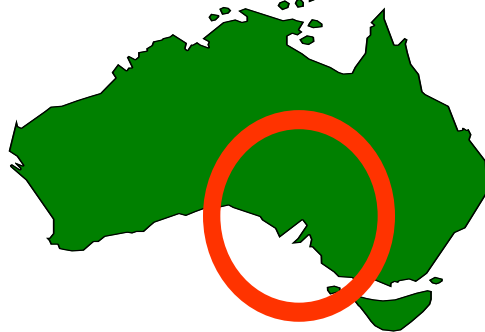
Critical occupational perspectives on aging as a societal issue





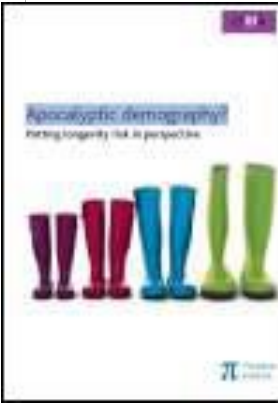
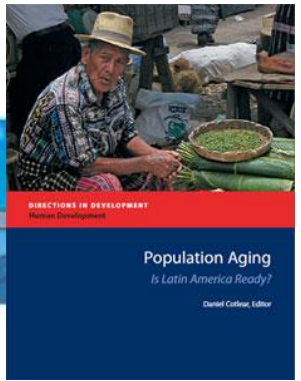
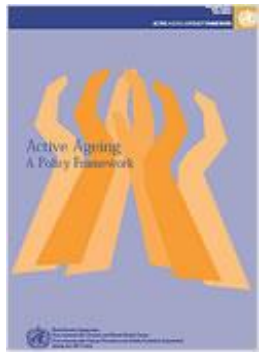
Common Potential

Creating the Future: Inspire, Explore, Take Action

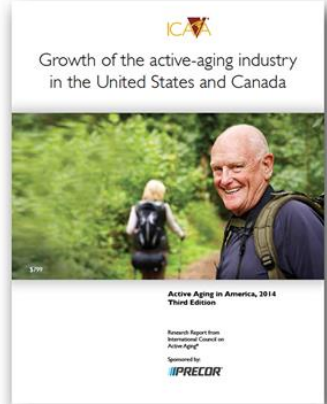
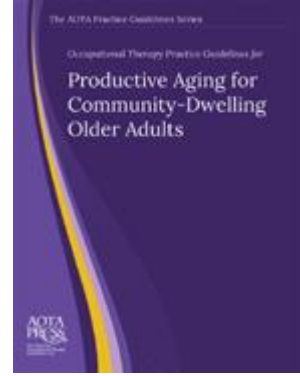


Enhancing critical scholarship through international collaboration

- What if communities were organized to celebrate population aging for all (occupational justice) in ecologically sustainable conditions?
(UPEI Collaborations & PhD supervision; international publications & film partners?)
- What if *caregivers* were instead *societal enablers* ensuring choices & decision making persist in everyday life occupations despite frailty & dementia?
(Karolinska Institute & Luleå University of Technology, Sweden; UPEI Collaborations)



Active Ageing:
Solidarity and Responsibility in an Ageing Society



Critical occupational perspectives on aging as a societal issue

- Implications of social and political re-configurations on the shaping of occupational possibilities for aging and older persons
- Shaping and perpetuation of occupational inequities on the basis of age, in intersection with other social conditions, at various scales

Enhancing critical scholarship through international collaboration

- Addressing the ‘taken for granted’
 - “...any particular version of reality is not natural or inevitable and, in fact, may serve the political aims of specific interest groups” (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004, p.237)
- Attending to occupation as political
 - “...the roots of critical studies lie in connecting the everyday to larger political and economic questions” (Mumby, 2004, p.252)

A specific challenge and opportunity: **Enablement vs Ageism**

- Ageism is evidenced in overt and subtle ways, results in stereotypical negative attitudes, prejudices and social exclusion toward older persons that contribute to withdrawal, depression, diminished health and cognitive decline.
- Studies show a preponderance of people over 60 (84%) have experienced discrimination based on their age in one form or another
- Ageism is an international phenomenon. How can occupational scientists collaborate internationally on ways to address elderhood stereotypes through education, policy and community intervention programs?

Policy and Advocacy Approaches-

- Combatting policies and practices that exclude or discriminate against older persons with reason, evidence and collective **moral courage**
- Promoting responsible social dialogue about ageism as an intergenerational issue that influences quality of life (and occurs with adolescents as well as older people)
- Advocating for legislation that punishes exploitation and predatory marketing and sales in all forms to vulnerable populations

Collaborative Research

- Design international population intervention studies within communities that explore the value of intentional intergenerational experiences (e.g. through existing civic centers, clubs, churches, volunteer programs)
- Encourage replication of intervention studies with communities with strategies for personal enablement (e.g., Well Elderly I & II) using robust and policy sensitive measures of outcome

Thanks!

