



UNIVERSITY OF
SURREY

**SOCIOLOGY, SLEEP AND
AGEING: (RE)VITALISING
THE RESEARCH AGENDA**
WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

24 May 2024

OUR SPONSOR



The Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS) at the University of Surrey sponsors workshops and Fellowships at the 'cutting edge' of science, engineering, social science and the humanities. Through this scheme the Institute fosters interdisciplinary collaborations and encourages a flow of international scholars to visit, enjoy their stay at Surrey and leave behind excellent ideas and innovations.

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INTRODUCTION

In his classic text *Some Must Watch Whilst Some Must Sleep*, the eminent sleep scientist William C Dement suggested that the "anthropological and sociological implications of sleep are vast, and complex" (1972: 2). He was undoubtedly correct. Since that time, sociologists have highlighted how sleep is arrived at via an interaction between biology, individual understandings, attitudes and 'others' – and that the form and content of these interactions are affected by the rules and norms surrounding sleep and by 'status differentials'.

Many of the earliest sociological studies of sleep were concerned with age and ageing. Arber and Hislop, for example, wrote about the gendered nature of sleep disruption among mid-life women; whereas Venn and Arber showed that older people have complex attitudes toward daytime sleep. Based on qualitative research with Italian women about their sleep Bianchara and Arber highlighted how the legacy of caregiving may disrupt sleep long after the caregiving has ended; and Martin and Bartlett found tensions between care home staff concerns for 'risk' and privacy.

Whilst these (and other) studies made clear that sociology has much to offer the sleep/ageing field, work in this area has become less visible over recent years. At the same time, emerging works from New Zealand (Gibson) offer a reminder of the social aspects of sleep and ageing - particularly with regards to discourses and practices around sleep in older adulthood; sleep among families affected by dementia; and the nuanced cultural perceptions of sleep, ageing and health. It therefore seems timely to revisit some of these early contributions, map current sociological work on sleep/ageing and consider future (global) research priorities.

This workshop therefore brings together a range of scholars to discuss the past, present and future of sociological work on sleep and ageing. Attendees include those involved with early sociological studies into sleep and ageing; as well as those currently active in the area. Given rapid changes across a range of potentially related areas, attendees also include experts in sleep science/medicine, machine learning and wider areas of social gerontology.

Workshop Chair:

Professor Rob Meadows,
University of Surrey

Organising committee:

Professor Rob Meadows, University of Surrey and Dr Rosie Gibson, Massey University, New Zealand

Administrative support:

We are grateful for support from Louise Jones and Mirela Dumic, Institute of Advanced Studies

PROGRAMME

FRIDAY 24 MAY

32 MS 01, RIK MEDLIK BUILDING, Main Campus

(BST) 10.00 onward	Arrival and Registration	12.45 – 13:00	Finding Themes Session
10.25	Welcome - Professor Andrew King Head of the Department of Sociology, Co-Director of Centre for Research on Ageing and Generations, Co-Director of Centre of Excellence of Ageing	13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
10.30 – 11.30	Mapping the Terrain - Oral Presentations/Introductions: "The History of the Surrey Sociology of Sleep Group" – Professor Rob Meadows "Sleep, Ageing and Society: A New Zealand Perspective" – Dr Rosie Gibson 'Sociology, Sleep and Ageing' - Dr Catherine Coveney "From Chatbots to....." - Dr Richard Green	14.00 – 15.00	Facilitated Discussion 1 – Identifying Priority Domains What is Missing? What is Exciting? What is Needed?
11.30 – 11.45	Break	15.00 – 15.45	Facilitated Discussion 2 – Interdisciplinary (Methodological) Innovations What is Desirable? What is Feasible?
10.45 – 12.45	Mapping the Terrain - Oral Presentations/Introductions (cont.): "Ageing, the Digital and Every Day/Night Life - Dr Wendy Martin "Smart Homes, Smart Tech" - Professor Christine Hine "Embodied Changes" - Dr Carrie Ryan "Sleep and Self- Perceptions of Ageing" – Dr Serena Sabatini "Sleep Duration and Next Day Stress" – Dr Haomiao Jin "Ageing and the Surrey Sleep Research Centre" – Dr della Monica	15.45 – 15:55	Wrap Up and Next Steps
		16.00	Close



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