

# TRENT CENTRE FOR AGING & SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

## Featured Articles:

**Student-Led  
Experiential Learning  
at TCAS**

**New Partnership with  
Chanie Wenjack  
School for Indigenous  
Studies**

**Featured Research  
Update:  
Aging Vitalities**



# Experiential Intergenerational Learning at TCAS

# DIRECTOR'S LETTER



## Spring has sprung!

From Dr. Elizabeth Russell

In the Fall of 2021, my Qualitative Research Methods course hiked the Lady Eaton Drumlin, taking photos for a lesson on photovoice, and along the way, we planted crocus bulbs for students to return to in the spring, marking their own small place here at Trent. As those little purple and yellow flowers pop up, they remind us that the spring and summer season always returns, prompting us to fondly reflect on a positive 2021-22 academic year. As we transition into the summer research and planning season, it is nice to look back on the school term that was. 2021-22 brought a major focus on experiential intergenerational learning, and for many TCAS faculty members, this meant bringing our classrooms to life with the experiences and voices of older adults. Connecting students with older adults - their family members, neighbours, and other community members - is an integral component of an age-friendly university, a designation that Trent is proud to hold. This type of work will transition seamlessly into the Trent-based Long-Term Care Home and Seniors' Village, directly connecting students and older people in a creative and natural setting. I hope you enjoy reading about some of the ways that faculty have incorporated intergenerational components in their classrooms, often using creative and hands-on approaches. Beyond this, so much has happened this past academic year for TCAS and its members, and I am pleased to share these updates with you. For example, we have partnered with the Chanie Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies to host two major events, and we are actioning many items from our Membership Engagement Survey.

I am proud of the work that TCAS members are undertaking, and that TCAS is leading - not even a global pandemic has held us back from growing and connecting!

-Elizabeth



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# University-Integrated Seniors Village and Long-term Care Update

## Teeming with Possibility: Spanning the Globe for Innovative Approaches to Inform Trent University's Seniors' Village

By Laura Poulin

TCAS Graduate Associate Member

Author, University-Integrated Seniors' Village Report Series

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As a Ph.D. student who has dedicated my career, research and academic studies to the care of older populations, I jumped at the opportunity to become a research assistant for the University-Integrated Seniors' Village that will be developed here at Trent. Through this position, I have been tasked with summarizing the promising practices that will be used to inform Trent's unique approach. The report I develop will consist of an environmental scan, a literature review, and consultations with experts in the field of aging and care. Approximately 5 years

ago, I completed a similar project on Canada's east coast that focused on developing a memory care service line for older adults with dementia and other memory impairments. I thought, "how much could the seniors' village landscape have changed in the past 5 years?" I was very surprised to find out just how much it had.

It turns out that university-integrated seniors' villages have been growing exponentially with new developments emerging every year. This growth has been most common in the United States, with an estimated 100 seniors' villages already integrated on a university or college campus and approximately 400 villages projected to be in operation by 2028. With all of these villages emerging on post-secondary campuses, I knew I had to seek out unique initiatives to help Trent become an innovator in the field.

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Exploring the globe for inspiration, I learned that in a Denmark university, students are living in retirement and assisted living communities. In this model, students receive reduced rent and board for committing 30 hours a month to being a 'good neighbour' to their older roommates. These intergenerational living opportunities are mutually beneficial, reducing ageism and allowing students and older adults to form meaningful relationships with each other.

Further south, health and wellness precincts are in development in Australia, turning university campuses into bustling community hubs. These campuses provide numerous community amenities including seniors' residences, health and social services, recreation centres, parks, retail/commercial space, and child care centres to support the well-being and quality of life of the entire community.

Closer to home, in the United States, seniors' villages support their residents in the pursuit of life-long learning. Older adults not only attend lectures, pursue post-secondary degrees and are involved in research projects, but they can also facilitate lectures for their peers. In Canada, leading-edge seniors' village models are also gaining momentum with sporadic initiatives across the country focused on social inclusivity of seniors other than the dominant norm. These villages aim to provide culturally appropriate care and services, embracing the needs and preferences of the local populations that they serve.

So what is my takeaway from this project so far? University-integrated seniors' villages are progressive. They provide the potential to break the mould of conventional seniors' care and foster transformative post-secondary student experiences. They leverage community collaboration and can support socially inclusive campus environments. Certainly, a seniors' village at Trent University is teeming with possibility and I, for one, am eager to see this possibility unfold.

**Interested in reading the University-Integrated Seniors' Village Report Series?  
Make sure you're on our distribution list for updates on its publication!  
Contact [aging@trentu.ca](mailto:aging@trentu.ca) to be added to the list.**

**Click [here](#) to learn more about Trent's University-Integrated Seniors Village**

# Student-Led Experiential Learning

This past term, students across Trent and TCAS worked on some really exciting experiential learning projects focused on aging. Check out some examples below of how TCAS students, and students in TCAS members' courses connected with aging and their community!

## Community-Based Aging Research: A Focus on Older Adults Experiencing Homelessness in Peterborough

In just one semester, final-year Trent psychology students Monica Trela, Paige McFarlane, and Katie Terrion, conducted an incredible community-based research project focusing on the needs of older adults experiencing homelessness in the Peterborough area. As students in TCAS Director Dr. Elizabeth Russell's qualitative research methods course (PSYC 4120H), and drawing upon Monica's concurrent position as a staff member at the Brock Mission in downtown Peterborough, the group spoke with shelter staff members about their experiences working with older clients who are experiencing homelessness.

"This research project allowed me to gain real life experience in qualitative analysis, specifically with focus groups and coding the interviews. In terms of the content, I learned a lot about how the homeless shelters work and in particular how older adults face tremendous amounts of barriers. I also learned that more needs to be done for people facing homelessness and they need an increase in support and resources. Looking forward I find myself more interested in this field and would like to volunteer or even work at a shelter." - Katie Terrion



Monica Trela, B.A., Psychology (top left)  
Katie Terrion, B.A., Psychology (top right)  
Paige McFarlane, B.A. (Hons.), Psychology & Sociology (bottom)

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The student researchers found that, according to staff members, older adults often experienced exploitation and had significant challenges finding suitable housing, with both themes often being exacerbated by challenging cross-sectoral coordination. Students reflected at length about how these sobering findings impacted them, fueling their desire to continue working with and contributing to their local community in the future.

"This project was valuable to me as it allowed me to collaborate with my peers over a similar interest, providing me with the opportunity to learn experientially from my group members and community members about a very important topic. Having the opportunity to complete a focus group with staff members of a local homeless shelter was an experience I am grateful to have, as it taught me about older adults experiencing homelessness and the barriers one may face when attempting to access suitable housing." - Paige McFarlane

Experiential learning is a core component of Dr. Russell's courses, and indeed, of many courses here at Trent, however this student-led project provided an especially invaluable and enriching experience for these three students. We are so grateful to the Brock Mission for giving their time and sharing their experiences to help our students learn the importance of considering the needs of often-under considered older people.

"Doing qualitative research methods with Dr. Elizabeth Russell was a phenomenal opportunity to do experiential learning. The class and our research project allowed us to connect in the community to do work that we truly cared about and gave us an insight on how qualitative research is done. The experience was unforgettable and what I learned was an invaluable skill set that I will bring with me into my future endeavours." - Monica Trela

# Student-Led Experiential Learning


## Community Stories Conversation Project

Students in TCAS Executive Member Dr. Suzanne Bailey's Writing the Body (ENGL 3700H) course this term worked on a Community Stories Conversation Project, where students had a conversation with a family member or person ideally over 75 years old. Check out (below) a snapshot of Laura Mungham's project on Carolyn Mungham (aka Granny).

Laura Mungham  
Presentation Handout

**CAROLYN MUNGHAM**  
AKA  
"GRANNY"  
May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1940

The poster girl for the quote:  
*"If there's a will, there's a way."*



*"When I walked in their jaws dropped. They were expecting a youthful 18 year old, but instead they found a 35 year old mother and wife standing in front of them."*

**Stories**  
Family pool  
Having children  
Contact lenses  
Credit cards

**Advice**

- Always ask questions, what one person says isn't always correct.
- Know the history behind your family, create a family tree.
- Don't hold grudges, talk things out.



Laura Mungham  
4th Year, English Literature

"I learned that it is so important to build connections between generations. Stories from older people in one's family are family heirlooms that need to be passed down to the younger generations. It has put into perspective how important it is not to stress about small things. Life goes by so quickly, and hearing the stories from the older generations shows how materialistic things in life are not important, and how important the connections you make during life are."



# Student-Led Experiential Learning


## Psychology of Aging Experiential Intergenerational Learning

Students in Dr. Elizabeth Russell's Psychology of Aging (PSYC 3550H) course were hard at work this semester connecting with older adults in their communities. See below three student videos that exemplify the many experiential intergenerational learning opportunities at Trent!




### TCAS Student Profile: Midori Hoppe

*This video I made for Dr. Russell's aging course focuses on the benefits of intergenerational activities on older adults and younger generations. My grandma is an inspiration to me both for her commitment to the Taiko group for the past 11 years, but also encouraging her family to embrace our Japanese heritage. This video incorporates some current facts surrounding the benefits of intergenerational activities on aging, while at the same time creates a memorable video my family can look back on for years to come.*



Midori is a B.Sc (Hons.) student in Psychology at Trent University. She is from Kenora, Ontario.

After graduation, she will be starting at St. Lawrence College in the Communicative Disorders Assistant program with the goal of pursuing her Masters in Speech-Language Pathology.




Midori's grandparents

Watch Midori's video [here!](#)

### TCAS Student Profile: Gordon O'Heir

*The video style and approach of having my father be the main subject was important to me as it was a way to connect and learn more about my father and have a deeper relationship with him as he begins to age. I believe it is very important.*




Gordon is a B.Sc (Hons.) student in Psychology at Trent University. He is from Marmora, Ontario.

In the photo with Gordon is his father, Rick O'Heir.


Watch Gordon's video [here!](#)

### TCAS Student Profile: Sherry Ethier

*Featured in the video is my Grandpa, Gill Marleau. He was born and raised in Westmeath, and knows every farmer and hunter in the area. He loves hunting and being outdoors, but even more than that, he loves getting outside and being social. My Grandpa Marleau has always been very active and independent. When we had the opportunity to make a video assignment for class, I knew exactly what I wanted to do. The assignment gave me an opportunity to spend a day with my Grandpa doing what he loves, and it also gave me the opportunity to make a video that my family and I can enjoy for years. It makes my Grandpa happy to see that he's able to pass down his knowledge of hunting and spending time outdoors, and I'm always happy to learn from him. He's one of my favourite people and I really enjoyed the whole process!*



Sherry is a B.Sc (Hons.) student in Psychology at Trent University. She is from Westmeath, Ontario.



Watch Sherry's video [here!](#)

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# Student-Led Experiential Learning

## Post-Concussion(s): Pushing Back Against Ableism and Ageism

TCAS Undergraduate Associate Member Emmaleigh Dew made a video for Dr. Nadine Changfoot's research practicum (POST 4800Y) course on her experience with concussions during her ringette career. Read more below!

"The video I made for my POST 4800Y Research Practicum with Dr. Nadine Changfoot is focused on my experience living post concussion(s). Having sustained three concussions throughout my ringette career, I have been forced to come to terms with the uncertainty of aging with and into an invisible and intermittent dis/ability. My video aims to speak against ableism while highlighting what it means to live with post-concussion syndrome as an ex-university athlete. This video is for every young athlete who has been forced to quit their sport due to injury; those who understand what it feels like to lose their team, their sport, and themselves all at once. Making this video helped me confront and reclaim post-concussion identity and recognize how I have been adapting and facing/understanding the uncertainty of it all while continuing to pursue my dreams. This summer, I am taking a much-needed break from the virtual world and will be living and working at a remote fishing lodge outside of Dubreuilville, Ontario. In September, I start my studies at the Bora Laskin School of Law at Lakehead University where I am excited to learn more about civil rights law and Indigenous law under their new Indigenous Law and Justice Institute, the Maamawi Bimosewag – They Walk Together."



Watch Emmaleigh's video [here!](#)

Emmaleigh Dew  
TCAS Undergraduate Associate Member

# Student-Led Experiential Learning

## CSAS 5000 Student Experience

This term, the Foundations in Interdisciplinary Aging Studies (CSAS 5000H) course welcomed 9 new students, connecting virtually to initiate conversations around aging and older adults. For two students, Adebayo Makanju and Phyllis Owusu-Ansah, their experience with the course allowed them to reflect on those conversations in relation to the aging experience in Africa.

"My experience with this course has been phenomenal. The course is a small class that gives room for participation during discussions. Professor Stephen Katz is very supportive of our academic work. Aging studies in Canada are different from aging studies in Africa (Ghana) because the seniors in Canada are mostly cared for by the government whilst elders in Ghana are cared for by their families. The extended family system is prominent in Ghana. In some way, children are obliged to cater for their parents." - Phyllis Owusu-Ansah

"In the words of David Bowie "Aging is an extraordinary process where you become the person you always should have been." This reality is reinforced by the Foundations in Interdisciplinary Aging Studies (CSAS 5000H) course, instructed by the feline-loving, intellectually astute, and experiential endowed Prof Katz. A contemporary course that has exposed me to key theories, methods, and approaches to a spectrum of gerontological in ways universal views of aging reality and not just a homogenous afro-centric framework to build my thesis upon." - Abeyabo Manaju



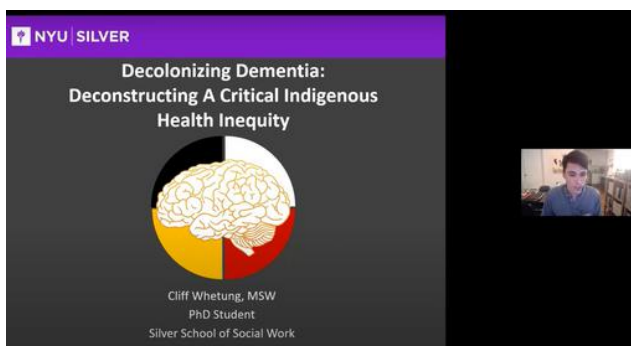
Top row (left to right): Dr. Stephen Katz, Adebayo Makanju, Laura Poulin, Megan Hill  
Middle row (left to right): Phyllis Owusu-Ansah, Louis Agyekum, Uzma Danish, Ama Pokuaa  
Bottom row (left to right): Amber Colibaba, Melanie Lalani  
Absent: Shawna Peddar

# New Partnership with the Chanie Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies

Earlier in the term, TCAS had the opportunity to partner with the Chanie Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies on two fantastic events that highlighted the experiences of Indigenous aging. "We are proud to be building this important relationship with our colleagues and friends at the Chanie Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies and look forward to growing this relationship." - Director, Dr. Elizabeth Russell

## Aging & Society Seminar Series: Decolonizing Dementia

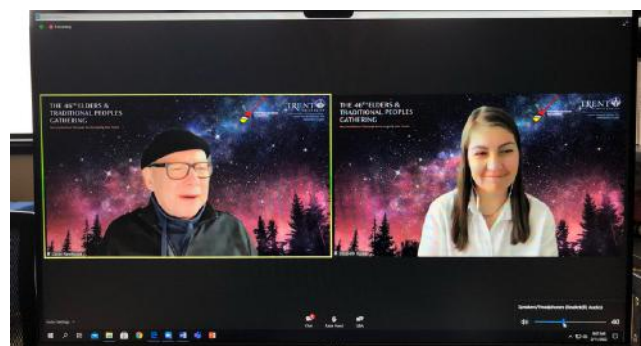
The 2021 Aging & Society Seminar Series, in partnership with the Chanie Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies, featured a talk by Cliff Whetung, a fourth year Ph.D. student at New York University's Silver School of Social Work. In his talk, Cliff discusses and critiques existing research about Indigenous cognitive health and its connection to colonialist perspectives. He then considers tangible steps toward the equitable inclusion of IOAs in cognitive health research, policy, and intervention.



[Click here to watch the seminar!](#)

## Indigenous Insights: Aging with Grace

In February 2022, the Chanie Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies in collaboration with TCAS held the Elders Gathering pre-conference event, "Aging with Grace". The event featured keynote speaker Cliff Whetung from Curve Lake First Nation, followed by panelists, Professor Emeritus Shirley Williams, Dan Longboat, and Janette Corston to discuss their experiences combined with Cliff's research.



[Click here to watch the event!](#)

# Winter Walk



In December 2021, TCAS members got together to enjoy the winter weather and a casual social gathering. We were joined by Jennifer Clinesmith (Director, Campus Planning & Development) and Julie Davis (VP External Relations & Advancement) on the site of the University-Integrated Seniors Village and Long-Term Care Home to visit, and learn about the land and the upcoming project.



Thank you to those who joined us!



Click [here](#) to watch our holiday video, if you missed it!



# Featured Research Update: Aging Vitalities

By Dr. Nadine Changfoot  
TCAS Executive Member



Aging Vitalities is an exciting arts-based research project led by Executive Committee Member Dr. Nadine Changfoot where Indigenous e/Elders and older settler adults each direct and create their own short multimedia documentary. The first filmmaking workshop took place in April 2019. Dr. Changfoot and Dr. Sally Chivers recruited storytellers from Peterborough/Nogojwanong, aiming for a very diverse group in terms of age, Indigeneity, race, queer and disability.

The project germinated from Dr. Changfoot's prior research project (as Co-Principal Investigator), "Mobilizing New Meanings of Disability and Difference" (CIHR funded) where disabled persons, including healthcare providers, created short multimedia documentaries of lived experience which they wanted to be seen, heard, felt and celebrated. Their videos showed that disabled persons live full lives with vitality, pushing back against the cultural dominance of ableism. These stories generate new understandings of disability, disability pride and possibilities. From this project, researchers and storytellers led workshops with healthcare providers in hospitals and post-secondary classrooms to support improvements in healthcare for disabled persons. As well, disability art became increasingly recognized in Ontario (Chandler, Changfoot et al. 2018) and became a priority area for the Ontario Arts Council.

From these earlier stories, the idea for Aging Vitalities blossomed. More diverse stories of aging are needed to talk back to ageism and ableism, and to recognize that older adults are agential with vitality/ies and that aging is desirable. The very diverse group of storytellers were eager to jump into the process of making a short film during the three-day workshop. We spoke with each storyteller in advance to orient them to what would happen on each workshop day and to sound out some initial ideas of their lived experience that might translate well into a script for their film. Storytellers were encouraged to think of images and sounds that might accompany their story idea. Film creation took place in Bagnani Hall, Trill College which was transformed into an arts studio.

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On the first day, Anne Taylor opened our gathering with an Anishnaabe teaching and Land Acknowledgement. Introductions followed with a short presentation on dominant themes of aging to help each storyteller understand more clearly how their own lived experience pushed back against ageism and crosscutting logics of discrimination related to settler colonialism, gender, race, and ableism. The first day focused on each person developing and refining their own story which was shared in a powerful storycircle space of listening, receiving and supporting. The energy of the room grew exponentially with the storytelling; the creative juices were flowing from each storyteller as they collected/created photographs, sounds, and video to accompany their words.

Melodie McCullough shares of her storycircle experience: **“It's so important to unearth the stories beneath the surface.** And, when you see or meet someone, you don't really know their life and what they've been through and their challenges. It's so much more rewarding to know them as people, as women [in our workshop], when you understand that background, and share my own back- a little of myself with them - so that we all shared something of ourselves, you just feel closer to people...”

Each storyteller created and directed their film using Final Cut Pro on a laptop computer they were given for the duration of the workshop with as much or as little support as they wanted from the artist-facilitation team (including Nadine and Sally) from Re•Vision: The Centre for Art and Social Justice at the University of Guelph. At lunchtime, there was nourishing, delicious food from Curve Lake's Grandfather's Kitchen that provided time and space for connection among the storytellers and team of artist-facilitators. At the end of the three days, there was a premiere of all the films, eliciting a collective “WOW” and visual, aural feast. Each storyteller's film was incredibly moving and powerful, made so especially by the relations and connections experienced during three full days of intense creative labour.

In the current era of Truth and Reconciliation, having Indigenous e/Elders and older settler adults in the same room, engaging in the creative process of filmmaking, was important to create space for listening and hearing Indigenous experiences and settler experiences. This had not been done before by the researchers; Dr. Changfoot anticipated that each storyteller would enjoy making their film, however, she did not know what would emerge at the outset when bringing Indigenous and settler storytellers together. Nonetheless, she was aware that some very real and challenging discussion might emerge given the ongoing need for truth around Indian Residential Schools and white settler colonization. Some generative tensions arose within the group, specifically around the privilege of white settler experiences in contrast with Indigenous – Anishnaabekwewag- stories of resilience within settler colonization's dispossession and genocide of Indigenous peoples.

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Alice Olsen Williams and Angela Connors made clear that Indian Residential Schools and missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls are part of their and their communities' experience; this was something that needed to be present and known in the space of storytelling because settler privilege was and remains related to settler colonizing histories. What became clear was the ongoing need to better understand the role of colonization and privilege on the part of settler persons and what meaningful reconciliation could and can be. Dr. Changfoot emphasized listening and hearing. No immediate answers were articulated or announced because self-contained and complete answers do not do justice to an ongoing and open endeavour that needs to be done in respectful and caring relation with one another. This gathering provided in a modest yet important way the meeting of Anishnaabekwewag e/Elders and older settler women for critical reflection for how to make Truth and Reconciliation meaningful and settler researchers and storytellers accountable to Anishnaabekwewag e/Elders storytellers within the Aging Vitalities project.

Alice Olsen Williams shared that “being with a group of white, privileged women created an anxious, uncomfortable feeling for me. Because there were a couple of the women there who were acquaintances of mine, I found it quite difficult to be honest. I thought my truths would hurt their feelings (white fragility), or they’d judge me negatively in a way that would diminish me, or dislike me because I was Anishinaabe. All these images ran around in my head, and I kept reasonably quiet as I was afraid to express my truths and experiences. However, when I saw there were two other Anishinaabe women in the group, I immediately felt relieved. I felt comfortably equal to them, that I would not be judged wanting. We had the same colonial experiences which made us sick, sorrowful, and angry – while the white women lived a life of the other end of the big stick of colonialism, racism, and privilege.”

For Angela Connors, “the struggles and experiences that Anishnaabekwewag have are really based in intergenerational trauma and that is what we have to work through especially when we’re in groups where people don’t understand the impact of the ongoing trauma caused by settler colonialism. We are constantly struggling with that, both Anishnaabkwewag and settler, but especially Anishnaabekwewag. **Sitting with the discomfort is part of the process.**”

Key themes emerging from the stories that are a source of delight as well as serious reflection are the multiplicitous ways of aging, the time immemorial Indigenous traditions and ways of aging which are to be respected and honoured, and the wellspring of creativity experienced by storytellers. Within the stories, there is expressed a multiplicity of meanings and experiences of becoming older, something not surprising in light of the diversity within the group.

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We are socialized and shaped to think of a human life in singular terms, as linear, proceeding forward in time in an able-bodied and minded way, and also in an acquiring way: we acquire this, we acquire that. We get better at this and or that. Then, once a certain time of life has been reached, age-wise, which often becomes linked to a loss or decline in physical, cognitive, financial capacity, boom, and with frequently accompanied ageist and ableist pitiable responses, aging becomes represented or imagined as a downward downhill trajectory which can be understandably quite disheartening, fearful, and anxiety-inducing when they are presented in this way. To buttress against fear and anxiety around this view of aging, there is a huge anti-aging industry to provide so-called “fixes” to fight against aging. In contrast, the stories of Aging Vitalities tell viewers that a person need not fight aging. Instead of fear and anxiety and “fixes,” aging offers experiences to be welcomed, savoured, and shared!

“Each time I view these videos, the “Aging Vitalities” theme strengthens,” says Mary Gordon. “My own video grows in importance in my life with each viewing. I know that my [hair and clothing] colour is an expression of intensity, affirmation, spirit, and life. **So now, nearly three years after the initial experience, I can say with confidence that I have more room for joy.** My health and heart are in better shape now than they were then. Throughout the pandemic, I have found creative ways to keep my hair colours evolving, never the same thing twice, thank you very much.” Gordon’s story, titled Heart, broken, presents a symbol of healing she had not thought of prior to the filmmaking, but one that holds enormous meaning in living with and through pain and joy associated with loss.

From a scholarly perspective, the documentaries themselves are supporting Indigenous, crip and queer renderings of aging (read an article published by Dr. Changfoot, Dr. Chivers and their storytellers [here](#)). Specifically, they push back against a mythical and dominant understanding of aging which creates the expectation of aging without illness or disability. This makes Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour’s experiences of aging, as well as aging with and into disability, invisible and at risk of being understood as less valuable and vital. Instead, new representations of aging interpreted from the videos offer relational instead of individualist experiences of aging and greater complexity of aging experiences which are more relatable. For example, in the Anishnaabekwewag stories there is an extended and deepened attention to Anishnaabe relations with the land, animals, plants, water, sky, earth and humans across generations which settler viewers are implicitly asked to respect, understand and relate with, not to appropriate. In the settler stories, aging in and with extended relations compared with a narrow focus on the dominant heteronormative couple is central. The films, as a collection, also offer some guidance in ongoing Truth and Reconciliation when aging is centred. The Indigenous teachings within the Anishnaabekwewag stories make clear that the assumption of growing old and maintaining traditions and ceremony have neither been a choice for nor experienced by Indigenous people.

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Aging Vitalities is honoured to have stories told by Anishnaabekwewag who brought into the world Anishnaabe experiences and traditions whereby becoming older is welcomed and intimately connected with all relations, both human and non-human, and in relationship with the land. Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg interdependencies among humans, animals, plants, ancestors and more come alive in these stories. Resistance against colonial dispossession, disappearance, and cultural genocide and the vitalities of Anishnaabe ways of knowing, healing, and living in good ways are beautifully presented with great care. There is much to learn from these stories for their many gifts.

Alice Olsen Williams shares a memory from the workshop: “But I was thinking you know [about] us [Indigenous people], things are not very good for us. A lot of us, probably most of us, have gone through terrible violence, death, suicide, and I believe that was meant to be because the state does want to get rid of Indians.” Williams made this known in the workshop to bring in truths of the state’s and settler culture’s discriminatory and unjust treatment toward Indigenous peoples into the space.

When reflecting upon creating the script for her film, Angela Connors, remembers: “I wasn’t really aware of what Indian Residential Schools were until I was much older and both my parents had passed. Although my mother did talk about being in the Mush Hole which was the Mohawk Institute and she would tell stories. But it wasn’t until they had both passed that I then started to become aware of what residential schools were, the impact of it, and then things started to make sense. **I shared my son’s comment about there being no old people in our family with Nadine in our conversation about the workshop and thought this was perfect for a film idea.**”

Connors experiences how her film has been generative: **“Now I find that what it has done is actually to help create relationships with folx that I may never have had the opportunity to engage with, so it’s broadened that [my relationships].”**

The stories, Anishnaabe and settler, do not shy away from pain and loss experienced during a lifetime. What they do is share the profound depth of life changes and their visceral, affective, multiple layers, as well as the transformative becoming they usher into the fullness and wholeness of aging, a fullness and wholeness experienced importantly in relationship, in community. Thus, these relationships and communities need very much to be well supported. This support includes robust funding for institutions of healthcare, long-term care, and community care accessed by older persons, including and especially in Indigenous communities. Just as important as the support, is the needed leadership from diverse older persons: Indigenous, those living with and into disability, on lower incomes, racialized, and queer. Their leadership is crucial for the very design, interactions, technologies, access and programming that these institutions will deliver.

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Storytellers also shared that they thoroughly enjoyed the discovery of their own creativity during the workshop process and continue to seek and bring more creativity in/to their lives. They really enjoyed having access to the cutting-edge Re•Vision computer and software technology used to make their documentaries, learning the technology and the hands-on experience of directing and creating their films. Others preferred the support of artist-facilitators. The workshop was a pivot point for storytellers in that it provided a place to stop and reflect upon their lives. The community created by the storytellers remains a lasting important memory, and a wellspring from which their growing creativity continues and flows. It is a reminder that when we come together to mobilize the stories in the making of this video or at venues such as ReFrame Film Festival or the Canadian Indigenous and Native Studies Association (CINSA), Aging Vitalities energy resurges and extends the community created by the workshop to diverse audiences.

One huge highlight was the acceptance and screening of all the Aging Vitalities stories at ReFrame Film Festival 2020 (the last in-person ReFrame to date). All the director-storytellers enjoyed being recognized as VIPs during the event. An audience of about 500 saw the Aging Vitalities collection. The Anishnaabekweg stories were shown during an all-Indigenous screening of films, with Williams and Connors participating in a filmmaker Q&A afterward; the settler older adult stories were screened together separately. There was some question around dividing up the stories into separate screenings and once it was known that the Anishnaabekweg preferred this did settler older adults understand the importance of this curatorial decision; for this screening, Indigenous stories needed to be centred for the ReFrame audience. One settler storyteller recounts that they understood the need “to see the world from their [Anishnaabe] perspective.” The storytellers also participated all together on a ReFrame panel, sharing their experiences of the filmmaking and learnings in relation to aging.

Alice Olsen Williams, Anne Taylor, Angela Connors presented their stories with Dr. Changfoot at the Canadian Indigenous and Native Studies Association (CINSA) in 2020, the last in-person conference at Trent to take place before the pandemic. The response from the audience was warm and welcoming: the renderings of Indigenous aging as cyclical, digging for medicine, weaving in time and weaving in place were seen as visually, aurally, relationally beautiful.

The experience of making the video on Aging Vitalities was wonderful for several reasons. First, it brought storytellers back into safe physical contact again, especially during the pandemic and before the omicron variant appeared. With masking and social distancing, and on such a beautiful, sunny, colourful, crisp fall afternoon, we were able to connect with one another, learn how each storyteller was keeping, and best of all, feel and taste the excitement, fun, and rewarding work of the video making.

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Second, it was fabulous to see the tables turned where the storytellers were in front of the camera and being interviewed instead of being behind the camera, directing their own videos. Their reflections were enormously captivating to hear. Third, it is a reminder that the videos made by the storytellers each offer unique visions and understanding of aging which support individuals' and community (re)visioning of aging, thinking especially of the resources needed for aging well with strong community relations and care. The pandemic has shown clearly how long-term care, for example, and our care relations and economy need significantly more resources in terms of staff, adequate pay, space, PPE and more.

Storytellers shared what it was like to come together during the making of the Aging Vitalities video:

Alice Olsen Williams: "It was really good to see one another to talk and to find out that we're all doing well [during the pandemic]."

Angela Connors: "It was great to see everybody especially not having contact with people in-person for so long [because of COVID]. It's wonderful to see how our stories have gained traction and that people are interested in hearing about what we old women have to say."

Mary Gordon: "Bringing us back together has been critical to my continual learning – about myself and my grief, about my community of older women, about my culture and its relentless hold on the narrative, and about aging itself. It's also been another source of joy. Just seeing some of those faces brings back the intensity and energy of those few days, and of our strong collaborative spirit."

Melodie McCullough: "It was so great to be together again. The connection with storytellers since we made our stories is so meaningful."

Scholarly publication from the films continues. "[ReVisioning Aging: Indigenous, Crip and Queer Renderings](#)" argues for and demonstrates the multiplicitous and fluid dimensions of aging against dominant western ideas of so-called "successful aging" without illness or disability. An article is in the works which from the Anishnaabekwewag films demonstrates the foundations for Indigenous women's sovereignty and the transformative potential this holds for politics. Also, once in-person is possible, a storytelling workshop with Indigenous women will get going. Last summer, Anne Taylor, Alice Olsen Williams, Angela Connors presented their short stories/films to the Getsinnyag 55+ group to a warm reception. In partnership with Taylor, Williams and Connors, we are hopeful for future conversations and an in-person workshop when allowed.

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In the Aging Vitalities video, you will meet Alice Olsen Williams (Anishnaabe name: Minaachimo-Kwe), Angela Connors, Mary Gordon, and Melodie McCullough who share their experiences of making each their own story. Drs. Changfoot and Chivers led the filmmaking workshop and were also artist-facilitators with the Re•Vision Centre for Art and Social Justice team at the University of Guelph who provided artistic-technological-filmmaking support and production of the stories. All eleven films made during the workshop were juried accepted and screened at ReFrame Film Festival 2020, a special occasion also since it was the last in-person festival gathering since the pandemic. Aging is desirable and prideful, and Dr. Changfoot sees these videos inspiring the public imagination and vision for diverse aging, Indigenous and settler, and for resourcing growing old(er) in good ways. The stories offer welcome alternatives for embracing and proudly aging. They bring into the world experiences of aging that are desirable and rich in reflection of vivid, vivacious lives, relationships, and community.



[Click here to watch the Aging Vitalities Video!](#)

**To learn more about the project, and the films visit their website [here](#). On this website, you will see the link where you can view the stories/films made by Alice Olsen Williams and three more Aging Vitalities storytellers: Inge Fowlie, Ann Barrett, and Charmaine Magumbe and also listen to their podcasts sharing their experiences of the making of their films and times during the pandemic. Click on [this link](#) and the password is: surgebitstfx Please note: these films are for educational purposes only and not for public screening.**

# Posthumanist Turn in Aging Studies Symposium

Professor Stephen Katz, in collaboration with TCAS and the EngAge Centre for Research on Aging at Concordia University, organized a well-attended online series of 4 panels on the subject of 'The Posthuman Turn in Aging Studies' in October and November, 2021. He invited a range of interdisciplinary scholars from the humanities, feminist theory, social studies of science and technology, critical and geographical gerontology, Indigenous studies, and film and communication studies, to present their ideas on how new trends in posthuman thought have relevance for research on aging. In particular, the seminars explored posthuman forms of care, relational and decolonizing approaches to aging and life-courses, posthuman materialities and technological design, literary re-imaginings of human/non-human ecologies, and inclusive aging futures. Inspired by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's question, 'can we live inside this regime of the human and still exceed it?', Professor Katz plans to continue the discussions created in the seminars for possible future events and potentially an edited book collection.

**Fragmenting, decolonizing and disrupting ageing**

October 18, 11am EDT

TRENT UNIVERSITY  
TRENT CENTRE FOR AGING & SOCIETY

engAGE  
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

act  
ageing communication technologies

Canada  
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada  
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

Paula Morgan

Linn Sandberg

Stephen Katz

Sandy Grande she/her(s)

Julia Henderson

# TCAS Membership Engagement Survey

Thank you to those members who participated in the TCAS Membership Engagement Survey in 2020. A total of 24 members participated in either an online survey, telephone interview, or both to discuss their experience being TCAS members. Since then, we have been hard at work reading your feedback and recommendations for ways to help improve the TCAS member experience.

Actions Taken	Next Steps
<div data-bbox="253 814 337 890"></div> <p><b>New communication strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased visibility on social media</li> <li>• Weekly e-mail updates</li> <li>• Detailed newsletter</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="253 1129 363 1192"></div> <p><b>Increased student member participation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jordan Till - TCAS Knowledge Mobilization Hub Graduate Assistant</li> <li>• Sam Teichman -Social Media Coordinator</li> <li>• Luke Whale - Visual Communications Assistant</li> <li>• Stephanie Daag - Research Assistant</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="253 1717 347 1793"></div> <p><b>New focus on knowledge mobilization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning to launch the TCAS Knowledge Mobilization Hub</li> </ul>	<div data-bbox="906 821 984 896"></div> <p><b>Continue to increase our online presence</b></p> <div data-bbox="889 1045 1000 1142"></div> <p><b>Creation of student member group</b></p> <div data-bbox="886 1247 1000 1339"></div> <p><b>Enhance community-Centre relations through educational opportunities</b></p> <div data-bbox="886 1503 984 1600"></div> <p><b>Formal creation of the TCAS Knowledge Mobilization Hub</b></p>

# Follow Us on Social Media

Sam Teichman, TCAS Social Media Coordinator and graduate associate member, has been working hard to expand our social media presence. Please check us out on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram! As always, please let us know if there is anything you'd like shared.



 on Twitter [@TrentAging](https://twitter.com/TrentAging)

 on Facebook [@TrentAging](https://www.facebook.com/TrentAging)

 on Instagram [@trentaging](https://www.instagram.com/trentaging)

 on YouTube [@Trent Centre for Aging & Society](https://www.youtube.com/TrentCentreforAgingandSociety)



# TCAS Student Blog

The TCAS Student Blog features articles by TCAS undergraduate and graduate associate members on topics of their choosing. Interested in contributing? Email [aging@trentu.ca](mailto:aging@trentu.ca)! Please enjoy our first article by Mariana Castilli Rosa below.

## Lecture Reflections

By Mariana Castilli Rosa  
TCAS Graduate Associate Member



On October 20, 2021, I attended an online lecture organized by Mecila (Maria Sibylla Merian Centre Conviviality-Inequality in Latin America), an academic consortium with headquarters in São Paulo, Brazil which is composed by German and Latin American institutions and funded by the German government. In this event, Dr. Annette Leibing, professor at the Université de Montréal, presented her research on dementia prevention in the highly unequal context of Brazil, which attracted my attention even though my area of research is not dementia per se. Dr. Leibing presented and challenged the idea of dementia being a “democratic” disease, a notion that sounded familiar to me. Once the

Covid-19 pandemic started, the initial discourse in Brazil was that it was democratic: anyone, no matter the social class, could get this respiratory illness. Once upper- and middle-class people started working from home so they could practice social distancing while their maids and children’s caregivers had to use busy bus and subway services, this idea was challenged.

Similarly, in the case of dementia, because some studies indicate that this illness can be prevented by making lifestyle changes, individuals who get sick are to blame: they are not doing enough, they are uneducated. In her talk, Dr. Leibing acknowledged that instead of recognizing the role of the government in providing quality health care, the privatization of responsibility scapegoats vulnerable and already marginalized populations. Moreover, it highlights the idea that it is the government’s duty to educate people, not provide better health care. Dr. Leibing’s insightful lecture prompts us to question the role of the government as illnesses shift from a social to an individual problem. And it begs the question: in this morally charged discourse that blames individuals for their illnesses, how do we deal with the government’s intentional spread of misinformation such as did President Bolsonaro by endorsing hydroxychloroquine to prevent Covid-19? And, more importantly: How does this meddling with public health issues pushes us to further rethink the connection between illnesses and democracy?

# TCAS Member Updates

TCAS is pleased to welcome six new members: **Adebayo Makanju** (graduate associate member), **Shawna Peddar** (graduate associate member), **Dr. Stephanie Tobin** (faculty member), **Emmaleigh Dew** (undergraduate associate member), **Uzma Danish** (graduate associate member), and **Steve Russell** (community associate member).

TCAS community associate **Jayne Culbert**, presented a [webinar](#) for the Seniors Health Knowledge Network on Age-friendly Peterborough's Health and Housing Navigation Study.

TCAS executive member, **Dr. Nadine Changfoot** [interviewed with CBC radio-télévision Canada](#) to discuss Peterborough-Kawartha's history as a bellwether riding and issues for voters and voter turnout.

TCAS executive members **Dr. Mark Skinner**, and **Dr. Kirsten Woodend** published [Reimagining aging in Peterborough starts on campus](#), in The Peterborough Examiner.

Guest column: Reimagining aging in Peterborough starts on campus

By Kirsten Woodend  
Mark Skinner Guest columnists  
Thu., Oct. 7, 2021 | 4 min read



TCAS welcomed **Dr. Liana Brown** and **Dr. Kirsten Woodend** to the Executive Committee.

TCAS member **Dr. Sally Chivers** published [Deception and Design: The Rise of the Dementia Village](#), in e-flux Architecture.

TCAS welcomed graduate associate member **Samantha Teichman** as our volunteer social media coordinator.



TCAS faculty member **Ann Macleod** published [COVID-19 one year on, how can we recover from social isolation?](#), in Peterborough Currents.

TCAS executive members **Dr. Stephen Katz** and **Dr. Nadine Changfoot** presented at the Critical Dementia Network's online seminar "[Temporalities of Dementia](#)."

TCAS hosted the NANAS online symposium "[Contested Language and the Study of Later Life](#)".

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# TCAS Member Updates

TCAS Director **Dr. Elizabeth Russell** published *Teaching university students to be 'age-conscious' could help address our elder care crisis*, in The Conversation.

TCAS faculty member **Dr. Emily Bruusgaard** published *Femininity and fatness after midlife: Rachel Lynde and the invisibility of fat aging in Canadian literature* in Fat Studies.

TCAS visiting scholar **Dr. Neil Hanlon** and executive member **Dr. Mark Skinner** published *On older person/place transformations: Towards a more-than-representational geography of aging in rural Canada*, in The Canadian Geographer.

TCAS Director **Dr. Elizabeth Russell** and Coordinator **Amber Colibaba** shared the [TCAS Holiday Video](#).

TCAS executive member, **Dr. Sally Chivers** published *How Do You Think About Death?*, in the Fall 2021 52.1 Edition of Trent Magazine.

TCAS executive member, **Dr. Mark Skinner** and graduate associate member **Laura Poulin** published *Emotional geographies of loss in later life: An intimate account of rural older peoples' last move* in Social Science & Medicine.

TCAS Graduate Associate Member **Samantha Teichman** was awarded the SSHRC CGS-Doctoral Scholarship for her research *Funeral without Hugs: Communication Technologies as Care*.

TCAS faculty member **Dr. Jim Struthers** was interviewed in the first two episodes of the [COVID in the House of Old](#) podcast.

TCAS fellow **Dr. Janna Klostermann** presented *At the Limits of Care: How women negotiate moral, gendered responsibilities in our aging society* at the Gilbrea Centre Seminar Series.

TCAS executive member, **Dr. Sally Chivers** published a book chapter *Old Friends: Reimagining Care in Relations through Helen Garner's The Space Room*, in Contemporary Narratives of Ageing, Illness, and Care.



TCAS coordinator **Amber Colibaba** and executive member **Dr. Mark Skinner** published *Community Reintegration of Previously Incarcerated Older Adults: Exploratory Insights from a Canadian Community Residential Facility Program* in the Journal of Aging & Social Policy.

TCAS hired **Jordan Till** as our Knowledge Mobilization Hub Graduate Student.

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# TCAS Member Updates

TCAS Director **Dr. Elizabeth Russell**, executive members **Dr. Sally Chivers** and **Dr. Mark Skinner**, and Coordinator **Amber Colibaba** were featured in the [2021 Trent University Report on Research Excellence](#).

TCAS Director **Dr. Elizabeth Russell** was interviewed by Global News on [Trent University research that explores the effects of the pandemic](#).

TCAS advisory member **Dr. Jenny Ingram** published *Improving dementia care: Insights from audit and feedback in interdisciplinary primary care sites*, in BMC Health Services Research.

TCAS fellow **Dr. Rachel Herron** presented *Safe Places for Aging and Care? Exploring Violence in Care for Older Adults* at the Gilbrea Centre Seminar Series.

TCAS members **Dr. Nicole Dalmer**, **Dr. Kirsten Ellison**, **Dr. Stephen Katz**, and **Dr. Barb Marshall** published *Ageing, embodiment and datafication: Dynamics of power in digital health and care technologies*, in the International Journal of Ageing and Later Life.

TCAS community associate member **Jayne Culbert** presented at the Age-Friendly Communities Outreach Program's Conference in the [Built Environment and Personal Health and Well-Being Showcase](#).

TCAS members **Dr. Mark Skinner**, **Dr. Rachel Herron**, and **Dr. Rachel Bar** met in-person for the first time in two years (!!) to discuss their CIHR/ASC-funded research *Improving social inclusion for Canadians with dementia and their carers through Sharing Dance* with Canada's National Ballet School.



TCAS executive member **Dr. Nadine Changfoot**'s promotion to Full Professor begins July 1, 2022!

TCAS Director **Dr. Elizabeth Russell** was awarded an [Early Career Researcher Award!](#)



**TCAS Members: Do you have an update of any kind you would like included in the next newsletter? Please let us know! E-mail any and all updates (publications, news articles, webinars, conferences etc.) to [aging@trentu.ca](mailto:aging@trentu.ca). No update is too small!**

# CHALLENGE THE WAY YOU THINK



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YouTube: [Trent Centre for Aging & Society](https://www.youtube.com/TrentCentreforAging&Society)