Situated Elderliness
- design with, by and for

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Photo: Christina Mörtberg
Overview

• Background
• Frame of Reference – concepts
• Examples – PD workshops
• Implications for Design
Not a Tail but a Nerd from 1970s
Socio-economic challenges - upcoming change in demography.

So called ‘tide-wave of elderly’,

health care and social services are moving from public organizations to private homes.

Smart homes for elderly – enabling elderly to stay in their homes
Crossroad of

Science and Technology – Feminist Technoscience

Agential Realism (Barad 2007)
  - Intra-action, performativity, becomings

Participatory Design
Situated elderliness (Brandt et al 2010)

- to honor seniors’ experiences,
- to show how elderliness is situated in a practice,
- how elderliness emerges when people and technology meet
Agential Realism – Intra-Action

“Whereas the construct of interaction suggests two entities, given in advance, that come together and engage in some kind of exchange, *intra-action* underscores the sense in which subjects and objects emerge through their encounters with each other.”
(Suchman 2007:267).

Boundary – drawing – in- and exclusion - ontological implications (Hekman 2010)

Move from dualisms towards ongoing ontologies - becomings
Material-Discursive Practices

Entities are not separate but entangled

Højgaard, Juelskær & Søndergaard (2012, p. 68) write:

“Everything is always engaging something else, in specific ways designated by concepts: intra-activity, i.e. matter and meaning, object, and subject, nature and culture are mutually articulated and mutually entangled.”

Intra-action:
entrance to discussing how elderliness & independence are constituted in encounters – in entanglements
Participatory Design

Workshops 2011 – 2014

Participants 65-79

Cartographic mappings, scenarios, social network, sketching

“a grapple with the ordinary” (Haraway 2008, p. 3)
Cartographic Mappings
PD Activities

Narratives illustrated their active lives

Scenarios – future lives and what is needed to facilitate day-to-day activities

Lively conversation for making their desire to stay in their homes

Alarms, sensors and so on

But also

More intimate aspects of their daily life
Beathe says:

do I manage to keep time, to ensure that, to cook food, what kind of help do I need to facilitate this, and ... last but not least do I manage to go to the bathroom and take a shower, do we have toilets that work so I can ... the most embarrassing I think is about being dependent on someone else to help me in the bathroom. It is absolutely the worst thing I know ....

...I think this is really important, one should start here [on basic needs] – other issues will also appear. Certainly one can focus on other issues but just to start, what do you need, you need food for the day and you need to go to the bathroom and you need ... here I think it is the absolute first and most important [demands], because many [services/technologies] do not exist and they [designers] don't care

(Finken and Mörtberg, 2014, 315)
Reading their Performance or Intra-Actions:

Identified both In- and exclusion

Both independency and dependency

Reminders - participants become subjects (mobiles were included) by identifying themselves with younger people

Technology becomes a subject with agency - acts (or not) on behalf of the object (the human) – Alarms, sensor and so on

Subjects and objects are not prefixed – come into existence in encounters

Intimacy emerged:

Inclusion: Less degree of mobility, increased dependency, embarrassment

Question of in-or exclusion – boundary drawing activities:

Being sensitive to more intimate aspects of day-to-day life

(Finken & Mörtberg, 2014)
Intra-action

Awareness of
elderliness - heterogenous, experts – of their day-today life

normativity ( included in design choices) – e.g. the “ideal user”,

Elderliness & Independence – a process of becoming with digital service/technologies

(Finken & Mörtberg, 2014)
Implications for Design

• Experts of their Everyday

• Ongoing Practices – Situated

• Accountability - boundary-making practices (ongoing ontologies) is related central concerns in PD

(Finken & Mörtberg, 2014)
References


Design from nowhere

Systems are constructed from nowhere to everyone

Designers are seeing everyone but not seeing themselves

Developers/designers are not aware of their positions, activities, visions, dreams

The God's view from nowhere

Thank You!

Photo: Tomas Stefansson