



4th International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Emotional Geographies 1-3 July 2013 at the University of Groningen, The Netherlands

Session title and chair	
Session Title	Care
Session Chair name	Affiliation
Debbie Lager	Department of Cultural Geography, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen

Session presentation details	
Presentation 1 Title:	Reconstructing life (hi)stories and trajectories of people with intellectual disability in Flanders (Belgium). About intensive encounters and emotional experiences.
Presentation 1 Abstract	In the context of a doctoral research project life trajectories of people with intellectual disabilities and additional mental health problems in Flanders (the Dutch speaking part of Belgium) are investigated. The complex support questions and 'difficult behaviour' of this population turn out to be precursors of endless trajectories in the landscape of care. I am fascinated by these trajectories and by meanings of particular spaces and places. Therefore this research foregrounds the life (hi)stories and life trajectories of people with intellectual disabilities and mental health problems from a cross-fertilization of the theoretical perspectives Disability Studies (my familiar theoretical perspective as a pedagogue) and Social Geography. In particular, three life stories and trajectories are reconstructed through intense encounters with people themselves and with people in their natural and professional network, in which multiple research methods are adopted. Pictures appear as a very useful entrance to elicit memories and connected stories and emotions and serve as a communication medium, by which pictures perform the voice of the photographer. Researcher and research subject also go back to important places and spaces (i.e. former places of residence) and meet people who were important in this places and spaces. In this processes of remembering and reconstructing, a plurality of emotions (loss, nostalgia, pleasure, desire, melancholy, frustration, hope, sadness, resilience), are re-experienced and re-lived. This paper tries to capture such moments and shares reflections of and questions on the role of emotion in (re-)experiencing place/space and how to engage with emotions and feelings in interpretative research. This interpretative turn in research creates an openness to relationality, subjectivity, values, engagement and results in a less traditional interpretation of research, researcher and participant. This paper also foregrounds some of the emotions, never ending thoughts, hesitations, responsibilities linked to the rotating roles and multiple identities of the researcher.
Author name	Author affiliation
Lien Claes	Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of Ghent University (Belgium)

Presentation 2	
Presentation 2 Title:	A Space for Others: Exploring Cognitive Urban Geography With Ethics of Care, Concern and Empathy in Affective Social Networks in Geneva
Presentation 2 Abstract	<p>In the mid 90s, a joint enterprise from the Institute of British Geographers and the American Association of Geographers called for unveiling and exploring the various aspects of the subtle relationship that exists between geography and ethics. Bridging over the Atlantic, a group of Anglo-Saxon geographers lead by J. Proctor and D.M. Smith pointed out the necessity to further develop the bounds between the study of space and moral philosophy.</p> <p>Questions were directly addressed in the beginning of 1997 through the first volume of <i>Philosophy and Geography: Ethics, Place and Environment</i>, concerned with the uprising attention brought to environmental changes. This contribution was only briefly later continued in <i>Progress in Human Geography</i>. Within this initiative, which further developments quickly felt short in the years 2000 to the profit of other research interests, the notion of care had been pointed out as key to approach what was regarded as both an epistemological and ontological challenge for geography. First developed in the 1980's by philosophers C. Gilligan and J. Tronto as a feministic approach to ethics, the notion of care became increasingly central to a whole set of disciplines concerned with the central role of woman as care givers. However, today, with the emerging of the postfeminist critic, the sense given to the notion of care tends to shift from 'taking care of' to 'caring about'.</p> <p>Through this shift, I suggest the possibility to approach a spatial understanding of the social bounds individuals maintain throughout their youth—binding in kinfolks, friends, acquaintances and strangers—in a sole field of affect, cognitively linking themselves to a World shaped by care, concern and empathy. The relationship between care, spatial practices, degree of urbanity and level of exposure to otherness are then revealed in an ethnographic fieldwork using friendship as a method, and recurrent interviews with actors of this affect-based network.</p>
Author name	Author affiliation
M. Shin Alexandre Koseki	Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne / Swiss Institute of Technology Lausanne
Presentation 3	
Presentation 3 Title:	Being touched and beings lost: Ecological community, the sense of the world, and the effects/affects of extinction.
Presentation 3 Abstract	<p>How might we begin to explain the effects (emotional, ethical, ecological and political) of the irrevocable loss of entire species of beings due to human induced extinctions? How are we touched by, or how come so many fail to consider themselves touched by, such losses? What effects do such losses have on “the sense of the world”? This paper attempts to elucidate some of the connections between our understandings of, and emotional responses to, ideas of extinction and (ecological) community. It adopts and adapts Jean-Luc Nancy’s concept of The Inoperative Community in an ecological and post-humanist way so that it might be understood in terms of communities created by and constituted between the very different species whose lives touch each other in myriad ways, and are in turn touched by their loss.</p>
Author name	Author affiliation
Mick Smith	Philosophy / Environmental Studies, Queen’s University, Kingston, Canada

Short biographical note for presenters

Lien Claes	Lien Claes is working in the field of Disability Studies at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of Ghent University in Belgium. She is doing a Phd research with people who are labeled with 'intellectual disabilities' and 'additional mental health problems'. In this research she works closely and intensively together with these people on their life trajectories and important spaces, places and relationships in these trajectories.
M. Shin Alexandre Koseki	Shin Koseki is pursuing a doctoral research in the doctoral program of architecture and sciences of the city of the Swiss Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL). Through an ethno-anthropological approach binding moral psychology and cognitive geography, he addresses the relation between the ethical function and the spatial dimension of the urban phenomenon, questioning the role of spatial affordances in the constitution of individual ethics using notions of care, concern and empathy for others.
Mick Smith	