

Call for Papers

SPECIAL ISSUE

The Legal Semiotics of the Elders

Guest Editors

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As societies progress, legal interpretations evolve in tandem, influenced by social norms and experiences. The emergence of an “aging society” is a testament to this evolution, marked by a significant increase in the elderly population and the implications of extended lifespans. This demographic shift challenges the established social order and calls for the development of new legal frameworks. This issue concentrates on the effects of increased life longevity on legal systems and societal perceptions of the elderly, scrutinizing the roles and systemic positions of the elderly through diverse theoretical and practical perspectives.

The discourse on legal protection for the elderly is deeply intertwined with the broader Human Rights dialogue, underscoring the necessity for laws that defend the dignity and rights of the aged. These discussions often mirror a society’s dedication to maintaining equality and non-discrimination, as enshrined in universal human rights. Semiotics and semioethics can enrich this dialogue by examining the impact of legal language and practices on societal attitudes toward the elderly and by shedding light on the ethical aspects of legal narratives and elder care practices. How and to what extent is law effective in protecting the elders? What are the implicit ethical considerations enshrined in legal protections?

The experience of aging is increasingly analyzed through a gendered lens, revealing distinct disparities between the aging processes of different genders. Legal definitions and societal views of aging often possess gendered undertones, affecting how aging is legally addressed. The legal system strives to define and manage aging to ensure fair protection and benefits, yet it must continuously adapt to the nuanced realities of how aging differs between men and women. This includes acknowledging the unique challenges each gender faces, as well as guaranteeing that laws are inclusive and attuned to these gendered aspects of aging. Furthermore, the categorization of legal rules concerning the elderly frequently incorporates implicit factors that influence their application and interpretation. What are the often-neglected legal categorizations that shape legal perspectives on elder-related situations?

Contributions can examine the dynamic relationship between legal semiotics and the process of aging. This examination can delve into aspects such as legal discourse, the categorization within the legal framework, the various forms and practices of safeguarding rights, the influence of age discrimination, and the potential conflicts that arise when viewed through the prism of interdisciplinary studies. Contributions on legal concerns arising at the crucible between care for the elders and new

ultratechnologies (AI, conversational robots, wellbeing digital technologies, etc.) will be particularly appreciated.

Submissions of abstracts should be addressed to both Stefania Yapo (stefania.yapo@unitn.it) and Massimo Leone (massimo.leone@unito.it)

- Abstracts of 300 words by 15 January 2025

- After selection, final papers (no more than 15,000 words) should be submitted by 15 July 2025.