The Role of Technology in Understanding Perspectives on Aging and Health

As the population ages, research has increasingly focused on conditions associated with growing older, such as dementia. Technology is often presented as a solution for managing or treating these various health conditions. This framing can position health conditions as problems to address through design and can neglect the complexity and positive aspects of older adulthood. In this talk, I draw on critical perspectives from Human Computer Interaction and Gerontology. I describe three ways in which technology can help us understand and challenge stereotypes around aging as well as dementia. I will argue for a view of aging that takes into account the ways that technologies position older individuals and, in turn, the way that this view can inform the design of new technologies to enrich the experience of growing older.

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