

Rewriting Female Ageing: Positive Later-Life Narratives in Post-COVID Cinema from the Global North

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Ageing has surged as a central theme during the COVID-19 pandemic, gaining visibility in social and cultural discourse and narratives. This new cultural attention opened space for an in depth analysis of how later life is framed within narrative cinema, particularly for women. This paper centers on a qualitative study of different aging representations in a selection of three post pandemic films from the Global North, *The Life Ahead* (Edoardo Ponti, 2020), *Good Luck to You, Leo Grande* (Sophie Hyde, 2022), and *The Miracle Club* (Thaddeus O’Sullivan, 2023), examining how these construct female ageing through narrative structure, aesthetics, and character development. This analysis considers how these films connect with broader discourses of care, resilience, and social engagement in the aging process for female subjects,

Along with the qualitative study, a supporting quantitative section is included to help highlight patterns in gender and screen time, in order to contextualize newer representational trends that contribute with positive ageing. The findings in this study suggest that recent films increasingly try to resist dominant traditional decline based frameworks, offering instead portrayals of middle aged and older women as complex, agentic, and socially engaged. The selected narratives thus reframe ageing and later life not as a period of social isolation and loneliness but as one characterized by complexity. This study positions contemporary cinema as a site where post-COVID age norms are both reflected and reimagined. The paper argues that such narratives play a significant role in challenging ageist assumptions and help expand cultural imaginaries of ageing women. In doing so, it contributes to interdisciplinary conversations on ageing, media, and post-pandemic cultural production.