

Tele(visualising) Health: TV, Public Health, its Enthusiasts and its Publics

27 February – 1 March 2019

Dickens Library, Mary Ward House

5-7 Tavistock Place, London UK WC1H 9SN

Televisions began to appear in the homes of large numbers of the public in Europe and North America after World War II. This coincided with a period in which ideas about the public's health, the problems that it faced and the solutions that could be offered, were changing. The threat posed by infectious diseases was receding, to be replaced by chronic conditions linked to lifestyle and individual behaviour.

Public health professionals were enthusiastic about how this new technology and mass advertising could reach out to individuals in the population with the new message about lifestyle and risk. TV offered a way to reach large numbers of people with public health messages; it symbolised the post war optimism about new directions in public health.

But it could also act as a contributory factor to those new public health problems. Watching TV was part of a shift towards more sedentary lifestyles, and also a vehicle through which products that were damaging to health, such as alcohol, cigarettes and unhealthy food, could be advertised to the public. Population health problems could be worsened by TV viewing.

How should we understand the relationship between TV and public health? What are the key changes and continuities over time and place? How does thinking about the relationship between public health and TV change our understanding of both?

In this three-day conference, we seek to explore questions such as:

- How did the enthusiasm develop for TV within public health?
- How were shifts in public health, problems, policies and practices represented on TV?
- How was TV used to improve or hinder public health?
- What aspects of public health were represented on TV, and what were not?
- How did the public respond to health messages on TV?
- What were the perceived limitations of TV as a mass medium for public health?
- In what way was TV different from other forms of mass media in relation to public health?
- How were institutions concerned with the public's health present – and staged – on TV broadcasts?

The conference aims to bring together scholars from different fields (such as, but not limited to, history, history of science, history of medicine, communication, media and film studies, television studies) working on the history of television in Great Britain, France and Germany (West and East) (the focus of the ERC BodyCapital project), but also other European countries, North and South America, Russia, Asia or other countries and areas.



PROGRAMME

Wednesday, February 27th 2019

10:00-10:30 **Arrival and coffee**

10:30-11:00 **Welcome and Introduction**

Virginia Berridge (LSHTM)

Alex Mold (LSHTM)

Christian Bonah (Université de Strasbourg)

Anja Laukötter (MPIHD-Berlin)

11:00-12:00 **Keynote lecture**

Elizabeth Toon (University of Manchester)

Title TBA

Chair: Tricia Close-Koenig (Université de Strasbourg)

12:00-1:00 LUNCH

Panel 1 – TV as a Public Health Tool

Chair: Alex Mold (LSHTM)

1:00-1:45 Alexandre Sumpf (Université de Strasbourg)

‘The socialist body in the family sphere: the broadcast “Health” (1960-1992)’

1:45-2:30 Susanne Vollberg (Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg)

‘Health education by television in West Germany from the 1970s to the 1990s’

2:30-3:00 COFFEE BREAK

3:00-3:45 Sandra Schnädelbach (MPIHD-Berlin)

‘Bad vibes: Images of communication, emotional balance and health in GDR television’

3:45-4:30 Alex Chandler (University of Glasgow)

‘Be All You Can Be; The Scottish Health Education Group, identity and drugs’

Thursday, February 28th 2019

10:00-11:00 **Keynote lecture**

Jeremy A. Greene (Johns Hopkins University)

‘The television clinic: A history of new media in medical practice’

Chair: Christian Bonah (Université de Strasbourg)

Panel 2 – Sexual Health on TV

Chair: Hannah Elizabeth (LSHTM)

11:00-11:45 Elisabet Björklund (Uppsala University)

‘Medical programs on reproductive health in Swedish television of the late 1960s and early 1970s’

11:45-12:30 Angela Seward (Wellcome Collection)

‘Let’s talk about VD: Francis ("Frank") St Dominic Rowntree (1928-1996) and his career in health education’

12:30-1:30 **LUNCH**

1:30-2:15 Pascale Mansier (Dauphine Université, Paris)

‘SidaMag, a French Television Health Magazine: contribution to publicization of AIDS prevention’

Panel 3 – Visions of Health/Healthy Visions

Chair: Virginia Berridge (LSHTM)

2:15-3:00 Christian Bonah & Joël Danet (Université de Strasbourg)

‘Fighting "the uncertainty of tomorrow": Explaining and staging social security on school television’

3:00-3:15 **COFFEE BREAK**

3:15-4:00 Jessica Borge (Université de Strasbourg)

‘Compassion on the shop floor? Lindsay Anderson, Britannia Hospital and television coverage of 1970s NHS strike action’

4:00-4:45 Anja Laukötter (MPIHD-Berlin)

‘History of television from the perspective of the audience: Techniques of dealing with and practices of watching television in the GDR’

Wellcome Collection Film screening

6:00-8:00 **Television archives and public health**

Followed by drinks and discussion

Viewing room (Library entrance, 2nd fl), Wellcome Collection, 183 Euston Rd, London

(Places limited please RSVP promptly: tkoenig@unistra.fr)

Friday, March 1st 2019

10:00-11:00 **Keynote lecture**

Christina von Hodenberg (German Historical Institute London/Queen Mary University of London)

‘Measuring Television's Impact on Audiences: Sitcoms in Britain, USA and West Germany, 1966-1979’

Chair: Anja Laukötter (MPIHD-Berlin)

Panel 4 – Risk, Health & TV

Chair: Jessica Borge (Université de Strasbourg)

11:00-11:45 Benjamin Coulomb (Université Grenoble Alpes)

‘When television showed one of the greatest health scandals about cosmetics in France: Morhange, 1972’

11:45-12:30 Peder Clark (LSHTM)

“‘Stop! In the name of love”: Heart disease, family values and the armchair nation in 1980s Britain’

12:30-1:00 **Commentary and Discussion**

Virginia Berridge (LSHTM)

The conference is organized by the ERC funded research group BodyCapital (bodycapital.unistra.fr), and hosted by the Centre for History in Public Health London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (history.lshtm.ac.uk).

The healthy self as body capital: individuals, market-based societies and body politics in visual twentieth century Europe (BodyCapital) project is directed by Christian Bonah (Université de Strasbourg) in collaboration with Anja Laukötter (Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin). The project is funded by the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (Advanced Grant agreement No 694817).

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Attendance is free. Please register online: <https://tinyurl.com/yb2ctqju>



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