



History Centre News

Volume 1
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New History Centre launches!

Welcome to the first quarterly newsletter of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine's new Centre for History in Public Health.

The School's unique alignment of historical and public health and science disciplines, at a time of growing importance and public interest in the history of health, has made us a major contributor to the development of public health policy both in the UK and internationally.

This Centre will be a focus for expertise in historical research into public health and, in particular, its 20th and 21st century history. It will enable us to better collaborate across the public health disciplines and improve opportunities for funding, add value to the public image of the School.

We are delighted to announce the launch of this exciting and challenging new venture!
Virginia Berridge, Head of History

Simon Szreter to speak at official launch



The History Centre is delighted to announce that the University of Cambridge's Dr Simon Szreter will be speaking at our official launch on 27 November.

Dr Szreter is co-Editor and founder of the joint History Faculty and Institute of Contemporary British History website on History and Policy. He is the author of numerous publications and articles on the history of demography, fertility and sexuality, public health and social capital.

Everyone is welcome to attend the launch event, which starts at 5.15 pm in the Manson, and will include refreshments.

In the news

The School's participation in Archives Awareness Month featured on ITV's 'London Tonight' programme, while Virginia Berridge and Victoria Killick both appeared in a double-page spread in 'Guardian Higher' all about the new History Centre.

New seminars

All seminars start at 5.30 pm

Drug and Alcohol Research

5 Nov, 105/106, 51 Bedford Sq
Evidence and expediency: research and recent UK drug policy' - John Witton, Health Services Research Co-ordinator, National Addiction Centre, Institute of Psychiatry, London.

10 Dec, Room 364, Keppel St
'Origins of American Anti-Drug Laws' - Dr David F Musto MD, Professor of Psychiatry, Yale University, USA

History in public health

all in Room 364, Keppel St

21 Oct - 'The field of psychiatric contention: mental health activism in Britain 1960-2000'. Dr Nick Crossley, Department of Sociology, University of Manchester.

6 Nov - 'Policy speaks to social science: the "Cycle of Deprivation" research programme, 1972-82'. Dr John Welshman, Institute of Health Research, University of Lancaster.

20 Nov - 'Transformations of the ageing male: from male climacteric to the andropause' - Dr Chandak Sengoopta, Birkbeck College, University of London.

Welcome to new staff!

Martin Gorsky has joined us as Wellcome Senior Lecturer. Martin has worked at the Universities of Bristol, Portsmouth and Wolverhampton. His main research interest is the development of the British health system in the 20th century, with particular reference to the role of voluntary hospitals and mutual health insurance before the NHS.

So successful, so simple, so why have scholars ignored them for so long?

The History Centre is organising a one-day conference focusing on health cash plans on 22 October. *Hospital contributory schemes to health cash plans: a 20th century history of a British institution*, will be held at Senate House in London.

Martin Gorsky, event organiser, explains: 'Since 1948, the NHS has been committed to direct taxation as its principal form of finance. But before then a broader range of funding options existed, including hospital contributory schemes which originated in the 1870s and which, by the '30s, provided cheap insurance against the risks of hospitalisation for 10 million people'.

Policymakers of the 1940s decided they would have no place in the NHS, and historians have almost completely overlooked why (although the role of doctors' leaders and hospital representatives in the formation of the NHS is well documented). After the NHS was launched, many schemes decided to continue anyway and restructured themselves to provide cash benefits during periods of sickness, along with convalescent, dental and optical care. Many, known as health cash plans, still flourish and one scheme manager calls them 'a philosophically acceptable alternative to private health care'.

The conference will disseminate the findings of a research project based at the Universities of Portsmouth and Wolverhampton since 2000, which investigated the history of the movement in the 20th century, explored how effective it was prior to 1948, and asked why it was excluded from the structure of the NHS.

The target audience will include officials of existing health cash plans, interested academics and policy analysts. The programme runs from 10.30 am until 3.45 pm and can be downloaded in full from www.lshtm.ac.uk/history/contributoryschemes.html

Ronald Ross archives funding secured!

Our funding bid to the Wellcome Trust Research Resources in Medical History for the preservation and re-cataloguing of the archives of Sir Ronald Ross has been successful!

This extensive collection is of major importance for the study of the development of tropical medicine in the early 20th century and includes correspondence, photos, publications, notebooks, press cuttings and a sketchbook. The funding will enable the Archivist to continue to work full time at the School and help make the Ross archives and other tropical medicine and public health collections more accessible to all those interested in the history of medicine.

Collaborations

Recent collaborations between the History Centre and other units and Centres within the School include work on the history of soap between Suzanne Taylor and Val Curtis of the Hygiene Centre, a joint cancer initiative between Aileen Clarke and Ornella Moscucci.

Future collaborations under discussion include work with Richard Coker on an oral history of the control of TB in Russia and a possible initiative with Wenzel Geissler focusing on DVBD in Kenya.

How are we funded and managed?

Funding comes from the Wellcome Trust, the Economic and Social Research Council, the Nuffield Trust, the Joseph Rowntree Trust and the Unilever Centre. We also run funded seminars, conferences and workshops.

A Management committee meets twice a year, supported by monthly meetings of a strategic group incorporating active researchers and a wider group for affiliated staff.

The next meeting of the Management Committee will be on Wednesday 29th October, between 2.00 pm and 5.00 pm in Room 5.

Find out more about us at www.lshtm.ac.uk/