



Potent Substances: on the Boundaries of Food and Medicine

Convened by Dr Vivienne Lo and Professor Tilli Tansey

13th - 15th September 2010

5th Floor

Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at UCL

Wellcome Building

183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE

The author of the Hippocratic treatise 'Ancient Medicine' deemed medicine a branch of food and highlighted culinary practice as foundational to medical knowledge and practice. Nonetheless, throughout history, there have been fierce debates over what exactly constitutes *materia dietetica* (nourishing substances) and *materia medica* (medicinal substances) and evidence about their effects. Potent Substances will engage historians, anthropologists, scientists and policy-makers in conversation about the boundaries of food and pharmacy. Three days will be devoted to the following sub-themes: Old Food and Drugs for New; Boundaries and Expertise; and Arts and the Environment. The long-term aims are to offer policy and practice recommendations on the boundaries of food and pharmacy relevant to high priority current and likely future challenges, drawing on the interdisciplinary knowledge of the conference participants.

Art and Outreach

The lectures will be screened free outside of the lecture room for the public, where on the last day of the conference Dr Carole Reeves will run an all-day tasting event of medicinal foods and drinks.

Throughout the three days of the conference Chila Kumari Burman, a leading figure among UK Black and Asian artists, will bring her vibrant and provocative style to an installation dedicated to Potent Substances, on the subject of the boundaries of food and medicine. Come and join in.





Programme

Subject to Revision

13th September - BOUNDARIES AND EXPERTISE

9.30-10.15 **Registration and Refreshments**

10.15 **Panel: Psychoactivity, Culture and the Category of 'Drug': Local and International Discourses**

Chair: Mr Mike Jay
What is a 'drug'?

Dr Alex Klein
Khat

Dr Pien Metaal
Coca Leaf

11.15 **Refreshments**

11.40 **Panel: Food and Drugs Crossing Cultural Boundaries**

Chair: Professor Sander Gilman

Professor Michael Heinrich and Dr Ivan Casselman
Science and the Cross-Cultural Exchange of Knowledge: 'Traditional' Food and Medicine in the WWW

12.20 Dr Mathew Smith
Anaphylactic Reactions: Regulating Peanuts in a Risk Society

13.00 **Lunch**

14.00 **Panel: Who Owns our Health?**

Chair: Professor Virginia Berridge

Dr Laurence Totelin
When Foods become Remedies: Medicalisation, Professionalisation and Masculinisation in Classical Greece? The Curious Case of Greek Garlic and Other Substances

14.40 Dr Emma Spary
Industrial Foods and the Question of Public Health Two Centuries Ago

15.20 Dr Helga Satzinger
Colours: Transforming Drug, Food, and Toxin Knowledge in Late C19th. Laboratories, Kitchens and Public Concern



16.00

Refreshments

16.20

Dr Tracy Chen

From Green Tea to Food Supplement: History, Evidence and Legislation

17.00

Roundtable discussion with Short Presentations by Panelists

Chair:

Professor Adrian Renton

The Economics of Evidence

Professor Virginia Berridge

Evidence and Substances

Professor Michael Heinrich

Dr Tracy Chen

14th September OLD FOOD AND MEDICINES FOR NEW

09.40

Registration and Refreshments

10.00

Panel: Household Foods and their Effects

Chair:

Professor Tilli Tansey

Dr Anthony Butler

Dietary Nitrate: Carcinogen or Hypotensive Agent?

10.40

Dr Henry Oakeley

Why and How Plants are Used as Medicines: A Historical Perspective

11.20

Refreshments

11.40

Panel: Risk and Regulation: The Evidence

Chair

Professor Adrian Renton

Dr Volker Scheid

The "Chinese" Herbal Medicine Treatment of Menopausal Syndrome: Fictitious Facts and Factual Fictions about Diseases, Drugs, and Treatments

12.20

Paul Kadetz

Challenges to the Regulation of Herbal Products in the Western Pacific Region of The World Health Organization

13.00

Lunch

14.00

Panel: Milk



Chair: Dr William MacLehose

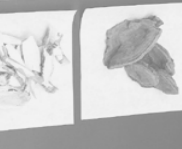
Professor Lawrence Weaver
Chemical Physiology, Nutrition and the Demise of Wet Nursing

14.40 Dr Barbara Orland
The Swiss Whey Cure. Medicine, Commerce and Nationalism (1750-1870)

15.20 Mr Leon Rocha
'The Other Baby Killer'? The Politics of Sweetened Condensed Milk in Malaysia in the 1970s and 80s

16.00 Refreshments

16.20 Ian Baker
Drinking the Milk of Dragons: Eating Mercury in Burma (Film and Presentation)



15th September ARTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

9.30 Registration and Refreshments

10.00 Panel: The Culinary and Medical Arts
Chair: Professor Anne Murcott

Professor John Wilkins
Good Food and Bad: Pleasurable and Nutritional Eating in Greco-Roman Thought

10.40 Ms Yoshimi Osawa
From Konbu (Laminaria japonica) to MSG; Umami and its Commercial Transformation

11.20 Refreshments

11.40 Dr Dean Willis/Nick Hayes
Hot Stuff: The Bioscience of Spicy Foods

12.20 Dr Zhou Xun
The Popularisation of Medical Foods in Late 20th Century China

13.00 Lunch



14.00 Panel: Water

Chair: Sir Iain Chalmers

Dr Kaori O Connor
Water Water Everywhere – Thalassophobia and Thalassotherapy

14.40 Earl Baldwin of Bewdley
Fluoride, Naturally Occurring Substance, Scheduled Poison or Medicine

15.20 Professor Michael Depledge
Water and the Environment

16.00 Refreshments

16.20 Roundtable Discussion: The Art of Self-Care in the Community

Chila Kumari Burman
Potent Substances

Wellcome Collection on *High Society*

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