

Cultural Histories of Air and Illness (Coventry, 8–9 Jun 18)

Millburn House, University of Warwick, Jun 8–09, 2018

Amanda Sciampacone

Air has always had an influence on the health of individuals, societies, cities, and nations. From Hippocrates's belief that air affected the human body to Victorian medical theories on tropical climates and bad air as the source of disease, air was understood to have a direct effect on health and to be a cause of illness. With the advent of modern medicine, the role of air's impact on human health has shifted, but remains present. For instance, current concerns about air pollution and respiratory disease, as well as the role climate change is playing on the health of ecosystems and nations, demonstrate the continued significance of air's relationship to health. The Cultural Histories of Air and Illness Conference will span disciplines and periods to explore broadly the connections between health and the environment, and the ways in which this relationship has been constructed, debated, and disseminated.

Registration is now open:
<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/arthistory/research/conferences/air/registration/>

PROGRAMME

Friday 8 June 2018

Registration – 9:30am – 10:30am

Welcome and Plenary Lecture – 10:30am – 12:00pm

Jennifer Tucker (Wesleyan University):

Dangerous Exposures: Work and Waste in the Victorian Chemical Trade

Lunch – 12:00pm – 1:30pm

Parallel Panels 1, 2, and 3 – 1:30pm – 3:00pm

1. Philosophies and Communities of Breath

James R. Cross (University College London):

The Influence of Hippocrates' On Breaths on Notions of Air and Illness in the Ancient World

Maximilian Gregor Hepach (State University of New York, Stony Brook):

Feeling, Seeing, Breathing Air?: Experiencing the (In-)Conspicuousness of Air

Stephanie Shirilan (Syracuse University):

Breathing (Un)Easy: Precarious Pneumatic Community in Shakespeare's Theatre

2. Cultural Miasma

Frances Thielman (Texas A&M University):

Taking Shelter from the Plague Wind: Ruskin's Miasmatic Imagination and the Victorian Gothic Novel

Nicholas Robbins (Yale University):

Ruskin's Plague-Wind and the Climate of Art in 1884

James Glisson (Huntington Library):

Miasmas around the Harbour: Atmospheric Pollution in Nineteenth-Century Brooklyn

3. Rights to Air

Rowan Boyson (King's College, London): "The Interest in Breathing": Outlines of a History of a Right to Air, c. 1640–1800

Laurin Goad Davis (Pennsylvania State University):

The Privilege of Fresh Air

Chang Liu (Heidelberg University):

Chinese Rock Music as Environmental Protest: A Call for Clean Air in Post-Olympics China

Tea and Coffee — 3:00pm – 3:30pm

Parallel Panels 4 and 5 — 3:30pm – 5:30pm

4. Medical Topography and Settlement

Alex Solomon (Ashoka University):

Great Mutations in the Air: The Corpuscularization of Air and Illness

Erin Lafford (University of Oxford):

"Our grosser atmosphere": Aesthetics of Aerial Contagion in Gilpin's Picturesque

Rachel Winchcombe (University of Manchester):

"The ayre there is so temperate and holsome": Climate, Health and the Location of Early English Colonies

Netta Cohen (University of Oxford):

Palestinian Air, Jewish Identity

5. Air, Treatment, and Ventilation

Greta Perletti (Universities of Trento and Bergamo):

The Purity of Air and the Medical Treatment of Consumption: Constructing the Interesting Self in Nineteenth-Century and Early Twentieth-Century Culture

C. Alan Short (University of Cambridge):

J. S. Billings and the Conundrum of the Naturally Ventilated Hospital

Kathryn Schoefert and Caitjan Gainty (King's College, London):

"Temperature, Humidity and Movement": The Crisis of Ventilation in Early Twentieth-Century Medicine

Julia Murphy (Independent Scholar):

Room to Breathe: Fresh Air and Civil Commitment in Healthcare

Exhibition Opening for Art, Air and Illness at the Lanchester Research Gallery, Coventry University
Wine Reception – 6:00pm – 8:00pm

Saturday 9 June 2018

Registration – 9:00am – 9:30am

Parallel Panels 6 and 7 – 9:30am – 11:00am

6. Winds of Illness

Francesca Minen (Ca'Foscari, University of Venice):

It's an Ill Wind: The Relationship Among Air, Health, and Sickness in Mesopotamian Cuneiform Sources

Rosa Mauro (University of Basilicata):

The Relationship between Bad Air, and Health in Latin Literature: An Overview

Anna Gorokhova (Moscow State Pedagogical University):

On the Question of the Plague of Athens in 430 BCE and the Delphic Oracle

7. Air Pollution and the Senses

Chloe Preedy (University of Exeter):

Smoking Wit: Tobacco Consumption in the Early Modern Playhouse

Jessica Balls (University of East Anglia):

"Fly the rank city, shun its turbid air": Air Pollution and Sensory Impairment in Late Eighteenth-Century London

Emanuela Ettorre (University 'G. d'Annunzio' of Chieti-Pescara):

A "pestilent congregation of vapours": Unhealthy Environment and "headachy air" in the Dysphoric Visions of George Gissing

Tea and Coffee — 11:00am – 11:30am

Parallel Panels 8 and 9 — 11:30am – 1:00pm

8. Atmospheres of Health

Katherine M. Bentz (Saint Anselm College):

The Power of Green: Air, Villas, and the Health of Prelates in Early Modern Rome

Olivia Meehan (University of Melbourne):

Cultivating the Intellectual: Fresh Air in the Scholar's Garden

Linn Burchert (Humboldt University):

Healthy Breathing Spaces in Abstract Modern Art, 1910–1960

9. Urban Air and Contamination

Elena Serrano (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science):

Urban Airst: Eighteenth-Century Anxieties and Biopolitics

Jennifer Wallis (Queen Mary, University of London):

Respiratory Technologies, Contagion, and the Politics of Urban Space

Adrian Tait (Independent Scholar):

"The poisonous state of the air": Apocalyptic Environmentalism in the Work of Robert Barr and M. P. Shiel

Lunch — 1:00pm – 2:30pm

Parallel Panels 10 and 11 — 2:30pm – 4:00pm

10. Contagion and Identity

Jen Baker (University of Warwick):

Demon Diseases: Contagions of Guilt in Sheridan Le Fanu's "The Mysterious Lodger" (1850)

Alice Heeren (Southern Methodist University):

Miasmas, Air, and Tropicality in Augusto Malta's Rhetoric of Contagion

Dorothée King (Rhode Island School of Design):

Unhealthy Air in Contemporary Arts

11. Dangerous Air

Coreen McGuire (University of Bristol):

"The breath and sweat gather on the flannel": Air and Personal Protection in the Mines, 1919–1945

Janne Mäkiranta (University of Turku):

From Smoke to Carcinogens: Making Air Pollution a New Medium of Disease

Marijn Nieuwenhuis (University of Warwick):

Atmospheric Governance: Gassing as Law for the Protection and Killing of Life

Tea and Coffee – 4:00pm – 4:30pm

Keynote Lecture and Closing Remarks – 4:30pm – 6:00pm

Richard Hamblyn (Birkbeck, University of London):

The Weather in the Streets: Historical Perspectives on Urban Meteorology

For further information about the conference, including information about travel and accommodation, please visit the conference webpage: <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/arthistory/research/conferences/air/>

The conference is organized by Dr Amanda Sciampacone. For enquiries, please email the organizer: a.sciampacone@warwick.ac.uk. The conference is generously supported by the Leverhulme Trust, and the University of Warwick's Humanities Research Centre and Department of History of Art.

Reference:

CONF: Cultural Histories of Air and Illness (Coventry, 8-9 Jun 18). In: ArtHist.net, Apr 17, 2018 (accessed Sep 16, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/17887>>.