Master of Culture Health & Medicine

Final Masters Project Presentations
25 October (2pm - 5pm)
Conference Room, AD Hope Building, ANU

As part of the Master of Culture, Health and Medicine students may undertake their own research project, which they then present in a public event.

This year, four of our students will present their work on a range of topics covering H1N1 pandemic, homeless people in Australia to depression and general practitioners in Australia.

The event is open to everyone and tea and coffee will be served.

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http://cass.anu.edu.au/future-students/graduate/mcham
BECKWITH, Stephanie

The emergence of a ‘global civil society’ and the impact of new media during the recent ‘Swine Flu’ outbreak

On 12th August 2010 it was reported that millions of doses of the Australian Swine Flu vaccine were likely to be discarded, just months after it had been in such high demand that governments were making massive orders to cover entire nations. Just over a year after the ‘Swine Flu’ outbreak spread fear across the globe, it has become clear that millions of people have actively rejected the vaccine that was once so anxiously anticipated. How is it that despite all official media and public health campaigns urging everyone to take the vaccine, ultimately very few ended up doing so? One explanation for this is the role that the internet has played in enabling people to access alternative sources of information to that espoused by governments.

This paper will explore the changing nature of civil society in relation to the emergence of the internet. Analysing the use of the internet during the recent ‘Swine Flu’ outbreak it will be argued that new media has the potential to empower individuals to voice their opinions and access alternative sources of information to that espoused by governments. Whilst access to the internet has its limitations, the highly pervasive nature of this new media has enabled it to spread into many corners of the globe. It will be argued that such widespread use of the internet to disseminate and access information has in fact assisted the emergence of a ‘global civil society’ which has, in turn, challenged the neoliberal establishment that so adamantly encouraged people to take the Swine Flu vaccine.
HUANG, Anne

Influenza pandemic: ethical opinions and behavioural responses of the general public

Influenza pandemics are considered to be one of the gravest emergencies and disasters the world can experience due to their potentially devastating consequences. In the face of such an event, various un-answered and difficult ethical questions and dilemma surface with regards to the influenza pandemic response measures as well as responsibility of each individual. While various governments and organizations have documents regarding ethical considerations of influenza pandemic preparedness and response, little research has been conducted to investigate the ethical perceptions of influenza pandemic of the general public. Furthermore, virtually no research has been conducted to address how the influenza pandemic ethical perceptions of the general population affect the behavioural responses of the population. The purpose of this research project was to understand the ethical opinions and behavioral responses of the general public with regards to influenza pandemic. Ten in-depth interviews were conducted and subsequently analyzed. The qualitative analysis suggests that while most participants had strong opinions in terms of ethical topics such as duty not to infect others and duty to treat, their experiences and behavioural responses did not always coincide with their ethical opinions. This relationship between the ethical opinion and behavioural responses during influenza pandemic is further analyzed form the perspective of the participants.

3.30-4.00pm Coffee break

4.00-4.40pm

BAKER, Rhonda

Australia’s White Paper on Homelessness

In this analysis of the White paper I will use an interpretive framework to use Dvora Yanow’s own words to show “how a policy means”. Combining this with a value-critical approach, I will show how the story of the White Paper represents how homelessness is viewed in Australia and indeed the meaning around homelessness. I will show how this shared meaning surrounding homelessness is the result of the historical and political environment that homelessness exists in, and how academic’s and the community’s association of homelessness with mental illness and personal flaws or bad choices keep the status quo in Australia, and generate beliefs of a fair and egalitarian society despite evidence to the contrary. Data gained from an analysis of newspaper articles from July 2008-2010, with the key words “homelessness” and “policy” will be used to provide further evidence of the meaning that is generated around homelessness, and how this meaning and the story of homelessness serve to complicate possible action and solutions to the problem.