Environmental Illness Today

Program

15 April
University Main Building, Biskopsgatan 3, room IX

13:30 Registration

14:00-14:15
Welcome
Ingrid Berg, Center for Integrated Research on Culture and Society

14:15-14:45
Introduction by Michael Boyden and Martin Tondel

14:45-16:15
Environmental Illness in Context: Definitions, Issues, Disciplinary Perspectives
Chair: tba
Steve Kroll-Smith, Professor of Sociology, University of North Carolina-Greensboro: Chemicals, Climate, and the Body, Looking with a Sociological Eye
Steven Nordin, Professor of Psychology, Umeå University: Environmental Intolerances: Characteristics, Assessment, and Underlying Mechanisms
16 April
09:00-10:30

Environmental Odors and Sick Buildings, Then and Now
Chair: tba

David S. Barnes, Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania: Have We Rediscovered Our Permeability? Learning from the Lost Science of Medical Geography

Dan Norbäck, Professor at the Department of Medical Sciences, Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Uppsala University: Symptoms and Biomarkers in Relation to Indoor Environment: Current Knowledge and Unsolved Issues

10:30-11:00 Coffee Break

11:00-12:30

Conditioning, Attribution, Narration I
Chair: tba

Omer Van den Bergh, Professor of Health Psychology, Leuven University: Environmental intolerance: an experimental inquiry

Jan Vilis Haanes, MD, Department of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, University Hospital of North Norway: Symptoms associated with environmental factors” (SAEF) - Towards a paradigm shift regarding ”idiopathic environmental intolerance” and related phenomena

12:30-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:30

Patient Organizations, Contested Symptoms, Grading Systems
Chair: Martin Tondel

Magnus Svartengren, Professor at the Department of Medical Sciences, Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Uppsala University: Evidence-Based Medicine: Sufficient Evidence for Establishing a Policy

Lena Hillert, Associate Professor, Institute of Environmental Medicine, Karolinska Institute: Electromagnetic Hypersensitivity: How Does Society Respond to Self-Reported Ill Health Attributed to Environmental Exposure?
15:30-16:00 Coffee break

16:00-17:30

**Conditioning, Attribution, Narration II**  
Chair: Therese Hellman

Karin Jensen, Associate Professor of Clinical Neuroscience, Karolinska Institute: *Explaining the Unexplainable in Medicine: Examples From the Neuroscience of Pain and Placebo Effects*

Jyrki Korkeila, Professor of Psychiatry, University of Turku: *From Anxiety to Illusions and Delusions – What Is Normal?*

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17 April

09:00-11:00

**Digital Health, Claims to Toxicity, Precarity**  
Chair: tba

Tarryn Phillips, Associate Professor in Crime, Justice & Legal Studies, La-Trobe University: *Toxic Truths and Online Odysseys: Digital Placemaking in the Environmental Illness Community*

David Watson, Associate Professor, Department of English, Uppsala University: *“Some kind of wasting shit’: Living Chronic Times in Toni Cade Bambara’s The Salt Eaters.”*

Claudia Merli, Associate Professor of Cultural Anthropology, Uppsala University: *Living with Ash: Experience, Protection, and Volcanic Ejecta in Mexico, Indonesia, and Japan*

11:00-12:00

Roundtable

12:00 Symposium ends

14.00-16.00 Excursion to the Museum of Medical History, Eva Lagerwalls väg 8. Bus will transport the participants to and from the Museum.
Speaker bios

Barnes
David Barnes is Associate Professor of History and Sociology of Science and Director of the Health and Societies Program at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author of The Making of a Social Disease: Tuberculosis in Nineteenth-Century France (University of California Press, 1995) and The Great Stink of Paris and the Nineteenth-Century Struggle against Filth and Germs (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), as well as several articles about the history, culture, and politics of public health. He is currently writing a history of Philadelphia’s Lazaretto quarantine station (1799-1895). His other interests include public history, historic preservation, the history of the senses, and the history of disgust.

Haanes
Jan Vilis Haanes is senior consultant and head of Department of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, University Hospital of North Norway (Tromsø). As adviser, expert committee member, lecturer and clinician he has focused on topics like risk perception/communication and medical conditions with limited support for a traditional pathophysiologic explanation. He is first author in the just published the paper: “Symptoms associated with environmental factors” (SAEF) – Towards a paradigm shift regarding “idiopathic environmental intolerance” and related phenomena. The article advocates for a change from focus on “exposure” and “intolerance/sensitivity” over to “perception” when symptoms are associated with e.g. exposures to odorous chemicals, dental fillings, wind turbines and electromagnetic fields in the general environment.

Hillert
Lena Hillert holds a PhD and an MD from Karolinska Institutet and is qualified specialist in Occupational and Environmental Medicine (1994, in Occupational Medicine 1990) in Sweden. Her thesis, Hypersensitivity to electricity; symptoms, risk factors and therapeutic interventions”, was presented at Karolinska Institutet in 2001. Lena Hillert currently holds a position as an associate professor at the Institute of Environmental Medicine, Karolinska Institutet, and as a Senior consultant at the Centre for occupational and environmental medicine, Region Stockholm.

She has been engaged in clinical work as well as research concerning new
environmental illnesses, e.g. hypersensitivity to electricity, for over twenty years. Lena Hillert has been a member of Swedish as well as international expert groups concerning idiopathic environmental illness.

**Korkeila**
Jyrki Korkeila is professor of psychiatry at the University of Turku and also a licensed psychotherapist. He is the chair of the national guideline group for borderline personality disorder. His research interest have focused on clinical epidemiology, early psychosis and risk factors for illnesses. He has an interest in nosological, psychosomatic and conceptual issues in psychiatry and he has been active in the philosophy section of Finnish Psychiatric Association.

**Kroll-Smith**
Steve Kroll-Smith is a Professor of Sociology and Faculty Member in the Program for Sustainability at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He’s the former Director of the Environmental Studies Institute at the University of New Orleans. For six years, he edited Sociological Inquiry and is the recipient of the Sociological Honors Society’s Distinguished Editor Award. He received the American Sociological Association Distinguished Contribution Award for Research on Hazards and Disasters. He published the first sociological analysis of environmental illness in 1993. In 1997, Kroll-Smith and Floyd published Bodies in Protest. Social Forces called it “the first sustained sociological analyses of a…controversial, and spectacular medical condition.” In 2000, Kroll-Smith co-edited Illness and the Environment, A Reader in Contested Medicine. Philip Landrigan, MD, Mount Sinai School of Medicine notes, “This thought provoking volume makes a bold effort to bridge the chasm…between the sociology of medicine and the sociology of the environment.” He is the author of eight books and more than eighty articles and book chapters. His first book, The Real Disaster is Above Ground was listed among the American Library Association’s Top 10 Book List for 1990. His recent book, Recovering Inequality, Hurricane Katrina, the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906 and the Aftermath of Disaster is nominated for two book awards.

**Merli**
Claudia Merli is Associate Professor of Cultural Anthropology at Uppsala University. She is a medical anthropologist and has established herself also in the field of disaster and risk research. Her main region of specialisation
is Southeast Asia, but she has carried out fieldwork on disasters and risk also in Japan and Italy. In 2019 she was the main convener and organizer of The Fourth Northern European Conference on Emergency and Disaster Studieshttp://www.needs2019.com hosted at Uppsala University, and is a coordinator for the Disaster and Crisis Anthropology Network (European Association of Social Anthropologists). She is currently the Co-Investigator responsible for the qualitative research for the interdisciplinary HIVE consortium (Health Interventions in Volcanic Eruptions) on hazard and respiratory health related to volcanic ash, funded by Research for Health in Humanitarian Crises (R2HC) http://community.dur.ac.uk/hive.consortium/about.php Her main field of interest in disaster studies is the application of critical perspectives in risk research and the anthropological study of post-hazard social and communal processes, specifically Disaster Victim Identification, theological discourses, contextual theodicies, and related politics.

**Norbäck**

Born in Evertsberg, Dalarna, Sweden in 1950. Background in chemistry, biology, environmental science and occupational hygiene. PhD in Medical Sciences (Occupational and Environmental Medicine) in 1990. Currently associate professor in Occupational and Environmental Medicine at Uppsala University, Sweden. Has worked with large epidemiological studies on indoor and outdoor risk factors for asthma, rhinitis, biomarkers of inflammation and allergies and sick building syndrome symptoms (SBS) among children and adults in Europe and China. The studies have been performed in homes, schools, day care centres, offices, nursing homes for elderly and in aircraft. Asthma, allergies and lung function have been followed over 20 years in cohort studies in Europe. Bilateral international co-operation with researchers in Norway, Iceland, Slovenia, Iran, China, Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Japan. The main bi-lateral co-operation have been with China. Member of different international scientific co-operation projects (multicenter studies) within the European Union. Have received research fundings from various National Swedish funds and EU-funds for projects on indoor and outdoor environment and allergy, asthma and other hypersensitivity reactions. Has 370 scientific publications, many in high ranked journals, and has been main tutor for eleven PhD students. Has written about 30 scientific book articles or review articles.
**Nordin**
Steven Nordin is a professor in psychology at Umeå University, with a background in neuropsychology and sensory psychology, working with issues regarding medical psychology and health psychology from a public health perspective. The scientific approaches include laboratory exposure settings, epidemiology, field studies and qualitative methods. Apart from other health issues, he has in the past 20 years been working with environmental intolerances.

**Phillips**
Dr Tarryn Phillips is an anthropologist and senior lecturer in the Department of Social Inquiry at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia. Her work lies at the intersection of legal studies, medical anthropology, and science and technology studies, where she is interested in the connection between health, power and inequality in Australia and the Pacific. Her book Law, environmental illness and medical uncertainty: The contested governance of health (Routledge 2015) is an ethnography of how people with environmental illnesses struggle for recognition in the medico-legal field. Her more recent work explores the ways in which digital technologies shape and constrain the treatment, recognition and experience of environmental illnesses.

**Svantengren**
Magnus Svantengren is qualified specialist in Occupational & Environmental Medicine 1996. He PhD presented his thesis at Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, 1986 Topic: Lung Deposition and Clearance of Particles in Healthy Persons and Patients with Bronchiectasis. He is presently professor and research group leader for occupational and environmental medicine, Uppsala University. He has a broad experience from human experimental and epidemiological research mainly regarding environmental effects primarily in the cardiorespiratory field and intervention studies aiming at healthy workplaces. Svantengren has acted as supervisor for 17 completed PhD programmes. Svantengren is member of Scientific advisory board The Delegation for Trust-Based Public Management, Government offices of Sweden and Swedish agency for Health technology assessment and assessment of social services’ (SBU:s) Scientific advisory board. Svantengren has experience from working for National, Swedish Board of Health and Welfare and Swedish Work Environmental Authority.
**Söderfeldt**

Ylva Söderfeldt is Senior Associate Lecturer in History of Science and Ideas at Uppsala University, Sweden. She received her PhD from Stuttgart University/Institute for the History of Medicine of the Robert Bosch Foundation with a dissertation on the history of the German Deaf movement. She taught History, Theory and Ethics in Medicine at RWTH Aachen University Hospital and held a postdoc at the Max Planck Institute for History of Science, where she launched a study of the knowledge practices surrounding a previously contested illness: hay fever. Currently, she runs a project funded by the Swedish Research Council entitled “Organizing Illness. The Mobilization of Patients in 20th Century Medicine”. Her research interests are disability history and patient history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, medical humanities, and digital humanities.

**Tondel**

Martin Tondel has worked in the field of occupational and environmental medicine since 1993. He became a specialist in 1997 and a senior physician in Occupational and Environmental Medicine in 2007 and since then focused on environmental medicine. Martin Tondel received PhD at Linköping University in 2007 and was appointed associate professor at Uppsala University in 2018. 2005 to 2013 he was engaged as an expert on electromagnetic fields, especially on issues related to electromagnetic hypersensitivity, at the National Board of Health and Welfare. He has since several years been interested in medical anthropology and risk communication including knowledge of risk perception. Together with colleagues at the Department of Occupational and Environmental in Uppsala he has been involved in developing a multi-professional model for consultations with patients having environmental intolerance.

**Van den Bergh**

Omer Van den Bergh obtained a Ph.D. in Psychology at the Laboratory of Experimental Psychology – University of Leuven (1986), followed a research training at the NIMH Center for the Study of Attention and Emotion at the University of Florida (1986) and a postgraduate training in cognitive behavior therapy. He is supervisor of the Flemish Association for Behavior therapy. He is founder and was director of the Research Group on Health Psychology at the University of Leuven from 1998 till 2015, and emeritus professor since October 2018. Omer Van den Bergh is expert in the broad area of the relationship between health and behavior.
The research involves both normal subjects in laboratory experiments, clinical studies on psychosomatic and pulmonary patients in the university hospital, and field studies on subjective health symptoms. He published over 300 papers and chapters in international journals and books.

**Watson**

David Watson is an associate professor in the Department of English at Uppsala University, where he specialises in American literature and culture. He has published on nineteenth-century and modernist American poets, nineteenth-century and contemporary novelists, and issues in transnational and translation studies. Currently he is completing a monograph on The Security Imaginary: Contingency and Vulnerability in Twenty-First Century US Fiction. His most recent publications are on failed states and the world novel, and the role of contingency within neoliberal narratives.

**Jensen**

Karin Jensen is an Associate Professor of Clinical Neuroscience at the Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden. She is the leader of the Pain Neuroimaging Lab at Karolinska Institutet - an interdisciplinary research group focusing on brain mechanisms involved in the perception of pain. Her team uses laboratory pain testing and brain scans in order to study the neural correlates of pain, and has specific focus on finding biomarkers of chronic pain. Jensen is also an internationally acclaimed placebo researcher and since 2014 she is on the board of the Society for Interdisciplinary Placebo Studies. Since 2018 she is a Pro Futura Fellow at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Studies.