



Panel 4.2. Rural Health Tourism: a New Domain for Rural History

Panel organiser: van der Burg, Margreet, Wageningen University, Netherlands

This panel will explore rural health tourism as a new domain of rural history, especially in the modern period. It is well known that many health and rehabilitation institutions, caring homes and health centres are, and have been situated in rural areas. This is the case for both western countries and their colonized rural areas. Though, their presence has hardly been seen as connected to or integrated into the research field of rural history and rural change. Neither has this been the case for physically nor mentally 'healthy' activities that are and were often connected to the rural environment, such as hiking, skiing, pilgrimages and spiritual retreats. When comparing to critical studies on contemporary medical or health tourism into the so-called developing countries (e.g. Hall 2011), we can raise many related questions with regard to the rural past. The 'invasion' of patients, clients and their visitors in rather social and economic homogeneous rural societies when these rural based institutions and activities started and intensified, does not only ask for how their coming changed the livelihoods of the inhabitants and how new (professional) labour opportunities altered the social setup, behaviour and structures of the surrounding communities. It also asks for how the direct or indirect contacts with other (e.g. most urban elite class) cultures, new health ideas and rituals, leisure and entertainment activities, and new professionals, have affected (groups of) people in the villages and small towns culturally. Another perspective is how the portrayal of the surroundings in promotional campaigns, infrastructural designs for accessibility and sanitation of the newcomers, designs of the health accommodations, day schedules, leisure activities, tell more about how the newcomers perceived their (future) relationships to the existing rural environment and the people who lived there. This session explores the research area by literature review, points for the research agenda and case studies in especially the Netherlands, USA New Mexico / N. Carolina and Switzerland. It focusses especially on the modern period. Besides how especially the gender dimension is at stake in this domain (e.g. m/f labour changes, services rendered to the institutions, visitors and tourists, f/m ratio of patients, clients, visitors, health movement adherents), we also pay attention to the intersections with other dimensions such as class/wealth, religion, race/ethnicity, age/generation, health status.

Chair: Keller, Irene, Archives of Rural History, Bern, Switzerland

Tuesday, 20 August 2013 // 1030 – 1200 // Session 4 – Room A-119

4.2.1. Rural Welcome for Health Activities and Medical Treatment: Connecting Histories of Health Tourism and Rural Change

Paper

van der Burg, Margreet, Wageningen University, Netherlands

Currently, the impacts of health related traveling and tourism are passionately highlighted and addressed. The existing historical literature on health institutions and activities hardly makes any notice of them being based in small rural towns or even more remote away from them within rural areas. The healthy environment is often propagated but hardly discussed in relation to ideas of rurality or images and the realities of rural communities. Though, if we want to know what rural change they brought about, characterizing the interactive relationships between the rural communities and the health related newcomers is crucial. This paper will connect the main contemporary issues and concepts with new research questions, conceptualisations and methods for rural history research in this field. I will discuss how definitions and distinctions of various health activities and medical treatment can be used for historical research on rural change. Also I will suggest how relationships between health facilities and rural communities can be systematically mapped to investigate exchange and impacts both ways, from the economic, social, cultural and political perspective. This is needed to show whether and how the promises of bringing welfare and health facilities in exchange for advantageous support and licenses are accomplished. From recent examples it has become clear that some really profit, but also that there is a potential increase of inequality and conflicts over incomes, social status, access to natural resources, and over decent behaviour among the sexes, generations, classes and ethnicities.

4.2.2. Magic Mountains: Rural Health Tourism in Early Twentieth Century United States

Paper

Jensen, Joan, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM, USA

This paper will focus on three rural mountain health resorts in the United States. One, in the Appalachian Mountains of North Carolina, was a sanatorium started by Dr. Mary H. Lapham, who had studied with Dr. Brauer of Hamburg and Dr. Spengler of Davos, Switzerland, perhaps the same sanatorium at Davos that inspired Thomas Mann's novel *The Magic Mountain*. Dr. Lapham introduced the pneumothorax machine into the United States, at a 1912 National Tuberculosis Association meeting and later instructed doctors in Silver City, New Mexico on the use of the new machine. By 1912, Silver City, New Mexico, at the southern end of the Rocky Mountains, had become a mecca for health tourists from all over the country. There Dr. Earl S. Bullock, oversaw the Cottage Sanatorium. The third centre, and the best known, in the Adirondacks of New York, was established by Dr. Eduard L. Trudeau. Each of these mountain sanatoriums became health resorts specializing in cures for tuberculosis, then a major cause of deaths in the United States. The paper will examine the cultures and cures of these three centres, who sought them, who staffed them, who fed them, and how they influenced rural mountain communities.

4.2.3. The Search for Health in the High Alps of Switzerland: Sanatoria Treatments in Davos and Leysin

Paper

Barton, Susan, De Montfort University, Leicester, UK

Tuberculosis was one of the biggest killers in the industrial cities of nineteenth century Europe. Without antibiotics there was little that could be done to relieve symptoms or provide a cure. Medical climatology was widely adhered to by physicians who sent wealthy TB sufferers away to the milder climates. In around 1860, Dr Alexander Spengler, a German refugee working in the Swiss Alpine community of Davos, noticed that local people who went away to work in cities where they contracted the disease, seemed to be cured soon after they returned home. Spengler also observed that tuberculosis of the lungs was absent among the native population. He assumed it was the high alpine air, unpolluted and relatively free of damp, with its south-facing location that combined to kill tuberculosis. His theory was published and patients began to arrive in Davos. In 1889, Dr Karl Turban opened his closed sanatorium in Davos where patients followed a strict routine of rest, exercise, fresh air and good food. In Sameden Dr Oscar Bernhard looked to the healing power of the sun to cure surgical tuberculosis, what he called heliotherapy. Inspired by Bernhard and Spengler, Dr August Rollier opened his own clinics in Leysin, specialising particularly in heliotherapy but also incorporating the fresh air altitude cure. By the beginning of the twentieth century the treatment of tuberculosis in Davos and Leysin reached industrial proportions and adapted to the needs of the sick who followed strict regimes, often remaining in the sanatoria for many years.

Participants

Barton, Susan

Dr Susan Barton is an honorary research fellow in the International Centre for Sports History and Culture at De Montfort University in Leicester. She has a wide range of interests in social history and her publications include work on knitted textile industry, working-class tourism, the British seaside, package holidays in Spain, sport and learning disability, tourism development in Switzerland and winter sports. Her current project is an investigation into the Winter Olympics up to 1948 and their sporting and touristic legacies. Her books include 'Healthy Living in the Alps – the origins of winter tourism in Switzerland, 1860-1914'.

Keller, Irene

Lic. phil. Irene Keller has studied history, German literature and political sciences at the Universities of Bern and Stockholm. She was a member of research staff in a project on Jeremias Gotthelf at the University of Bern transcribing some of that famous Swiss writer's sermons, worked in the office for preservation of historical monuments of the State of Lucerne (inventory) and is since 2012 part of the team of the Archives of rural history in Bern. At the moment, she's attending a Master of Advanced Studies in archival, library and information science in Bern and Lausanne.

Jensen, Joan

Prof. Dr. Joan M. Jensen is author of 'Silver City Health Tourism in the Early Twentieth Century: A Case Study' *New Mexico Historical Review* (2009). As historian of rural women, she published numerous articles and various books such as *Loosening the Bonds: Mid-Atlantic Farm Women, 1750-1850* (1986) and *Calling This Place Home: Women on the Wisconsin Frontier, 1850-1925* (2006). She taught women's history and directed the Women's Studies program at New Mexico State University, and co-established the Rural Women's Studies Association. She was president of the Agricultural History Society (1993) and received their Lifetime Achievement Award (2012).

van der Burg, Margreet

Dr. Margreet van der Burg is rural gender historian at Wageningen University, NL. She published several books and many articles on rural women within agricultural and rural modernisation programming with respect to labour, education, extension, self-organisation, representation, and agricultural research. From NL, she first broadened her view to Europe and the western world, and expanded the last decade to global and transnational change. She served as chair and board member in organisations on women's history, rural women's studies and agricultural or rural history, and is now on the editorial board of *Agricultural History*.