

## Sixth BSA Food Study Group Conference 2019

### Food Systems & Society

#### Late Changes

**Monday, 24 June 2019**

**Updated Abstract:**

**Comparing Stakeholder Discourse Coalitions Across Alcohol and Sugar Pricing Policies in the UK Through Discourse Network Analysis**

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**Background:** The media are a key influence on public and policymakers' perceptions of the need for, and acceptability of, new policies to improve population health. In the case of Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP) for alcohol and the Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL). The news media are a valuable source for stakeholders to present arguments for and against proposed public health policy. Here we compare the competing discourse coalitions evident in the UK public debate across two pricing policies, Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP) for alcohol and the Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL).

**Methods:** Data sets were generated from public debates on MUP and SDIL in UK newspapers using content analysis and discourse network analysis. Actor statements were analysed using discourse network analyses and harmonised in *Visone* to allow direct comparison. We applied a common tie-weight threshold to reduce ties to robust argumentative similarities and to maximise the identification of both network structures. We used network measures (size, density and EI index) to compare the two networks and principal coalitions

**Results:** In both debates, health charity and advocacy groups, individual NHS organisations and professional associations, as well as government advisory bodies, supported the pricing policies. Contrary to this, manufacturers/associated industries and associations, as well as think tanks and research analysts, had an opposing positions. For the policy opponents, the most discriminating policy concepts were mainly economic or political in nature (e.g., "Policy is illegal", "Policy will damage industry and associated industries", "Government action on commodity consumption is nanny statist" or "Policy will damage the wider economy"). For the policy proponents, the most discriminatory policy concepts related to public health issues ("Policy will reduce consumption of commodity", "Policy needed to address commodity 'problem'", "Policy will improve population health").

**Conclusion:** The media are a key influence on public and policymakers' perceptions of the need for, and acceptability of, new policies to improve population health. In contested public policy debates, stakeholders on both sides of the argument put forward competing rhetoric via the media to support their position in line with their vested interests whether driven by social and market justice principles.

**Tuesday, 25 June 2019**

**Updated Overview for Special Event**

**Food, Control and Embodied Futures**

Chairs/Session organizers: Zofia Boni, Samantha Murray

This roundtable aims to critically explore the intersections between food, embodiment, and constructions of health and transformation in relation to dietary control and restraint. Weight loss activities are inarguably projected towards imagined futures. These futures, however, are imagined differently by diverse actors, be it individuals, families, or governments and institutions. While dietary restraint and controlled eating for weight loss are not new phenomena, the persistence of their discursive power in shaping the relationships between food, bodies, and idealised embodied futures, remains a necessary site of critical inquiry. At this roundtable, we will ask what kind of embodied futures different actors imagine for themselves and others, and how food and dietary restraint are used in constructing and controlling them(selves). Further, we will question why and how people plan and experience dieting and weight loss, and what kinds of hopes and concerns drive these plans towards particular futures.

The session will begin with four succinct presentations (see individual abstracts). Speakers will focus on different regional contexts and experiences varied in terms of social class, gender, age and race. This will be followed by a structured roundtable discussion chaired by Dr Zofia Boni. The researchers will be able to expand on their claims, examine the connections between their presentations, and robustly explore the key issues related to food, control, and embodied futures.

The order of papers/abstracts:

*Experiences of fatness in relation to health, hunger and belonging amongst women in peri-urban South Africa*, Jo Hunter-Adams

*Embodied experiences, 'healthy' futures, and food insecurity*, Hannele Harjunen and Mikko Jakonen

*Towards a More Slender, Healthy Future? A Complicated Autoethnography of the Weight Loss Surgery 'Journey', Samantha Murray*

*Caring for future embodiment: anticipating change in obesity surgery and treatment, Else Vogel*