Shame as a public health intervention

Dr Paul Snelling
Principal Lecturer in Adult Nursing
University of Worcester
Institute of Health and Society
Henwick Grove
Worcester
WR2 6AJ
01905 542615
p.snelling@worc.ac.uk
PM David Cameron says 'runaway dads' should be 'shamed'

Absent fathers should be "stigmatised" by society in the same way as drink-drivers, the prime minister has said.

A father himself, David Cameron said "runaway dads" should feel the "full force of shame" for their actions.

Writing in the Sunday Telegraph to mark Father's Day, he said it was not acceptable for single mothers to be left to bring children up on their own.
Public (blaming) shaming (2)
There’s a company selling an Aston Martin at the price of a bicycle and we bought that company and we charged Toyota prices. I don’t think that should be a crime.
Callahan’s suggested questions

• If you are overweight or obese, are you pleased with the way you look?
• Are you pleased when your obese children are called “fatty” or otherwise teased at school?
• Fair or not, do you know that many people look down upon those excessively overweight or obese, often in fact discriminating against them and making fun of them or calling them lazy lacking in self-control?
And his response

‘let me say flatly that I do not favour stigmatising the overweight or obese, and surely not discriminating against them.
‘let me say flatly that I do not favour stigmatising the overweight or obese, and surely not discriminating against them.

It will be imperative, first, to persuade them that they ought to want a good diet and exercise for themselves and for their neighbour and, second, that excessive weight and outright obesity are not socially acceptable any longer.
Public health policy → Coercive measures
Public health policy → Health promotion
Public health policy → Health professions

(De)normalisation (stereotyping)

Other (aesthetic) factors

Shame

Stigma

Behaviour change

?
From the Sunday Times.

**Face it, fatty, your genes are innocent**

According to new research carried out at University College London by the Health Behaviour Research Centre of the charity Cancer Research UK and published last week in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, there really is such a thing as a fat gene. Researchers who studied 5,500 sets of twins found that genetics has more of an influence on weight than upbringing, exercise and diet. Scientists said parents should therefore not be blamed if their child is fat, as three-quarters of the variations in children's weight and water measurements were determined by their genetic make-up.

The long and the short of it is, America may be the most obese nation in the world—Britain is not far behind—but it's not happening. Our kids are doing just fine.
‘I hate to blithely dismiss a whole swathe of scientific findings but I don’t believe a word of this. Fat gene, my foot. Funny how it seems to manifest itself only in the prosperous, cake-guzzling, carb-and-sugar-laden West. Where are the obese Sudanese toddlers? The porky Ethiopians?...You can choose to make sacrifices or choose to be lazy and remain fat – and if you choose to be lazy and remain fat, then fair enough, but accept that it’s your own doing and take responsibility for it…fatness is a personal choice, one that can’t be blamed on anybody or anything other than our own greedy behaviour.’

India Knight in *The Sunday Times*
Public health policy

Coercive measures
Health promotion
Health professions

(De)normalisation
(stereotyping)

Shame
Stigma

Behaviour change

Other (aesthetic) factors
Writing social determinants into and out of cancer control: An assessment of policy practice

Stacy M. Carter*, L. Claire Hooker, Heather M. Davey

Centre for Values, Ethics and the Law in Medicine, The University of Sydney, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Available online 23 February 2009

Keywords:
Social determinants of health
Cancer policy
Equity
Health policy

ABSTRACT

A large literature concurs that social determinants of health (SDH) are demonstrable, important, and insufficiently attended to in policy and practice. A resulting priority for research should be to determine how the social determinants of health can best be addressed. In this paper we support the more effective transfer of social determinants research into policy by: (1) describing a qualitative analysis of thirty-two cancer control policy documents from six English-speaking countries and two transnational organizations, demonstrating great variability in the treatment of social determinants in these policies; (2) critiquing these various policy practices in relation to their likely impact on social determinants of health; and (3) advancing a tool that policy writers can use to assess the way in which social determinants of health have been addressed in their work. In the sample of policy documents, the distinction between structural and intermediate determinants, population-based and targeted interventions, and their respective relationships to cancer were not always clear. The authors identified four approaches to
Problems with Callahan’s suggestion (generally)

- Errors in application (it worked for him, for smoking)
- Arguments from dignity, and impaired autonomy
- Arguments from consequences
  - Doesn’t work (but selective evidence)
  - What is the thing being maximised?
  - Harms some to benefit others
I want people to be happy but I need them to think about what their weight is and whether they’re unhealthy.

England's chief medical officer: 'Two thirds of adults overweight'

27 March 2014 Last updated at 12:55 GMT

Being overweight is increasingly seen as the norm. England's chief
The value of health
Intrinsic versus instrumental (2)

...guidelines invite us to manage our bodies in an idealised, individualised world where lifestyle change is a straightforward matter of putting knowledge into practice. Instead, we inhabit complex social worlds where food and alcohol are central to social life, and the enactment of our social identities and key social practices. Citizens do actively manage their food and alcohol consumption in an effort to be healthy, but they do so from a context where ‘social well-being’ is the primary aim.

Healthy living guidelines and the disconnect with everyday life
Jo Lindsay

School of Political and Social Inquiry, Monash University, Clayton, Victoria 3800, Australia
(Received 21 April 2010; final version received 29 June 2010)

In Western democracies, citizens are advised by governments to manage their bodily practices in highly specific ways. There are guidelines for healthy eating, alcohol consumption, exercise and screen time. However, most research works suggest that there is a substantial gap between the guidelines and the ways in which most people live their lives. How can we make sense of this disconnect between the guidelines and everyday life? In this article, I discuss Australian healthy eating and healthy drinking
(Resistance to) Public shaming (3)

Size 18 jogger who was fat-shamed by white van man lands cover of running magazine

- Lindsey Swift, 26, fronts this month’s Women’s Running magazine
- Gained attention for letter she shared on Facebook to white van man
- Driver yelled sarcastic comments as she trained for 10k last month

By ANNABEL FENWICK ELLIOTT FOR MAILONLINE and SARAH BARNES FOR MAILONLINE

A woman who gained internet fame for the open letter she wrote to the white van driver who mocked her weight while she was out jogging has landed the ultimate victory.

This month, Lindsey Swift, 26, is gracing the cover of Women’s Running magazine - thought to be the first time a plus-size woman and ‘real-life’ runner has appeared on the front of a fitness publication in the UK as opposed to a model.

It comes a month after Lindsey, a size 18 trainee teacher from Barnsley, South Yorkshire, penned a cutting letter to the mystery bully in the hope it would encourage other girls to ignore the hecklers and get fit.

Scroll down for video

E31, Manchester, United Kingdom, 3 weeks ago

Well done - and hopefully continuing with the running and a healthy diet she will look fit and healthy - keep it up
Shame v Guilt

Self
Moral ↔
Distress ++
Self regarding
Hide escape
Public

Self conscious
Negative
Similar events

Act
Moral ++
Distress
Other regarding
Confess apologise
Private
Organ donation video
Some comments…

im sorry if this offends people but its out of order trying to make the public feel guilty because they want to hold onto THEIR organs that they were born with

i think this cums on way 2 stronly i mean its not like its against the law to not donate

How is this coming on too strong?...This is the reality of the situation......does it make you feel guilty?
Australian anti-smoking
UK ‘I’m not worried’
Shame as a public health intervention

Dr Paul Snelling
Principal Lecturer in Adult Nursing
University of Worcester
Institute of Health and Society
Henwick Grove
Worcester
WR2 6AJ
01905 542615
p.snelling@worc.ac.uk