

A pill for every ill?: Dialogues on drug practices, possibilities and harms

2-4pm, 25 October 2018
Japanese Studies Centre



The Health, Social Science and Medicine network at Monash invites you to an expert panel on the pharmaceuticalisation of twenty-first century health care practices.

The production, promotion and consumption of drug treatments are significant to economies across the globe. It is argued that prescription and over-the-counter medications figure so prominently in health care that, for many, good health is no longer assumed possible without the involvement of swallowed, sprayed, absorbed and injected substances. Drugs offer possibilities not only to treat illness but to enhance physical and mental capacities. It is also axiomatic that medicines have side effects – some minor and some significant – and the risk of iatrogenic illness is important to clinical practice and public policy. The WHO, for example, has acknowledged the need to encourage pharmaceutical markets and scientific development in harmony with the regulation of health harms. The over-, under- and misuse of psychoactive treatments and antibiotics are major challenges to health care, leading, in the case of antimicrobial resistance, to major threats to everyday medicine. Online access to prescription and drugs is decentering the role of medical experts and troubling the collection of data regarding illness and its treatment. In health care for companion animals, psychoactive medications like Prozac are used to modulate mood.

Our interdisciplinary panel of keynote speakers from medical anthropology, history of medicine and addiction studies will address pharmaceuticalisation with reference to: the iatrogenesis of drug-resistance; drugs as magical and commonplace; mid-twentieth century troubles for drug regulation.

Invited keynote speakers:

Dr Paul Mason (Monash University)

“Conspicuous Consumption: Tuberculosis and the pharmaceuticalisation of poverty”

Professor Andrea Whittaker (Monash University)

“Provisional title: Pharmaceuticals as cultural objects in everyday life”

Professor Nicolas Rasmussen (University of New South Wales)

“Goofball panic: Prescription drug abuse and the regulation of medicine in 1940s America”

The panel will be chaired by Michael Savic and Mark Davis.

Light refreshments will be served. For catering purposes, please RSVP [here](#) by 22 October 2018.

[HSSM](#) promotes cross-disciplinary dialogue in the fields of medical humanities, medical sociology, medical anthropology, bioethics, health psychology, psychiatry and public health.

