Open your mind. LUT.

Lappeenranta University of Technology

Computing Our Way to Paradise?
The Role of Internet and Communication Technologies
in Sustainable Consumption and Globalization, Robert
Rattle

Pathological Tendencies:

The Health Link

POPULATION HEALTH AND THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

- Human well-being is a basic goal that connects people, societies, cultures,and understandings—the human environment—across space and time and with the natural environment.

- The World Health Organization (WHO) defines **health** as "a state of complete **physical**, **mental** and **social well-being** and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"

- Evidence suggests that relative **income** and **socioeconomic** status are significant **health determinants**

- Social participation and work experiences can enhance health status.

CRITICAL ISSUES DEFINING BEHAVIOR AND THE HEALTH GRADIENT

Consumption represents **well-being** and that increasing material affluence correlates with improved well-being is altogether **idealistic** and simplistic

The determinants of individual differences regarding some characteristic within a population may be different from the determinants of differences between populations

Child poverty in Canada during the late 1990s was close to 15 percent. On the other hand, Denmark experienced a child poverty rate of just over 2 percent during the same period. Yet, based on measures of gross domestic product (GDP), Canada is a wealthier nation

SMOKE AND MIRRORS

Informing **smokers** of the **risks** associated with tobacco consumption does **not** necessarily **motivate** a smoker to quit or to seek opportunities to **quit**

The corporate image of the tobacco industry has been a strategic policy of tobacco companies

The **tobacco** industry has been intensely sensitive to **trends** in the social **acceptability** of tobacco consumption

The shameless application of tobacco **tactics** has become **increasingly** obvious in the **climate change debate**, among others

Global market interests boast an impressive arsenal of tools geared toward nothing less than expanding markets—chemical and pesticides, pharmaceuticals, resources, and fossil fuel industries all employ these tools

SHAPING SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

An **individual may choose** to smoke, but that choice is profoundly **influenced** by the individual's **social environment**, over which he or she has little choice.

The role of **governments** is viewed as active interventions in **disease diagnosis**, treatment, and management, **rather** than active interventions in **promoting healthy behaviors.**

Governments around the world implored global actors to **get credit flowing**; to float, underwrite, and sustain unsustainable investments for short-term expediency in a deeply regressive effort to buoy our **growth-addicted society.**

There is no role for institutional frameworks and social organizations to support **population health** if it is an **individual responsibility**.

GLOBALIZATION, ICTS, AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT OF POPULATION HEALTH

The consequences for population health from globalization are unquestionably important. What is the **role of ICTs** in this nexus?

However important individual genetic susceptibilities to disease may be, the common causes of the ill health that affects populations are environmental: they come and go far more quickly than the slow pace of genetic change because they reflect the changes in the way we live

Medical technologies and an emphasis on the **biomedical** or **epidemiological** nature of health are more than simply the application of a *technofix.*

Applications of ICTs, such as telehealth and telemedicine, provide an outlet to contribute to such measures of progress.

People continue to become **ill from entirely preventable causes**. Is this a good trend?

HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

Electronic health records and health information can help ensure accountability, and they can provide greater access to health information and relevant health knowledge.

Telehealth systems can ensure greater access to health and medical help in **remote areas** of the world

In one approach to diagnose diabetes, individual Aboriginal community members are isolated and subjected to noninvasive tests that enable health practitioners, both locally and in distant locations, to evaluate the data. A mobile van—packed with ICTs—serves as the focal point for screening and educating the individual about diabetes

HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

If ICTs can be used to bring such awareness to individual disease, why can they not be used to bring similar awareness to the social fabric that generated these diseases, and to the social changes necessary for disease prevention?

The failure to incorporate more sustainable ICT into the design phase of ICTs not only confines their contribution to sustainable consumption, but also limits, or perhaps misdirects, their application to population health.

There is a growing body of evidence indicating health impacts from ICTs as a result of ergonomic, chemical, electromagnetic and other possible causes

Open your mind. LUT.

Lappeenranta University of Technology