

PUBLIC HEALTH MATTERS

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A NEWSLETTER OF THE PUBLIC
HEALTH MUSEUM



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WPA Posters and the First Public Health TB Campaign

In his book *American-Made: The Enduring Legacy of the WPA*, author Nick Taylor stated: "These ordinary men and women proved to be extraordinary beyond all expectations...In this, they shamed the political philosophy that discounted their value and rewarded the one that placed its faith in them, thus fulfilling the founding vision of a government by and for its people. All its people." From 1936 to 1943, the Work Projects Administration (WPA) provided an income to unemployed artists who assimilated visual art into the American landscape. These artists created several works of art including educational posters that were the foundation of the first United States public health campaign – the fight against tuberculosis (TB). The artists engaged specific communication techniques when developing these brightly colored Illustrative posters that persuaded Americans to improve their health and treat TB.

Continued on page 2

In the News:

The Public Health Museum is featured in the March/April issue of Harvard Magazine "Elucidating Public Health" by Nell Porter Brown.

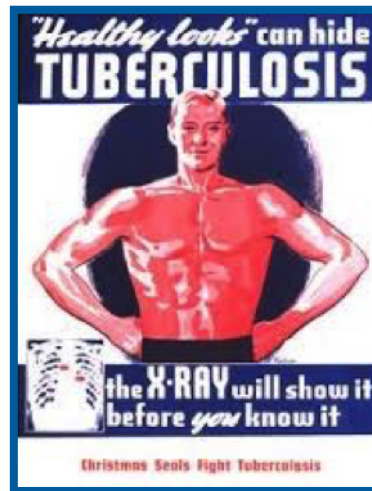
Outbreak 2017

Outbreak 2017 will be held August 7-11, 2017
Watch the Museum [website](#) for application information coming soon.

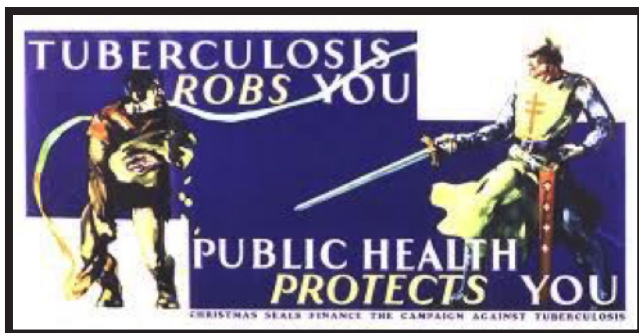
WPA TB Poster Campaign (cont. from page 1)



Technique #1: Appealing to Parental Instincts. The approach in the poster *Tuberculosis – Don't Kiss Me! Your Kiss of Affection – the Germ of Infection* evokes the innate tendency of parents to protect their children. The fundamental nature of the poster reveals the confines of the existing knowledge about TB in the 1930s. Between 1882 and 1944 when the bacteria which caused TB was found and the first antibiotic against TB named streptomycin was discovered, the medical community believed that TB was hereditary and unpreventable.



Technique #2: Juxtaposing Text and Images that Contradict Expectations. At first glance, the tactic in the poster *Healthy Looks Can Hide Tuberculosis – The X-Ray Will Show It Before You Know It* presents the expectation that an exercise or vitamin regimen is being promoted. Upon a closer look, a clear message emerges that despite a healthy appearance - TB could have been contracted already. The X-ray machine identifies TB prior to any physical symptoms.



Technique #3: Using Metaphors with Imagery. The strategy in the poster *Tuberculosis Robs You – Public Health Protects You* portrays the metaphor of disease as a culprit stealing good health and running up against a Christian knight who symbolizes protective public health. A villain absconds with valuable health in his sack to go forth and infect the public when he cringes in a confrontation with a nobleman with a First Crusade cross representing support of a higher power in the battle of good versus evil or health versus sickness.

In summary, WPA poster artists used highly impactful and effective communication techniques with bold graphics and limited text to captivate an audience with such projects as the TB public health campaign. Many WPA posters have been discarded without a trace, but their historical significance will always be preserved. Willem de Kooning, a WPA poster artist who went on to achieve great commercial success with abstract expressionism, said: "I changed my attitude toward being an artist. Instead of doing odd jobs and painting on the side, I painted and did odd jobs on the side." The WPA posters generated an awareness and appreciation of the value of art not only among the artists who painted them but also among all Americans who developed a respect for visual art as a quintessential element of our American culture.

By Linda J. DiPersio, MSM, MSHC

Group Tours of Museum Available Upon Request

Groups of all kinds enjoy the Public Health Museum.

Girl and Boy Scouts, science or history classes, public health students, healthcare students, public health professional organizations and many more.

The Public Health Museum offers group tours of the Museum. If you have a group interested in learning about the history of public health, call to schedule a group tour today. Phone: (978) 851-7321 extension 2606.



The Environmental Health and Safety department from Pfizer Andover tour of the Museum. The group included various occupational and environmental health professionals including Pfizer's occupational health nurse practitioner/manager, industrial hygienists, occupational safety specialists, environmental engineers, technicians and site security staff. The group's role at Pfizer Andover is to help keep 1200 employees safe and secure as they conduct biopharmaceutical manufacturing, research and development, to protect the environment from pollution, and to enable the business by ensuring compliance with safety, environmental and Homeland Security regulations.

Donald A. Henderson: A Public Health Success Story

We lost many notable personalities in 2016, among them a hero in public health circles. Donald A. Henderson, D.A. as he was known, was the driving force behind the program to eradicate smallpox. At age 27 and with only 2 months experience in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS), D.A. was assigned as acting chief of the EIS. Although he thought himself "obviously under-qualified" he rose to the occasion and was soon assigned as director of viral disease surveillance for CDC. D.A. was a "shoe leather" epidemiologist who gravitated out of the office and into the field to conduct interviews and to collect the data necessary to achieve his goals. When he set his sights on the eradication of smallpox he would not be deterred, even flying to Moscow to confront officials when the Soviet Union shipped weak vaccines for the eradication program. Although initially sceptical, D.A. became a strong proponent of "ring vaccination" that was key to the ultimate success of the smallpox eradication program. When the last case of smallpox was identified in Somalia in 1977, D.A. moved on to become the dean of the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health where he revised the curriculum to include more field work and practical experience. In addition, D.A. served as a bioterrorism advisor to several presidents. D.A. made an indelible mark on public health and the world, saving millions of lives and inspiring the continued quest for eradication of disease.



DA Henderson examines the vaccination scar of an Ethiopian girl.

"When this all began for me in 1961 I had not the slightest inkling that smallpox would be a disease that would preoccupy me for a lifetime. Whatever the quandaries, I return to the basic fact that, for the first time in history, a disease has been eradicated—the most serious of all the pestilential diseases." D.A. Henderson, September 7, 1928 - August 19, 2016

WORLD TB DAY

OPENING OF: "TB EXHIBIT REDESIGNED"

Friday, March 24, 2017

PRESENTERS:

Framingham TB Study 1916-1923:

Kathy Hursen, RN, MS

Public Health Nurse, Division of TB Prevention and Control, MPH- Retired
TB clinic 1989-1995, Framingham, MA, Coordinator

TB Past:

Alfred DeMaria Jr., MD

Medical Director and State Epidemiologist
Massachusetts Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences

TB Today: A Personal and Professional Perspective

Come hear Dr. Holland's compelling story of experiencing active tuberculosis,
and his perspective both as a provider and a patient.

Kelly Holland, MD

Primary Care Physician
Lynn Community Health Center, Lynn, MA

TIME: 4pm, Museum opens at 3pm

PLACE:

Public Health Museum
Old Administration Building
365 East Street
Tewksbury MA 01876

**PUBLIC
HEALTH
MUSEUM**
IN MASSACHUSETTS

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO REGISTER

publichealthmuseum.org

Admission is FREE, \$5 Donation Suggested

*Exhibit made possible through the support of the
Pittsfield Anti-Tuberculosis Association, Pittsfield, MA*

2017 Calendar of Events

PUBLIC HEALTH MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

APRIL 3-9, 2017

NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

Tuesday, April 4

MA Occupational Nurses and MA Public Health Nurses - 5 pm at the Museum.

Thursday, April 6

Dramatic Reading: Elizabeth Blackwell, First Woman Physician. Tewksbury Library: 7 pm

Friday, April 7

DPH Commissioner Monica Bharel, keynote speaker. 10am-noon at the museum. Panel discussion of The Future of Local Public Health

Check the Museum [website](#) for extended museum hours, program details and sign up.

The Museum is FREE during Public Health Week

AUGUST 7-11, 2017

OUTBREAK 2017

Week-long program for upcoming high school juniors and seniors explores a variety of public health careers.

Details and application information will be on the [website](#) soon.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTIVITIES

MARCH 2017

9th, World Kidney Day

19th - 25th, National Poison Prevention Week

24th, World Tuberculosis Day

APRIL 2017

National Autism Awareness Month

Occupational Therapy Month

Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month

7th, World Health Day

Global Health Awareness Day celebrates the founding of the World Health Organization and highlights a subject of major global health importance. The 2017 Global Health Day campaign "Depression: Let's Talk" calls attention to global mental health issues. Visit the [WHO website](#) for many World Health Day activities and resources.

3rd - 9th, National Public Health Week

23rd - 29th, World Immunization Day

24th, World Meningitis Day

MAY 2017

Healthy Vision Month

Hepatitis Awareness Month

National Stroke Awareness Month

5th, Hand Hygiene Day

15th - 21st, National Hurricane Preparedness Week

31st, World No Tobacco Day

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are always needed for a variety of projects at the Museum!

If you enjoy meeting new people, want to participate in educating the public and are available Wednesday or Thursdays or the first Saturday of the month, we encourage you to come help us with tours at the museum. Training is provided. The Museum also plans to increase its social media and internet presence in 2017. If you have experience in web site design and maintenance or social media and marketing, we'd love to talk to you!

If you are interested in public health, history or just want to spend some time with a great group of dedicated staff and volunteers, contact the Museum at 978-851-7321 EXT 2606 or complete the [application](#) and mail it to PH Museum, 365 East Street, Tewksbury, MA 01876.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH MUSEUM IN MASSACHUSETTS

Our Mission

The Public Health Museum is a non-profit educational and cultural museum. The Museum strives to preserve records and artifacts from our nation's public health history; educate the public about the achievements and contributions of public health; and inspire people to build upon the past and continue to advance the future of public health. Our Museum provides a space to explore public health artifacts, inspire future public health professionals, and foster community involvement.

Our History

Incorporated in 1990 and open to the public since 1994, the Museum has the distinction of being the first of its kind in the nation. Massachusetts has a rich history of leadership and notable firsts in the birth of our nation. In the field of public health, Massachusetts was the first to record vital statistics; the first to implement a sustained board of health; and the first to implement a communicable disease surveillance system, among many others.

MUSEUM HOURS

Wednesdays, Thursdays and the first Saturday of each month 10:00am-2:00pm
OR
By Appointment

WALKING TOURS

Seasonal (May through October, weather permitting)
The third Thursday and first Saturday of each month 10:00am-2:00pm
OR
By Appointment

ADMISSION

\$5.00 per person for museum
\$10.00 per person for walking tour

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to others who may be interested in the Public Health Museum.

To subscribe to this newsletter, please reply with SUBSCRIBE to Newsletter in the subject line. To unsubscribe, please reply with UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

ADDRESS

365 East Street
Tewksbury, MA 01876

DIRECTIONS

PHONE NUMBER

978-851-7321 EXT 2606

EMAIL ADDRESS

phmuseum@gmail.com

WEBSITE

publichealthmuseum.org

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