

## Program

09:00 – 09:15	Welcome and Introduction
09:15 – 10:15	<i>Beyond Scientific Research: How Art Can Deepen Our Understandings of the Health Damages of Racism and Inform Policy Making</i> <i>Dr. Lorraine Frisina-Doetter</i>
10:20 – 11:20	<i>Health Justice at a Crossroads? Language, Power, and the Chilling Political Climate</i> <i>Prof. Dr. Verina Wild</i>
11:20 – 11:45	Coffee Break
11:45 – 12:45	<i>Why is safety so unpopular? Rethinking the social imaginary of public health</i> <i>Prof. Dr. James Wilson</i>
12:45 – 13:45	Lunch
13:45 – 14:45	<i>Integrating graphic art in support of health data justice</i> <i>Dr. Amelia Fiske</i>
14:45 – 15:00	Coffee Break
15:00 – 16:00	<i>Narratives, High Body Weight, and the Struggle for Representational Justice</i> <i>Imogen Sophia Weidinger, M.Sc.</i> <i>PD Dr. Solveig Lena Hansen</i>
16:00 -16:15	Synthesis and Wrap Up

## Speakers

Dr. Frisina-Doetter



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Prof. Dr. Wild



© Yves Krier

Prof. Dr. Wilson



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Dr. Fiske



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PD Dr. Hansen



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Weidinger, M.Sc.



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## Workshop Idea

Health inequalities stem not only from individual choices but also from structural and social determinants such as access to healthcare, education, “healthy” food, and safe spaces – factors shaped by political, cultural, and social biases. This workshop explores how ethics can help shape public health responses to these disparities, with a focus on justice in healthcare and health policy. Against the backdrop of growing political polarization and shrinking spaces for critical debate, we will examine key challenges, assess methodological approaches, and evaluate their impact on policy and practice. Special attention will be given to integrating arts and humanities, amplifying neglected voices, and fostering innovative approaches to justice.

## Organisation

### Registration

Please register with David Moser before **30 September 2025**:  
damo@uni-bremen.de

### Participation fees (including catering)

Regular: 35€  
Student: 20€

### Location

University of Bremen  
Seminar- und Forschungsverfügungsgebäude (SFG)  
Enrique-Schmidt-Str. 7  
28359 Bremen  
Room: SFG 0150

### Organizers

Imogen Sophia Weidinger, M.Sc., iweidinger@uni-bremen.de  
PD Dr. Solveig Lena Hansen, sohansen@uni-bremen.de

### Funding

Zentrale Forschungsförderung der Universität Bremen  
Förderlinie 01 Impulse für Forschungsvorhaben  
[ZF01/2025/FB11/Hansen\_Solveig Lena]

# Justice in Public Health and Health Policy

## Comparative Perspectives from the Humanities

### Workshop

8<sup>th</sup> October 2025



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# Abstracts

**Beyond Scientific Research: How Art Can Deepen Our Understandings of the Health Damages of Racism and Inform Policy Making**  
*Dr. Lorraine Frisina-Doetter (University of Bremen)*

Racism is a fundamental determinant of health, producing disparities across individual, institutional, cultural, structural, and internalized dimensions. While public health research documents these inequities, quantitative measures alone cannot capture the lived, emotional, and ethical impacts of systemic oppression. This presentation explores how the humanities – particularly literature – illuminate the human costs of racial injustice and enrich our understanding of health disparities in the field of public health. Drawing on James Baldwin, I demonstrate how narrative and artistic expression reveal experiences of discrimination, resilience, and resistance, offering critical insights for justice-oriented public health policy. Bridging scholarship and the humanities fosters ethically grounded, human-centered approaches to advancing health equity.

**Health Justice at a Crossroads?  
Language, Power, and the Chilling Political Climate**  
*Prof. Dr. Verina Wild (University of Augsburg)*

In this talk I will reflect on academic work in the area of health justice. The last decades have shown an elaborate academic debate about health justice, branching out into and profiting from political philosophy. Theories of justice have been discussed in relation to health, and weighty arguments have been advanced to improve social justice in order to improve health for all. Considering health in all policies would also, so many assume, lead to more just and more healthy societies overall. These academic debates have also made significant efforts into developing adequate language to capture disadvantages and vulnerabilities in a nuanced but not stigmatizing way. Today, many working in the fields of public health and health justice research argue that this important academic research needs to show more and better effect in the real world. But how? While such discussions were never easy, in the current political climate it is becoming more and more difficult to even flag and critically discuss injustices. It goes so far that academic career and publication choices are being altered and adapted. In this talk I reflect on these developments. With the aim to keep speaking up and working for health justice today, I argue that even under constraints,

academics can and should act responsibly by maintaining conceptual clarity, by protecting and creating spaces for community voices and by firmly adhering to human rights. At the same time, I ask whether we need spaces among academics to speak about fears, self-censorship, potential trade-offs and risk-taking.

**Why is safety so unpopular?  
Rethinking the social imaginary of public health**  
*Prof. Dr. James Wilson (University College London)*

Scholarship in bioethics and public health ethics focuses on presenting normative arguments that will convince other scholars, rather than whether such positions would enjoy majority support among one's fellow citizens. For example, scholars may argue that that smoking should be banned, or that undocumented migrants have a full entitlement to healthcare, or that a maximum wage should be introduced. Some positions are defended and are deemed worth publishing in part because they run counter to popular views. What's considered mainstream in academia may be deemed extreme in wider political discourse, and vice versa. Often ethicists are not worried by this, as they argue that their fellow citizens ought to be persuaded by their arguments (even if they aren't). Such a view is not only complacent, but is arguably unethical for anyone who aims to help realise health justice. If insights are to migrate from the pages of journals to real-world political change, this requires a translation of abstract normative arguments into a form that resonates with the language and concerns of mainstream political discourse. As a result, one crucial (but underexplored) ethical project for public health ethics is to articulate the nature and purpose of public health in a way that grounds it in everyday lived experience. I explore how we might do this through changing the kinds of stories we tell about risk and safety.

**Integrating graphic art  
in support of health data justice**  
*Dr. Amelia Fiske (Technical University of Munich)*

Across the globe, structurally marginalized communities have faced historical disadvantage and continue to experience many challenges accessing safe, high-quality health and social care. Recent advances in technologies that need large amounts of health-related data to be built, such as health-focused artificial intelligence, make it more urgent and important to ensure that uses of health-related data are in the best interests of marginalized communities. In this talk, I

present research advancing “health data justice,” a concept that advances the access and use health-related data that specifically focuses on the needs of marginalized communities. Situated at the intersection of critical social science, feminist empirical bioethics, and graphic art, I explore the possibilities for integrating graphic art – as method, as communication tool, and as a form of reflection – in qualitative research on issues of health, justice, and policy. The hope is that a collaborative approach to the creation of graphic stories can enhance awareness among health policy decisionmakers and marginalized communities about how health data justice can be supported.

**Narratives, High Body Weight,  
and the Struggle for Representational Justice**  
*Imogen Sophia Weidinger, M.Sc. (University of Bremen)*  
*PD Dr. Solveig Lena Hansen (University of Bremen)*

This talk will focus on practices that determine whose voices are heard and deemed credible in discourses on high body weight (HBW). Drawing on qualitative data from expert interviews in Germany, we examine how HBW functions as a category of representational injustice for healthcare professionals themselves. Professionals affected by HBW may have their credibility questioned, and their expertise is often overshadowed by the disproportionate authority of medical knowledge and epidemiological data. Our findings suggest that this dynamic constrains their capacity to shape policies, clinical practices, and research agendas. Analyzing fictional narratives reveals an additional dimension of representational injustice: people with HBW are often portrayed as objects of ridicule, heroic dieters, or suffering individuals. Drawing on Nancy Fraser's tripartite model of justice and Rebecca Garden's concept of “narrative articulation,” we argue that just representation requires both accurate cultural portrayals and recognition of professional experiences without stigma. Narratives are not merely representations or ways of knowing – they actively shape the social phenomenon they describe. Storytellers and researchers are entangled in the ongoing “becoming” of HBW as a social category, which might differ from other social categories and phenomena that dominate current debates on epistemic justice. We contend that advancing health equity and social justice demands critical awareness of the social interests, narrative conventions, and structural forces that shape portrayals of HBW.