

DIY lifestyles? health, lifestyle media and the reflexive consumer

This paper emerges out of research I conducted on how young people use the internet to access health-related material. It examines a range of commonsense assumptions surrounding lifestyle advice media today in relation to media consumption and, in particular, the notion that media users can be ‘empowered’ through information, access and choice. Discussing the growing emphasis within popular advice culture on ‘DIY’ models of selfhood and citizenship, the paper seeks to complicate individualistic conceptions of lifestyle consumption and choice through highlighting the ways in which ‘traditional’ forms of social identity (in particular class and what I term ‘health habitus’) continue to play an important role in shaping people’s experiences and perceptions of health and self-care.

Bio:

Tania Lewis is a Senior Research Fellow in Sociology at La Trobe University. A former medical practitioner, she has published on health, lifestyle and the media in the *European Journal of Cultural Studies* and *Media, Culture and Society*. She is also the author of *Smart Living: Lifestyle Media and Popular Expertise* (Peter Lang, New York: 2008), the editor of *TV Transformations: Revealing the Makeover Show* (Routledge, London: 2008), and is currently co-editing a collection called *Ethical Consumption: A Critical Introduction* for Routledge.