

**“Nutritional and Body-Image Related Depictions in the Media : Do They Sustain or Counteract Healthy Attitudes and Behavior?”: Panel auf der Jahrestagung der International Communication Association, 28. Mai, New York**

**Abstract:**

This panel presents first evidence on the depiction, perception and effects of nutrition behavior and body images in German television based on the results of four empirical studies. Combining a content analysis and a survey, a connection, but also some intriguing differences between the portrayal of nutrition in the media and the self-reported eating behavior are found. Nevertheless, a relationship between media use patterns and eating patterns can be established. A framing experiment shows the interaction between media depictions and people’s attitudes towards nutrition, where some types of media framing (e.g. a risk frame) cause larger cognitive effects than others. Particularly for the case of eating disorders, the relationship between individual psychosomatic data and media use indicate a wide range of media functions. How the mostly female patients integrate the media content into their perceptions depends heavily on the individual type of disorder. At the same time, the willingness of having a cosmetic surgery, which is sometimes seen as one way for obtaining an ‘ideal’ body, is enhanced by the portrayal of this issue in German television. Both experimental and survey data indicate effects especially for heavy viewers of surgery-related programs. The papers altogether give a first insight into the crucial role mass media play in the field of nutrition behavior, based on different theoretical perspectives and a variety of methodological approaches.

Chair & Respondent: Patrick Rössler

**Papers**

- Lücke, Stephanie & Linzmeier, Vera: Nutrition in German Television – What We See is What We Eat?
- Steinhilper, Leila Katharina: The Effects of Risk-Framing in Nutrition Magazines
- Rossmann, Constanze & Brosius, Hans-Bernd: Cosmetic Surgery on Television and its Impact on Viewers’ Attitudes. A Multimethod-Approach to Cultivation Effects
- Baumann, Eva: The Mass Media’s Role in Causing Eating Disorders: Complex Interdependencies Instead of Direct Media Effects