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# Normative scripts in nutrigenomics and their social implications

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# content

- Prominent script in nutrigenomics: three assumptions on health
- Philosophy and Health and Good life
- Daily Life and Health and Good life
- What is Good life? Healthism, anxiety, personal responsibility
- Science and ethics
- Conclusion

# Prominent script in nutrigenomics

1. Health = disease prevention through food–gene interactions
2. Health = minimisation of quantifiable health risks by the ‘right’ food choice
3. Disease prevention = individual responsibility for food choice
  - Minimising personal risks through tests or belonging to a risk group and eating the right stuff

# Health script in everyday life

- Health: positive, feeling good
- No obsession for health, no health freak (= disrupting solidarity)
- Social, conviviality
- Food ≠ knowledge
- Food is identity, social, pleasure, caring

# Health in philosophy: Good life

- Health: well being balanced with other duties (Aristotle, Kant)
- Personal responsible for health as a condition for doing good (Kant)
- Time scale: between past, present, future
- Food: multiple functions: identity, social, cultural, pleasure, health

# Kant on maturity (1784)

Laziness and cowardice are the reasons why such a large part of humanity, even long after nature has liberated it from foreign control (*naturaliter maiorennes*), is still happy to remain infantile during its entire life, making it so easy for others to act as its keeper. It is so easy to be infantile. If I have a book that is wisdom for me, a therapist or preacher who serves as my conscience, **a doctor who prescribes my diet**, then I do not need to worry about these myself. I do not need to think, as long as I am willing to pay.

# No aligning nutrigenomics and daily life

- Reaction of Nx-scientists:
  - Consumer: more information, more knowledge
  - Healthier products: eating more fish products
- Food  $\neq$  knowledge
- Advices: fish oil: in salad? Depletion of fish resources?
- Do only consumers have to change? Should science not produce knowledge / information better applicable in daily life?

# Re-aligning Nx with daily life

- Other scripts:
  - Public health
  - Embedding health in taste and culture
- Social acceptable research priorities
- Incorporating end user panels in genomics research trajectories
- Only recommendations of food intake when accompanied by social research of its successful applicability

# Science and ethics

- Ethics outside science: green/red traffic light
- Ethics inside science
  - More fruitful integration of science and society
  - Identifying negative effects
  - Embedding science without moral pain
- Comparing scripts of science with that of ethics / daily life ethics
- Looking for bridges

# conclusion

- Better interaction between science, ethics, daily life
- Better research priorities
- Better products
- Better = More social applicable knowledge / information
- Why should only consumers change?
- Why doesn't science listen to end users?

# Based on:

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