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Advertising, Stereotypes and 'Addiction':
Understanding Sunbed Representation in
England, 1970s-1990s

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy in History

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Abbreviations

| | |
|-------------|---|
| AIDS | Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| ASA | Advertising Standards Agency |
| ASTO | The Association of Sun Tanning Operators |
| AV | Audio-Visual |
| BAD | British Association of Dermatology |
| BBC | British Broadcasting Corporation |
| BEES | British Epidermo-Epidemiology Society |
| BFI | British Film Institute |
| BMA | British Medical Association |
| <i>BMJ</i> | <i>British Medical Journal</i> |
| <i>BMJD</i> | <i>British Medical Journal of Dermatology</i> |
| CRCC | Co-ordinating Committee on Cancer Research |
| CRUK | Cancer Research UK |
| DHSS | Department of Health and Social Security |
| HEA | Health Education Authority |
| HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| ITV | Independent Television (UK) |
| MRC | Medical Research Council |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NHS | National Health Service |
| NRPB | National Radiological Protection Board |
| SAD | Seasonal Affective Disorder |
| SPF | Sun Protection Factor |
| TSA | The Sunbed Association |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| USA | United States of America |
| UV | Ultraviolet Radiation |
| UV-A | Ultraviolet Radiation A |
| UV-B | Ultraviolet Radiation B |
| WHO | World Health Organisation |

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Abstract

This thesis explores how the sunbed industry, the media, healthcare professionals, medical authorities, the public and a diverse range of smaller stakeholders created controversial and conflicting representations of artificial tanning, its providers and its consumers from the 1970s to 1990s in England. This thesis also extends the history of tanning, sunlight therapy, and changing technologies and visual cultures through close examination of commercial and public health advertising of sunbeds. A history of sunbeds – once and still sold as a health-enhancing technology – also sheds new light on medical, political, economic and socio-cultural changes from the 1970s to 1990s in England.

This case study builds on three main historiographical strands related to the late twentieth century growth in public health responsibilities and new mass media approaches in England. The history of sunbeds first extends how broadcast media became increasingly important to publicise health messages and warnings. This increase in media-medical feedback loops was intended to encourage healthier patterns of consumption among the public. Sunbed-related content quickly spread from local to regional and then national print media, and then from regional to national television broadcasts to reach wider audiences. An increase of ‘experts’ were encouraged to comment on technologies and consumption, and in turn, everyday lifestyle choices and consumer behaviours. Consequently, the final strand of this thesis demonstrates the rising confidence of (patient)-consumers through the media, who progressively shared their own experiences and opinions to influence the public and sunbed consumers. As a result, a history of ‘sunbed addiction’ not only uncovers the representations of sunbed users across varying gender, class, race, age and sexuality categories, but also sheds light on broader social-cultural perceptions related to stereotypes, stigma and moral panic.

Drawing together these strands of analysis, this history of sunbeds demonstrates how popular culture reciprocally influences and shapes public health research and scientific discussions in a constant cycle – the popular and medical representations and understandings of sunbeds, like other ‘health’ technologies and products, cannot be separated.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been submitted, either in the same or different form, to this or any other University for a degree.

Signature:



Fabiola Creed

Introduction

On the eighth of April 2011, the British government implemented the Sunbed (Regulation) Act 2010. The act banned under-18s from both using sunbeds and entering the premises of any sunbed provider.¹ Since the creation of this legislation, at least one sunbed-related programme has aired every year on a mainstream television network channel. These 'documentary' style programmes are typically shown before the warmer spring or summer months in England, when sunbed advertising tends to increase, alongside the habitual rise of skin exposure.² These yearly anti-sunbed programmes aim to discourage the public from sunbed tanning.³ Routinely, they reflect the typical hostile twenty-first century attitudes towards the sunbed industry, the stereotyped sunbed

¹ Elizabeth II, *Sunbeds (Regulation) Act 2010: Chapter 20*, The Stationery Office Limited under the authority and superintendence of Carol Tullo, Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office and Queen's Printer of Acts of Parliament.

² Chris Tigh, 'SMALL BUSINESS BRITAIN: TANNING SALONS. Pre-holiday glow puts health risks in shade', *Financial Times*, 30 May 2005, p.4.

³ Public health and government groups often communicate with mass media providers to create material, or even provide hints, that certain 'everyday' behaviours (such as sunbathing), substances and technologies are unhealthy and should be avoided. Unsurprisingly, many of these anti-sunbed programmes featured on the BBC. The BBC presented itself as a public service as it was mainly funded by licenses. The BBC included educational programmes to better 'inform, educate and entertain' the public about their health and everyday lifestyle choices. The BBC also have a longstanding history against private enterprises, often providing reactionary press against businesses, NHS Health Development Agency, 'Effectiveness of Mass Media campaigns', *Consumer and Markets*, 7, June 2004, pp.1-5; Melanie A. Wakefield, et al., 'Use of mass media campaigns to change health behaviour' *Lancet*, 376, (2010), pp.1261-71; Anon., 'Young 'tanorexics' risking cancer', BBC, 24 May 2004. Accessed: 4 December 2019: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/real_story/3737025.stm; Tom Mills, *The BBC: Myth of a Public Service* (Verso, 2016), p.4, p.114, p.2.

consumer, and general sunbed use. In turn, they seek to reinforce television viewers' hostility to the use of sunbeds.

Tantastic: Anti-sunbed Representation in Contemporary Media

On the second of June 2016, an hour-long documentary aired at 10pm on Channel 5.⁴ Titled *Tantastic: 50 Shades of Orange*, it replicated the conventional twenty-first century representations of the sunbed industry, sunbed consumers, and the popular attitudes towards sunbed use since the 2010/11 legislation change.⁵ The programme featured during the typical time of

⁴ In the second quarter of 2016, Channel 5 reached roughly 50.3 million UK-based viewers. *Tantastic* would have received a significant number of viewers as the programme could be viewed on different platforms and in 2017 was replayed twice on Channel 5. As a public service broadcaster, Channel 5 was required to show a high range of high quality and diverse programming, including a quota of news bulletins and educational programmes. Yet Channel 5 was smallest of the terrestrial channels and had a smaller budget than other broadcasters. Consequently, commissioning decisions often depended on how much money a programme could make. Factual commissioning editor Greg Barnett said: 'We need ideas that will buy viewers'. Therefore, programmes like *Tantastic* were both reflective of popular culture, and tailored to attract and captivate viewers, yet they had to be 'educational', Statista, 'Quarterly reach of Channel 5 television in the United Kingdom (UK) from 1st quarter 2012 to 2nd quarter 2019 (in 1,000 viewers)', Statista Research Department, 6 December 2019. Accessed 5 January 2020: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/290659/channel-5-quarterly-reach-uk/>; Phil Ramsey, 'Commercial Public Service Broadcasting in the United Kingdom: Public Service Television, Regulation, and the Market' *Television & New Media*, 18, 7, (2017), p.644; Jonathan Bignell, Jeremy Orlebar, Patricia Holland, *The New Television Handbook* (5th edn.) (Routledge, 2017).

⁵ *Tantastic: 50 Shades of Orange*, (Executive Producer: Andra Heritage, Series Producer: Michelle Horton, Jo Molloy), Channel 5, 2 June 2016; Since 2010, the negative stereotyping of the sunbed industry, sunbed consumers and the harmful consequences of sunbed use has featured on countless television shows (ranging from documentaries to horror films), *Nicola Roberts: The Truth About Tanning*, BBC 3, 9-

year for sunbed documentaries and imitated both the print press and digital world's anti-sunbed attitudes.

Typical of post-2010 sunbed representations in the media (especially on television), *Tantastic* excluded the 'voice' of the industry. In the rare event that the self-representations of the industry were mentioned, they were portrayed as self-serving and exploitative. Instead (like other similar shows), it focused on the depiction of three 'tanorexics', defined as typical twenty-first century sunbed users. Its stereotyping was not subtle. From the beginning, it pigeon-holed the three 'tanorexics' into traditionally stigmatised demographic groups. All three were working-class; none were metropolitan. Both male users were gay; the female user was young. *Tantastic* framed all three as vain, caring more about their appearances than their health and personal relationships. They were also presented as irrational consumers, unable to comprehend the 'long-term damage' and fundamentally 'addicted'. The documentary deployed users' problematic personal histories and presumed psychological issues to explain their tanning 'dependency', pathologising the 'tanorexics'.

On *Tantastic*, the 'general public' was represented by the interviewing reporters conducting the interviews; the sunbed users' friends and family; and both skin cancer patients and 'sunbed addiction survivors'. The healthcare providers treating the 'tanorexics' (usually psychologists and dermatologists) as unchallenged 'experts', while the 'survivors' group were portrayed as 'experts by experience'. All sunbed consumers represented on *Tantastic* appeared to be significantly affected by the negative consequences of sunbed use. The show's participants thus conveyed and reinforced contemporary hostility towards sunbed use. The 'act' of sunbed use was narrated as 'stupid', 'ridiculous' and 'serious' – it caused the 'big C word (cancer)'. Overall, *Tantastic*, presented a vision of complete consensus between stakeholders that sunbeds were unsafe

10pm, 4 February 2010; *Loving the Tan?* (Presenter: Adina Campbell), Aired 13.55pm, Saturday, 21 August 2010, BBC2; *Hayley: Call Centre's Tanning Addict*, BBC One Wales, Aired 10.40-11.10pm, 24 March 2016; *Z Nation*, Season 4, Episode 10 'Frenemies', Released on Netflix in November/December 2017.

and life-threatening. *Tantastic*, like other twenty-first century sunbed documentaries, ignored the contextual histories and the layers of contradicting narratives that both encouraged and discouraged sunbed use, triggering conflicted consumer behaviour.

Tantastic's negativity had not always been the dominant narrative of the sunbed industry and their consumers. Some of the audiences watching these sunbed-related programmes were unaware of the transitional periods that shaped these conventional negative depictions – viewers often assume that anti-sunbed opinions, often presented as ‘facts’, have been the norm since the birth of the sunbed industry.⁶ Such depictions did not empathise with the sunbed consumers who were trying to negotiate contradictory pressures from many different types of ‘expert’ voices. Some of these voices included the media, the sunbed industry, other sunbed-supporting industries (i.e., gyms, beauty and hair salons, electrical equipment-providers and advertising companies), anti-sunbed industries (i.e., non-UV tanning providers), healthcare professionals, public health, government groups, non-governmental organisations (i.e., Cancer Research UK (CRUK)), and the ‘experiential experts’ (i.e., sunbed (patient-)consumers, skin cancer sufferers and survivors). This thesis will provide a history of sunbed representations, and the cultural representations of ‘health’ and ‘beauty’ aesthetics, leading to our present-day (anti-) *Tantastic* attitudes. I will tease out several layers of narratives that both underpinned and influenced shifting depictions of the sunbed industry and their consumers, by evaluating a series of transitional movements from the late 1970s to late 1990s.

The history of sunbeds also demonstrates how the media and health ‘experts’ reciprocally shaped the other’s concerns, interests, responsibilities and approaches towards the sunbed industry and their consumers, ultimately co-

⁶ Sarah Carey, ‘Sarah Carey... going to hell on a sunbed’, *Irish Independent*, 31 August 2019. Accessed 22 November 2019: <https://www.independent.ie/life/sarah-carey-going-to-hell-on-a-sunbed-31475991.html>

producing a narrative framework for interpreting sunbed use. When explaining the interactions between media and medical representatives, one of these stakeholders did not have priority over the other, as these groups were not mutually exclusive. Instead, both discourses were bound together. For example, individuals were not isolated and bound to any one of these groups. Often an individual could be part of multiple stakeholder communities. For example, a 'healthcare provider' could also be a sunbed provider (see Chapter One and Two), and a media reporter could be a consumer.⁷ Similarly, an individual could change their standpoint on sunbeds over time - a regular sunbed user could later spearhead an anti-sunbed campaign.⁸

What is a Sunbed?

From the late 1970s to late 1990s, different types of sunbeds emerged over time.⁹ The material cultures, UV-strengths, sizes and costs of both public and domestic sunbeds gradually broadened. These diversifications demonstrate how new technologies regularly move down the social scale as they are purchased by a widening range of consumers.

In this thesis, when I refer to a 'sunbed' I am describing the body-sized tanning machines that emit UV-A and UV-B rays onto skin to produce a tan. These units typically have two panels of lamps between which one lies or stands. The original sunbeds, most popular from the late 1970s to early 1990s, resembled a bed.¹⁰ In 1993, *The Tanning Shop* introduced horizontal stand-up sunbeds, which eventually became more popular than the vertical units. These stand-up sunbeds required less physical space but gave consumers more

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Nicola Roberts.

⁹ For more information about the different types of tanning technologies before the term 'sunbed' was introduced, see 'Tanning Technologies and Terms Leading to 'sunbeds'' in Chapter One.

¹⁰ Elaine Williams, 'Holiday threatens sunset for tanning lamp manufacturers', *Financial Times*, 3 July 1981, p.9.

'breathing' space as their bodies no longer touched the hot cased lamps.¹¹ During the 1980s, a thirty minute to two hour sunbed session was required to produce a tan.¹² By 1993, a tan could be acquired after a six-minute session as the new commercial units were more powerful.¹³

During the early 1980s, professional units were heavy and expensive, costing between £2,000 to £17,000 - depending on the intensity of the sunbed.¹⁴ The smaller domestic sunbeds, on the other hand, were lighter and cost between £300 to £500.¹⁵ After the mid-1980s, household sunbeds reflected an even greater range of sizes and shapes, which could cost as little as £129.¹⁶ These gradual changes demonstrate how sunbeds entered the mass market and became an accessible object of everyday consumption by the late 1980s.

Why is a History of Sunbeds Important?

A history of sunbeds, focusing primarily on the changing representations of the industry, its consumers and the 'act' of consumption, is important for both public health and historical reasons. The sunbed phenomenon exemplifies the power of popular culture to intensify socio-cultural pressures to undergo tanning rituals, even after the British public acknowledged that sunbed use was unhealthy. A history of the sunbed industry also reveals how commercial drivers - rooted in the exploitation of these social pressures by local, regional and international businesses - could either work with, ignore and even challenge medical authorities, thus complicating and undermining health-promoting

¹¹ Amanda Sills, 'The six-minute tanning chamber', *Daily Mail*, 6 May 1993, p.36.

¹² Williams, 'Holiday threatens sunset for tanning lamp manufacturers', p.9.

¹³ Sills, 'The six-minute tanning chamber', p.36.

¹⁴ Christopher Doyle, 'The hidden dangers beyond the pale: CHRISTOPHER DOYLE throws light on solariums', *Observer*, 8 March 1981, p.38.

¹⁵ Anon., 'The Financial Times examines the problems confronting small companies manufacturing sunbeds and solaria.', *Financial Times*, 3 July 1981, p.9.

¹⁶ Anon., 'POSTAL SHOPPING GUIDE. Amber Leisure. Factory Direct!', *Guardian*, 15 February 1986, p.25.

interventions from public health and medical experts. Alongside this, the sunbed story illustrates how the media (in various textual and visual formats) can both amplify the changing voice of the ‘experts’ (initially, sunbed providers and later healthcare professionals), and negotiate the relationships between all influential stakeholders. An exploration of sunbeds through media and medical research maps out feedback loops, and demonstrates how the media reciprocally drove medical decision-making. The speed with which sunbed-related print press and later televisual content translated medical discourse also provides a clear example of the strong relationship between medical and media circles – connecting popular, intellectual and academic cultures.

Currently, the literature on sunbed use and spaces, mainly published by public health researchers and psychologists, is limited to brief overviews of the industry. These publications address the changing statistics of sunbed salons per year within different regions; legislative changes; and the ‘psychological’ reasons why individuals use sunbeds. Their authors focus on the post-millennium sunbed industry - when sunbeds were unquestionably framed as ‘addictive’ and ‘life-threatening’.¹⁷ This work overlooks the industry’s original late 1970s reputation.¹⁸ The following chapters will illustrate a more complex history of both healthcare providers and the public enthusiastically conforming to the pressures of commercial industries, amongst contradictions and confusion.

The history of sunbeds – once and still sold as a health-enhancing technology – also sheds new light on medical, political, economic and socio-cultural changes from the late 1970s to late 1990s in England. The history of sunbeds provides a cultural lens to study key transformations in public life since

¹⁷ Carolyn J. Heckman, Sharon L. Manne, *Shedding Light on Indoor Tanning* (New York: Springer, 2012); A. Walsh, et al, ‘Sunbed Outlets and Area Deprivation in the UK’, *South West Public Health Observatory* (2009).

¹⁸ During the early 1980s, the sunbed industry was introduced with a resiliently positive portrayal, Anon., ‘If you wonder how Miss Britain got that tan’, *Daily Mail*, 4 March 1980, p.23; Steve Tooze, ‘Tanorexia’, *Daily Mail*, 16 May 1996, p.45.

the late 1970s. Sunbeds demonstrate how industry, the media and medical research frame everyday consumption to change consumer behaviours. Examining the sunbed industry not only reveals the individual experiences of sunbed consumers across varying gender, class, race, age and sexuality categories, but also sheds light on broader social-cultural perceptions. These narratives map historical trends related to gender, class, race, age and sexuality stereotyping – drawn clearly from the history of sunbed representation. Finally, my thesis extends the history of tanning, sunlight therapy, and changing technologies and visual cultures through, not least, close examination of commercial and public health advertising of sunbeds.

Why Focus on Sunbeds from the Late 1970s to Late 1990s?

1970s' tanning technologies will be contextualised in Chapter One, but this thesis will primarily focus on the late 1970s to late 1990s for historical and methodological reasons. In England, the term 'sunbed' first appeared in newspapers from 1978 onwards.¹⁹ 1980s and 1990s' sunbed images mainly featured in the print press, trade directories, catalogues, and on television programmes. A focus on these two decades will provide a balanced exploration of the clear turning points, from the introduction of sunbeds as a health-enhancing device to their confirmation as a health-destroying machine.

By the late 1990s, new sunbed visual cultures were beginning to emerge, changing and complicating the depiction of sunbeds once again. The rise of the internet, followed by greater access to computers within households, led to the digital and virtual advertising of sunbeds. The rise of digital advertising yielded thousands of new sunbed adverts across the UK, volumes which would overwhelm this thesis. A separate study would be required to explore the post-millennium digital advertising of sunbeds. Moreover, after the late 1990s, anti-sunbed public health campaigns also appeared in the form of interactive websites and digitised posters, featuring on electronic billboards and

¹⁹ Maurice Willoughby, 'Not As Outrageous As it Sounds. A summer ski resort!', *Daily Mail*, 4 March 1978, p.28.

bus shelters. These anti-sunbed campaigns resulted from a growing interest in sunbed-induced melanoma from worldwide health organisations (such as the World Health Organisation (WHO)) – particularly across the UK, US, and Australia. From the early 2000s onwards, the skin cancer debate further ballooned at health conferences, creating both a spike of medical articles and an eventual sunbed legislation change, which marked another turning point in the history of sunbeds.

Finally, from the late 1990s, the definition of public ‘tanning’ services, became more ambiguous with the growing acceptance of fake tan. In the form of creams, lotions and sprays, fake tan became increasingly popular. On shop fronts and in adverts, both sunbed and fake tan services and products were often sold and listed as ‘tanning technologies’. This ambiguity reduced the stigma attached to public tanning providers and made it more challenging for public health to both monitor and regulate sunbed services. For a historian, this also presents new methodological challenges when searching for hidden ‘sunbed’ tanning technologies and is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Historiography (changes in post-war public health approaches and responsibilities)

The history of sunbeds has remained unexplored by historians. Yet sunbeds would fit well with various historiographies that develop the history of late twentieth-century public health responsibilities and approaches in England. A chronological approach from World War Two will present three interlinked historiographical strands that my thesis extends, supports and critiques. These include scholarly attention to the role of the media as a vehicle for health messages; the emerging history of new health 'experts'; and, the rise of the consumer.

Since World War Two, the media has become increasingly instrumental in changing public health approaches and responsibilities. Reciprocally, public health professionals supplying the media with content increased the popularity, distribution and authority of many media outlets – prompting more people to purchase, read and listen to their 'medically endorsed' health-related news stories, often published by media-'medical correspondents'. The interlinked growth of public health (and eventually health-orientated NGOs) and the media drove the use of new mediums to deliver health education messages to the public, largely using marketing models from other industries. This showed a late twentieth century shift in the media's involvement in public health matters and allowed new types of 'health' experts to emerge. Public health workers and media organisations often worked together to share medical research, aiming to decrease health risks and create 'everyday' health awareness and advice to 'improve' lifestyle and consumer attitudes, behaviours and choices. A review of the historiography will demonstrate that the perceived 'health experts' changed during the late twentieth century, often influenced by the media as a switchboard operator. By using different platforms, and controlling the contextual, rhetorical and visual content, the media could define who the health experts were – including industry, medical professionals, and later themselves and the 'experienced' consumers. The final strand of this literature illustrates the rise of the consumer. The media gradually encouraged consumers to apply

pressures on both commercial enterprises and public health, to expect transparency and make their own demands, often arguing that their individual and communal health and safety was a consumer 'right' in Britain. Virginia Berridge and Kelly Loughlin's edited book, *Medicine, the Market and the Mass Media* (2005) provides a brief overview of these three interlinked strands, regarding the growing role of the media in public health, the changing health 'expert(s)' and the rise of the 'consumer'. Other scholars examine specific examples from the 1950s to 1980s, including histories of breast cancer, AIDS/HIV, and tobacco and alcohol consumption histories. My research on sunbeds, from the 1980s to 1990s, will extend, support and sometimes contrast with these former and overlapping public health, industry, media and consumer histories.

Medicine, the Market and the Mass Media provided one of the first in-depth collection of essays to explore the post-1945 role of industry and the mass media in public health – an area which the history of medicine had previously neglected. Berridge and Loughlin defined public health as the 'efforts of societies and individuals to prevent disease, prolong life and promote health'.²⁰ Berridge and Loughlin asserted that this media health field was created during the post-war years, alongside the emergence of health correspondents in the media.²¹ Berridge and Loughlin argued that after World War Two, public health researchers became more focused on the 'individual behavioural determinants of health ... and the contrasting emphasis on social

²⁰ Virginia Berridge, Kelly Loughlin (eds), *Medicine, the market and mass media: producing health in the twentieth century* (London: Routledge, 2012), p.1.

²¹ For more reasons why science, health and medicine media reporting grew after World War Two, see Kelly Loughlin, 'Networks of mass communication: reporting science, health and medicine from the 1950s to the 1970s', in Virginia Berridge (ed), *Making health policy: Networks in research and policy after 1945* (Rodopi, 2005); Kelly Loughlin, 'Spectacle and secrecy: press coverage of conjoined twins in 1950s Britain', *Medical History*, 49, 2 (2005), pp.197-212; Berridge, Loughlin, *Medicine, the market and mass media*, p.6.

and environmental determinants of health'.²² Alongside this, growing numbers of public-private partnerships formed to advance, but also to commoditise the health of the public, including the media and commercial industries.²³ This created support and often tensions between public health professionals and the interests of the private sector, who also used the media to publicise their own 'expert' opinions. This, in turn, led to the rise in health consumerism, as the public could eventually make their own demands and voice their own arguments, which the media often supported in backlashes against public health approaches by the end of the twentieth century.²⁴ Berridge and Loughlin argued that after the war, overall health discussions became involved in a "circuit of mass communication".²⁵

Historians such as Berridge, Loughlin, William G. Rothstein and George Weisz, have argued that during the 1950s, public health began to focus more on chronic rather than epidemic disease – 'the rise of the "risk factor" was central to new styles of public health focusing on probabilities rather than direct causation'.²⁶ Unsurprisingly, tobacco smoking became a central issue from the

²² Berridge, Loughlin, *Medicine, the market and mass media*, p.xv.

²³ Jane Hand, 'Marketing health education: advertising margarine and visualising health in Britain from 1964–c.2000', *Contemporary British History*, 31, 4, (2017), pp.477–500; Jane Hand, 'Visualising Food as a Modern Medicine: Gender, the Body and Health Education in Britain, 1940-1992', Unpublished Thesis, University of Warwick, (2014).

²⁴ Berridge, Loughlin, *Medicine, the market and mass media*, p.1, pp.xv-xvi.

²⁵ D. Miller, J. Kitzinger, K. Williams, P. Beharrell, *The Circuit of Mass Communication: Media Strategies, Representation and Audience Reception in the AIDS Crisis* (London: Sage, 1998); Berridge, Loughlin, *Medicine, the market and mass media*.

²⁶ William G. Rothstein, *Public Health and the Risk Factor: A History of an Uneven Medical Revolution* (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2003); George Weisz, *Chronic Disease in the Twentieth Century: A History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014).

1950s onwards in Britain.²⁷ Elizabeth Toon's research on breast cancer provides an alternative example of the rise of the media in public health (campaign awareness and representation), the increase in both public health and media 'experts', and the rise, or at least the representation, of the more demanding consumer. From the late 1950s onwards, policy makers and health educators felt slightly more comfortable using the print press (not yet television) to bring the public into traditionally closed medical spheres and matters.²⁸ Toon argued that early 1960s newspapers and magazines imitated this use of the media to encourage smear tests for early detection of cervical cancer.²⁹ This also spearheaded a vocal campaign by women's groups, which expanded media discussions and educational effects to broadcast the reduced health risk offered by early detection. A new influential healthcare 'expert' was emerging in

²⁷ Virginia Berridge, 'Post war smoking policy in the UK and the redefinition of public health', *Twentieth Century British History*, 14, 1 (2003), pp.61-82; Berridge and Loughlin, *Medicine, the market and mass media*.

²⁸ Virginia Berridge, 'Medicine and the Public: The 1962 Report of the Royal College of Physicians and the New Public Health', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 81, (2007); For a history of heart transplants and the media in 1960s Britain, see Ayesha Nathoo, *Hearts exposed: Transplants and the media in 1960s Britain* (Springer, 2009); For the controversy over the medical-media broadcast of YLITH on television, see Kelly Loughlin, 'Your Life in Their Hands': the context of a medical-media controversy', *Media History*, 6, 2, (2000), pp.177-188; Kelly Loughlin, 'The History of Health and Medicine in Contemporary Britain: Reflections on the Role of Audio-Visual Sources', *Social History of Medicine*, 13, 1, (2000), pp.131-146; For a history of British medical debates about cancer education in the 1950s, see Elizabeth Toon, "'Cancer as the general population knows it": knowledge, fear, and lay education in 1950s Britain', *Bulletin of the history of medicine*, 81, 1, (2007), pp.116-138.

²⁹ Virginia Berridge, Kelly Loughlin, 'Smoking and the New Health Education in Britain, 1950s-1970s', *American Journal of Public Health*, 95, (2005), pp.956-64; Virginia Berridge, *Marketing Health: Smoking and the Discourse of Public Health in Britain, 1945-2000* (Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.71-5, pp.185-203; Ilana Löwy, *A Woman's Disease: The History of Cervical Cancer* (Oxford University Press, 2011), pp.107-28; Elizabeth Toon, 'The Machinery of Authoritarian Care: Dramatising Breast Cancer Treatment in 1970s Britain', *Social History of Medicine*, 27, 3, (2014), p.559.

media and campaign circles. Nonetheless, Toon observed that commentary on individuals' everyday cancer experiences did not feature in media discussions – the perspectives of (patient)-consumers who were experts by experience were not yet dominant in the media.³⁰

After the early 1960s, public health and policy interest in 'chronic disease' became more central.³¹ In the same period in Britain, Berridge argued that the 1962 report on smoking by the Royal College of Physicians demonstrated a shift in the role of the medical profession. Doctors were assuming the right to speak to both the government and public on matters of individual health, forming a new risk-based public health system. These changes in responsibilities and approaches to public health were reflected in doctors' increasing use of the media to share health-related information with the public.³² In the late 1960s and 1970s, health officials teamed up with both media broadcasters and advertising campaign agencies to apply a 'hidden persuasion' approach to discourage smoking. These methods originated from USA advertising theory.

Road safety and drink driving campaigns in the media also used these new models.³³ From the late 1960s onwards, Toon has observed another change regarding the rise of (patient-)consumer voices in the media. For the first time, celebrities were beginning to share their breast cancer treatment

³⁰ Toon, 'The Machinery of Authoritarian Care', pp.558-9.

³¹ Martin Moore argues that the public health and policy interest in 'chronic disease' became more central after the early 1960s, Martin D. Moore, 'Harnessing the Power of Difference: Colonialism and British Chronic Disease Research, 1940–1975', *Social History of Medicine*, 29, 2, (2016), p.390; Martin D. Moore, *Managing diabetes, managing medicine* (Manchester University Press, 2019).

³² Nathoo argues that journalists took on an investigative style of reporting, patients became more demanding and medicine started to become vulnerable to public critique during the socially and politically volatile 1960s, Nathoo, *Hearts exposed*, p.33.

³³ Berridge, Loughlin, *Medicine, the market and mass media*, p.7; Berridge, Loughlin, 'Smoking and the new health education in Britain'.

experiences to the public, and by the early 1970s, more comparisons of these experiences from 'everyday' women were appearing in women's magazines. In these breast cancer treatment discussions, organisations were speaking for their patients, as they wanted to encourage the British public to be aware of their health care rights in medical environments. This patient-consumer change in demand and expectations broke down the previous private doctor-to-patient confidentiality as patient-consumer experiences were being publicly shared in the media.³⁴ Both Alex Mold's and Ayesha Nathoo's research on 1960s and 1970s patient-consumers have echoed these communication and public health changes.³⁵ These changes in the 1960s led to a growing emergence of health-related media broadcasts. More 'experts', who were not exclusively from medical and healthcare backgrounds, now had the agency and tools to communicate with the public. In turn, more confident (patient-)consumers arose. As previous historians have demonstrated, these patient-consumers believed that they had the right to share their health experiences, often in the form of complaints or new demands for public health changes.³⁶

³⁴ Toon also argued that: 'They also urged their female readership to get more involved in their own health care, by seeking out more information, and if diagnosed, to be prepared to take an active role in determining how their breast cancers would be treated, Toon, 'The Machinery of Authoritarian Care', p.559.

³⁵ Alex Mold, 'Repositioning the Patient: Patient Organizations, Consumerism, and Autonomy in Britain during the 1960s and 1970s', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 87, (2013), pp.243–6; Nathoo, 'Chapter two: Communicating Medicine in Post-War Britain' in *Hearts Exposed*, p.33-56.

³⁶ Historians have demonstrated how other stakeholders, reciprocally influencing public health and the media, involved health education professionals, advertisers, NGOs and associations. For a history of public health and the media in relation to coronary disease/health, see Peder Clark, 'Problems of Today and Tomorrow': Prevention and the National Health Service in the 1970s, *Social History of Medicine*, (2019), p.16; For a history of public health and the media regarding vaccinations, see Gareth Millward, 'A Disability Act? The Vaccine Damage Payments Act 1979 and the British Government's Response to the Pertussis Vaccine Scare', *Social History of Medicine*, 30, 2, (2017), pp.429–447.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, public health workers and researchers were also using the mass media incrementally to enact their public health initiatives and promote health education, particularly in regards to smoking.³⁷ During the 1970s, because of the increasing use of the media, both public health and private industries (such as tobacco, food and alcohol) also worked together, challenging the traditional narrative that public health, the public and the media were both 'anti-industry' and hostile to commercial 'empires'. For example, *Medicine, the Market and the Mass Media* explains how the tobacco industry worked with government and public health alliances to develop 'safer smoking' substitutes during the 1970s.³⁸ During the 1980s, these alliances grew, as demonstrated in the history of margarine and obesity.³⁹ The early history of the sunbed industry also reflects these co-operative attitudes by illustrating how the sunbed industry, healthcare professionals and later government communicated with each other, especially in terms of local health service provision. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, these actors and the media presented to the public that sunbed use was a safer alternative to skin

³⁷ Berridge, Loughlin, 'Smoking and the new health education in Britain'; Berridge, 'Medicine and the Public'.

³⁸ Both Berridge and Starn evaluated American anti-tobacco television documentaries in their chapter on the rise and fall of 'safer' smoking in 1970s Britain. These documentaries were similar to the sunbed-related British television reports of 1980s and 1990s. My thesis demonstrates that first, during the 1980s, the sunbed industry, media, government and public health worked together to reduce health risk rather than eliminate sunbeds outrightly (Chapter Two and Three). Yet by the 1990s, British television reports held the sunbed industry accountable for the increasing rates of melanoma in the UK. In an attempt to ban the sunbed industry, these programmes told the public that the commercially pressurising, profit-hungry and exploitative sunbed industry did not care for the health of their consumers (Chapters Five and Six), Virginia Berridge, Penny Starns, 'Chapter 7: The 'invisible industrialist' and public health: the rise and fall of 'safer smoking' in the 1970s' in Berridge, Loughlin, *Medicine, the market and mass media*, pp.8-9, pp.172-191.

³⁹ See Hand, 'Marketing health education'.

cancer confirmed sunbathing (see Chapters One and Two). The media wanted to help consumers make informed and 'rational' lifestyle and health decisions. Media reporters cared about their consumers, and in fact, often presented themselves as knowledgeable consumers themselves, who both praised and advised the use of sunbeds as a protective shield against sunbathing-induced skin cancer. The sunbed industry's 'health' experts and the occasional healthcare professional also endorsed these reporters, whereas most scientists and the government were silent on the matter while awaiting more research. This support, however, changed during the late 1980s with the increase of published scientific research, which the print press and television translated for the public (see Chapter Four). Moreover, my in-depth research on the changing representation of the sunbed industry provider demonstrates that when working-class providers began to mass produce sunbeds for the public, public health, the media and the government began to increasingly pressurise the public to develop and act on anti-industry sentiments (see Chapters Three to Six).

In *Everybody Likes a Drink. Nobody Likes a Drunk*, Alex Mold provides another example of reciprocity between public health and the media during 1970s anti-alcohol campaigns. To explore the nature of public health and the place of the public within it, Mold examined the development of alcohol-related health education in 1970s Britain. Mold argued that although public health workers, policy makers and medical experts were concerned about the drinking habits of the whole population, health education campaigns - broadcast through billboard posters, local newspaper adverts and television commercials - tended to focus on the individual drinker. An addiction expert, Edward Griffiths, suggested that a public health focus on the alcohol industry's provision of alcohol was the best approach to decrease overall alcohol consumption, yet the option for public health to focus on industry was not followed. This reflected the 1970s 'new public health' approach, which focused on encouraging individuals to take responsibility for their own health and limiting the risk that they posed to

others through preventive actions.⁴⁰ As we will see in Chapter Six, anti-sunbed health messages during the 1990s imitated these trends. Mold also highlighted three main ‘public’ stakeholders who received the anti-alcohol campaigns: for alcohol consumption, this included the ‘drinkers, the population and citizen-consumers’.⁴¹ Mold showed how anti-alcohol health education campaigns changed their target drinkers over time, beginning with the alcoholics in the North-East, to then the ‘boozer’ (a heavy drinker, but not necessarily an alcoholic), to then the ‘sensible drinker’ - meaning all drinkers. This shifted the remit of alcohol policy, the media and public health to focus on a much larger group of people. The concerns had shifted to healthy individuals as well as the sick, showing a greater emphases on reducing overall communal health risk.⁴² The 1970s demonstrated increasing feedback loops of interlinked stakeholders – including public health, the media, industry, organisations, activists, the public and consumers.⁴³ My research considers the interactions and negotiations of these overlapping stakeholders, all using the media to offer their ‘expert’ and ‘consumer’ perspectives about sunbed use to the public. Moreover, my research extends Mold’s work by demonstrating that by the 1990s, the healthcare professionals and media reporters were no longer concerned about interfering with individual liberty. The private and public spheres had become entangled, inviting more public commentary onto individual’s private health decisions, particularly on their everyday lifestyles and consumption.

⁴⁰ Alex Mold, ‘Everybody Likes a Drink. Nobody Likes a Drunk’. Alcohol, Health Education and the Public in 1970s Britain’, *Social History of Medicine*, 30, 3, (2017), pp.1-2, p.8; Clare Herrick, *Governing Health and Consumption: Sensible Citizens, Behaviour and the City* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2011).

⁴¹ Alex Mold, ‘Everybody Likes a Drink. Nobody Likes a Drunk’, pp.1-25.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.24

⁴³ Toon’s examination of breast cancer treatment on *Through the Night* (1975), also portrayed a new purpose of the media, supporting healthcare consumers. This programme encouraged viewers to see medical treatment through the patient-consumers’ eyes. In turn, medical professionals began to listen to patient-consumer and changed their practice of cancer treatments within larger institutions, Toon, ‘The Machinery of Authoritarian Care’, pp.558-60.

Berridge and Loughlin argued that the 1970s demonstrated a “victim blaming” (or ‘individual behaviour focus’) approach.⁴⁴ This was partially different in the history of sunbeds, as the sunbed industry was increasingly blamed from the late 1980s onwards (largely because providers were presented as working class opportunists). Yet a victim blaming approach towards sunbed users still persisted during the 1990s as consumer behaviour was believed to be easier to change. Perhaps this was also because the media depicted sunbed users to be the working-class masses. Regardless, the history of sunbeds uncovers a persistent “victim blaming” approach during the 1990s, intensely focused on young women and mothers, framing them as irrational, self-destructive and ‘addicted’ (see Chapter Five and Chapter Six).⁴⁵

Roberta Bivins also demonstrates how a lack of consensus from ‘experts’ on emerging health concerns typically led to state level inaction.⁴⁶ In terms of the sunbed industry, this allowed space for the sunbed providers to be the unquestioned ‘experts’ from the early to mid-1980s. Later, the experts were the dermatologist specialists, and then general medical specialists, speaking to the public through the media. As the media negotiated this information, they also became the ‘experts’, soon joined by former sunbed users and melanoma

⁴⁴ Berridge, Loughlin, *Medicine, the market and mass media*, p.3.

⁴⁵ For addiction literature, see Helen Keane, *What's wrong with addiction?* (Melbourne University Press, 2002); Karen L. Kopelson, ‘Radical Indulgence: Excess, Addiction, and Female Desire’, *Postmodern Culture*, 17, 1, (2006); Jahn L. Forth-Finegan, ‘Sugar and Spice and Everything Nice’, *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*, 3, 3-4, (1992) pp.19-48; Julia Skelly, *Addiction and British Visual Culture, 1751-1919: Wasted Looks* (Farnham, Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2014); Julia Skelly, *The Uses of Excess in Visual and Material Culture, 1600-2010* (Routledge, 2018); Vicky Long, Hilary Marland, ‘From Danger and Motherhood to Health and Beauty: Health Advice for the Factory Girl in Early Twentieth-Century Britain’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 20, (2009).

⁴⁶ Roberta Bivins, *Contagious communities: Medicine, migration, and the NHS in post-war Britain* (Oxford University Press, 2015), pp.266-268.

survivors. Nonetheless, as both Mold and Berridge have argued, the decision-making, opinions and actions of changing ‘experts’ (often simplified in their translation through the media) were not free from socio-cultural bias and moral values. I will argue for sunbeds what both Berridge and Mold have asserted in relation to drugs: that “the question of who was using the drug – and how – was also important”.⁴⁷ Moreover, they point to how medical experts throughout the twentieth century often created the distinction between the medical ‘use’ and non-medical ‘abuse’ of drugs; this too is reflected in the history of ultraviolet (UV) technologies and their providers (see Chapter Five). Finally, Mold and Bivins argue that if health risks shift from the individual to overall Britons, such as the health detriments of children because of sunbed using mothers, then this encourages ‘state’ intervention.⁴⁸ I argue further that the media’s intervention in mothers’ ‘unhealthy’ lifestyle choices, dramatised in both the print press and on television, encouraged public concern and commentary.

In the 1980s, the role of the media during the early crisis of HIV/AIDS demonstrated how ‘medico-scientific and health news became part of a process of production and dissemination that could have enormous and reciprocal policy impacts’.⁴⁹ Steven Epstein’s work on AIDS highlights that, from the late 1980s onwards, patients became new experiential experts because of the increasingly

⁴⁷ Alex Mold, ‘DYNAMIC DUALITIES: THE ‘BRITISH SYSTEM’ OF HEROIN ADDICTION TREATMENT, 1965-1987’, Unpublished Thesis, University of Birmingham, (2004), p.28; Virginia Berridge, *Opium and the People: Opiate Drug Use and Drug Control Policy in Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Britain* (revised edn.) (London: Free Association Books, 1999), p.97.

⁴⁸ Roberta Bivins, ‘Immigration, Ethnicity and ‘Public’ Health Policy in Postcolonial Britain’ in Catherine Cox, Hilary Marland (eds), *Migration, Health and Ethnicity in the Modern World* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp.126-150; Alex Mold, ‘Consuming Habits: Histories of Drugs in Modern Societies’, *Cultural and Social History*, 4, (2007), pp.263-5.

⁴⁹ Berridge, Loughlin, *Medicine, the market and mass media*, p.6.

accessible and informative health-related media platforms.⁵⁰ Eventually, these ‘experts by experience’ could use the media to challenge and undermine public health, healthcare professionals and private industries.⁵¹ Consequently, from the 1980s onwards, the distribution of health knowledge more evidently became a complex negotiation between policy, public health, industries and patient-consumers through the media. Although Epstein’s work is based on the US, this shift is also noted in both Elizabeth Toon’s work on breast cancer and my own research on sunbed users in the UK.⁵²

In *Placing the Public in Public Health in Post-War Britain, 1948-2012*, the authors explained how “public health” became associated with “healthy living” and individual lifestyle choices, and how the government, industry, the media and the civil society (essentially ‘individuals, the state, the private and voluntary organisations’) were rendered responsible for persuading people to make more healthy choices by the 2000s.⁵³ The authors argue that the place of the public in public health, which included the ideas and responsibilities of the state and its

⁵⁰ Steven Epstein, ‘The Construction of Lay Expertise: AIDS Activism and the Forging of Credibility in the Reform of Clinical Trials’, *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 20, (1995), pp.408-437; Steven Epstein, *Impure Science: AIDS, Activism and the Politics of Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Jennifer Crane, *Child protection in England, 1960–2000: expertise, experience, and emotion* (Springer, 2018).

⁵¹ For a history on 1980s patient-consumers, see Alex Mold, ‘Making the Patient-Consumer in Margaret Thatcher’s Britain’, *The Historical Journal*, 54, (2011), pp.509-28; Alex Mold, *Making the Patient-Consumer: Patient Organisations and Health Consumerism in Britain* (Manchester University Press, 2015).

⁵² Elizabeth Toon, *Private Trauma, Public Drama: Breast Cancer Treatment in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming).

⁵³ Alex Mold, Peder Clark, Gareth Millward, Daisy Payling, *Placing the Public in Public Health in Post-War Britain, 1948-2012* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), pp.1-2.

citizens, changed over time.⁵⁴ My thesis - which explores how the sunbed industry, the media, government, healthcare professionals, voluntary organisations and consumers responded to sunbed consumption - demonstrates these shifts in the publics' responsibilities towards both individual and communal health. During the 1980s, health risk concerns were more individual and private (see Part One). Yet, by the 1990s, the mediatisation of public health shifted these 'self-induced' health issues into mass-media discussions, inviting public commentary.⁵⁵ Moreover, the media gave various publics the platform to 'speak back' to industry and public health (see Part Two).⁵⁶

The history of sunbeds also reflects the changes in perceptions of expert authority in public health matters. Although the media consistently reigned supreme in communicating 'health' messages, the sunbed industry demonstrated how often the providers and 'entrepreneurs' of new technologies were first presented as the 'experts' on the matter, especially in the absence of other stakeholders (see Chapters One and Two). Yet the increasing experience of first consumers, and then medical experts (first dermatologists and later psychologists), led to both government and public health intervention in the sunbed marketplace by the mid-1990s (see Chapter Six).

⁵⁴ For a history of 'public health' and the different definitions and meanings of 'public[ness]', see Mold, Clark, Millward, Payling, *Placing the Public in Public Health in Post-War Britain*, pp.2-3.

⁵⁵ Alan Petersen, 'Risk, Governance and the New Public Health' in Alan Petersen, Bryan Turner (eds), *Foucault, Health and Medicine* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), pp.189–206.

⁵⁶ Mold, Clark, Millward, Payling, *Placing the Public in Public Health in Post-War Britain*, p.4; Katrina-Louise Moseley's research on weightwatchers provides another historical example of 1990s media amplified consumer cynicism against commercial industries, Katrina-Louise Moseley, 'Slimming One's Way to a Better Self? Weight Loss Clubs and Women in Britain, 1967–1990', *Twentieth Century British History*, (2019), p.9.

My thesis on sunbeds thus builds on the work of Virginia Berridge, Kelly Loughlin, Alex Mold, Elizabeth Toon, and Steven Epstein. My research will extend these histories, as I not only explore 'policy documents and initiatives emanating from central government' but I also evaluate media sources and company records to contextualise what happened, why it happened, and 'what interest, issues' and activities were important.⁵⁷ Moreover, both the sunbed industry's and medical expert's use of mass media will also uncover how the framing of bodies, visuals, objects and environments can powerfully influence consumer behaviour – sometimes in unintended ways.

This history of sunbeds also shows that the medium used to transmit health messages for the public, from the 1970s to 1990s, changed over time, along with their rhetoric and visual agendas. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the British public saw positive sunbed-related information and adverts in first newspapers, and then magazines and later on television. From the mid-1980s, anti-sunbed reports gradually appeared. These reports spread, again, through newspapers, magazines and then television by the mid-1990s. These changes in both the platform and the tone demonstrate how health communication networks and 'expert' feedback loops function. Moreover, this method of health communication illustrates how the media became progressively responsible for broadcasting public health messages, managing the influential stakeholders. In turn, the press frequently negotiated the voices of the 'expert[s]', allowing the rise of the consumer's voice. This takes us to the next section, which demonstrates how my thesis has applied a novel approach, with new consideration of overlapping sources, to develop public health histories.

⁵⁷ To see how historians have previously researched post-war public health, see Berridge, Loughlin, *Medicine, the market and mass media*, pp.1-2.

Methodology

Berridge and Loughlin remark that from the 1970s, the ‘visual politics played out in the media became central to many activist causes’.⁵⁸ As the sunbed industry emerged in the late 1970s, unsurprisingly, the history of tanning and sunbed culture was strongly intertwined with a history of changing visual cultures and mediums. Both histories were influenced by the developing technologies used to capture representations of tans (ranging from a tan being shown to reflect a ‘healthy’, youth-invigorating, ‘sexy’ and wealth-radiating stereotype in mainly part one of my thesis, to an unhealthy, disconcerting, cheap, narcissistic, self-destructive and addicted stereotype in part two), and the different contextual purposes for showcasing a tan. For this reason, both visual culture and textual analyses will be central to my thesis. In this methodology section, I examine the decision-making behind this visual approach and offer an overview of the types of sources used to unravel the different narratives of sunbed use. These sources include a wide-range of mass media sources, trade directories and catalogues, cross-referenced with medical and grey literature, and finally a flavour of elusive sunbed company records.

Scholars have previously approached the four main source sets that I focus on in different ways. Similar to Ayesha Nathoo, the ‘media’ material primarily consisted of newspaper, magazines, and television sources.⁵⁹ I will assess these media sources together, followed by the more novel use of trade directories. I will then address the use of British medical journals by medical historians, followed by television sources. The transition from print press to medical and then television sources reflects *one direction* in which sunbed ‘experts’ informed each other: the media originally informed the public about sunbeds because of the absence of medical research. Yet later, healthcare professionals informed media outlets incrementally, wanting to advise both the public and sunbed consumers, who, in turn, often responded to these ‘experts’

⁵⁸ Ibid., p.12.

⁵⁹ Nathoo, *Hearts exposed*, p.xii.

through the media. Chapters One to Six demonstrate these media, medical and consumer feedback loops. I use an interdisciplinary approach to expose the different and changing yet overlapping layers of how interlinking or competing health and beauty industries, their consumers, healthcare professionals, government, NGOs, and the public both perceived and responded to sunbeds. My thesis provides public health, media, industry, consumer, and visual and material culture scholars with a framework to unpick intersecting and often contradictory narratives.

The Archive Journey That Led to A History of Sunbeds

Representation

I chose to focus on media and medical source sets to shed light on the history of sunbed 'representation' because of the scarcity of sunbed industry archives. Even within the digital and national archives that are traditionally fruitful in offering industry histories (such as the British Library or National Archives), various 'sunbed'-related search terms revealed few results.⁶⁰

To overcome this, I explored other public and private archives that could be linked to the sunbed industry. These included business registries, archives and council repositories, as these venues often stored information linked to

⁶⁰ Each digital, private and public archive contained scattered 'sunbed' textual, visual or audio-visual material, but I had to use several different 'sunbed'-related search terms. The successful terms that drew 'sunbed' material included 'sunbed*'; 'sun-bed*'; 'sun bed*'; 'solarium'; 'solaria'; 'sun tan'; 'suntan'; 'sun-tan' (and the same for 'suntanning' and 'suntanned') 'tan'; 'tanned'; 'tanning'; 'brown'; 'bronze'; 'bronzed'; 'sunkiss' 'sunkissed'; 'sunglow*' (and the variations); golden (and the variations); 'orange'; 'artificial'; 'ultraviolet'; 'ultra-violet'; 'ultra violet' 'UV' 'UV(-)A' 'UV(-)B'; 'parlour*'; 'Tanorexia'; 'Tanorexic'; 'skin cancer'; 'melanoma'. When archives of commerce, businesses and industry were particularly sparse, I also searched a dozen of the most prominent sunbed businesses which featured greatly within the print press.

manufacturing, commercial or technological ('health') industries, ranging from a local to national level. Despite regularly checking these sites for over two years (2016 to 2018), source material findings were either empty (such as the Business Archives Council, Thackray Medical Museum, Science Museum Group, Archives+ and Mass Observation Archive) or irrelevant and scarce (both Manchester and Liverpool City Council, Hulton Archive, Unilever archives, Wellcome Trust). Even businesses that sold sunbeds explained that they held no sunbed sales records, or that their records were not accessible for historians (Gary Lipman, *Ergoline* international sunbed business, *Debenhams* and *House of Fraser* archive).⁶¹ Since the 'sunbed' industry emerged in 1978, most sunbed manufacturers and providers were private companies (often small start-up businesses), who were unlikely to archive their business histories. Consequently, the sources, both ephemeral and institutional records, were likely destroyed.

Most start-up companies from the late 1970s to early 1990s had short lifespans, roughly two-to-three years (see Chapter Three). To survive, these businesses tended to either sell their company to more successful competitors;⁶² merge with another business;⁶³ increase their product range or switch to selling entirely new products;⁶⁴ rebrand by changing their name and

⁶¹ 'Inaccessibility' is a common issue within private commercial archives yet there are exceptions. For information on more 'accessible' private commercial archives, see Anna Greenwood, Hilary Ingram, 'Sources and Resources 'the People's Chemists': The Walgreens Boots Alliance Archive', *Social History of Medicine*, (2018), p.2.

⁶² J. Slaven, 'SALEWAY LIMITED (t/a Wakewood Sunbeds)', *London Gazette*, 10 October 1985, p.14076.

⁶³ Uvabronz, a leading manufacturer for sunbeds in the UK, merged with Hawkin's, a leading company in the professional fitness market, Anon., 'Hawtin PLC Acquisition Agreement.', *Regulatory News Service*, 12 August 1991.

⁶⁴ Anon., 'Amber Leisure - Display Ad 246 -- No Title', *Observer*, 8 November 1987, p.61.

trailing a new advertising campaign in a new medium,⁶⁵ or they were crushed by competition and became bankrupt and disappeared.⁶⁶ Often, an individual start-up company would experience more than one of these transitioning periods. The government's Beta Company House digital archive illustrates that many sunbed businesses emerged in the 1980s; however, only the title and the address typically remains of these earlier businesses. Only new sunbed businesses show more information. These large franchises have been well-known for at least the last two decades and their histories are easier to find online.⁶⁷ The history of the sunbed industry has remained uninvestigated because of these absent, elusive or inaccessible sources.

Nonetheless, business and economic historian Kenneth Lipartito remarked:

'if one were interested in the firm's public life, then internal records would be far less useful than public statements, adverts, images, and representations of the

⁶⁵ Anon., 'Langham Advertising is to launch a £250,000 popular daily and Sunday press campaign for new client Uvabronze'.

⁶⁶ In 'Legal Notices' under the 'Bankruptcy Acts 1914 and 1926 In the Liverpool County Court In Bankruptcy No. 105 of 1980. Re: Graham Birchall', Graham's businesses as a 'Solarium Operator' had been declared bankrupt. These included sunbed services or 'solarium equipment' sold via his shops "Touch of Class", "Graham Birchall Organisation" and "Bronuva", Anon., 'Legal Notices', *Liverpool Echo*, 17 May 1984, p.38.

⁶⁷ Another potential solution is the government's company records, accessible online; however, masses of information is missing, and other than the company name, director, and former company address, there is not enough information to create an in-depth history of the sunbed industry, Companies House, 'The Sunbed Association'. Accessed January 2018:

<https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/03082491/filing-history>

business as they appeared in mass media and other public venues.⁶⁸

This supports my focus on mostly media sources to historicise representations of the sunbed industry and their consumers. The print press and the *Advertising Archives* (alongside unconventional websites such as *Ebay*) were instrumental for locating sunbed adverts.⁶⁹ Yet these archives present other limitations. In national newspapers, sunbed adverts (including public services, home hires and full purchase for household use) were scattered in both chronology and quantity. For instance, a newspaper might run a salon's advert every week for an entire year, but then after, both the business and advert could ephemerally disappear. For mapping the changing trends within an industry, the short-lived exposure of a textually and visually limited advert might reveal little for historians.

Contacting a recognised sunbed provider was sometimes extremely fruitful. This approach led to a rich array of promotional material; yet, again two issues often occurred. Again, the sunbed providers were chronologically inconsistent with keeping their promotional material. In a span of two decades, there could be isolated years in which four sunbed pamphlets were kept, followed by a five-year absence. As a result, it was difficult to trace the changing transitions in how a company framed their sunbeds; developed their technologies and product range; diversified their target consumers; adjusted their key selling points, and finally, how the general platforms and formats of sunbed promotional material changed over time. Secondly, the sunbed providers that remain contactable were leading and large-scale international

⁶⁸ Kenneth Lipartito, 'Chapter 12: Historical Sources and Data' in Marcelo Bucheli, R. Daniel Wadhvani (eds), *Organizations in Time: History, Theory, Methods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p.289.

⁶⁹ A chronological search through the *Daily Mail*, *Mirror*, *Times*, *Guardian*, *Observer*, *Financial Times* has improved my knowledge of all the available 'sunbed' terms used in the British context. The relevant textual and visual 'sunbed' articles provided the relevant names of sunbed manufacturers, sunbed media reporters, public health groups and medical expert officials.

companies that could afford business archivists in the 1980s (such as Philips). Consequently, although their adverts were superior in quality and preservation, their sunbed distribution information cannot be found beyond the factory. The material from these better-preserved companies cannot provide an in-depth regional element, or a full understanding of how these companies influenced the public's sunbed consumption.

Nonetheless, these limited successes in locating company records led to a broader range of exceptional textual, visual and audio-visual material, exposing the 'representational' of the sunbed industry, sunbed consumers and public responses from the 1970s to 1990s. The mass media, as Lipartito asserted, offered 'an excellent primary source for exploring the history of media and communication'. Yet Lipartito argues that although the media provides a reflective narrative on political and societal events, 'it is one step removed from the actors and events'.⁷⁰ Therefore, my mass media sunbed 'representations' (from newspapers, magazines and cartoons, trade directories, television and film archives) will be cross-referenced against the available actors' texts, principally including medical journals and government reports.

Medical Historians Use of 'Visual Culture' and its Developments Over Time

'Visual culture' is a relatively new approach for historians of medicine but is now a well-established field of study and 'global field of critical practice'.⁷¹ Originating in art history, this contemporary approach continues to be deployed and developed across many different disciplines on a substantial range of topics.⁷² In the late 1960s and early 1970s, art critics analysed images, mainly

⁷⁰ Bucheli, Wadhvani, *Organizations in Time*, p.289.

⁷¹ Nicholas Mirzoeff (ed), *The Visual Culture Reader* (3rd edn.) (Routledge, 2013), p.xiv.

⁷² Margaret Dikovitskaya, *From Art History to Visual Culture: The Study of the Visual after the Cultural Turn*, (MIT Press, 2009).

photography. For most of the 1980s, however, critical approaches on visual cultures were thought to be a 'dreary' academic subject for historians.⁷³ Yet by the end of the 1980s and during the early 1990s, the discipline 'rose to prominence' in humanities studies,⁷⁴ generating many different *Introduction(s)* to 'visual culture' from the late 1990s onwards. These introductory texts established the popularity of this discipline, and the 'visual culture' approach has continued to be re-defined, developed, and broadened. The "visual turn" in the history of medicine is an example of how this critical approach permeated different disciplines. My research on sunbed consumption aims to extend the approach in the history of medicine. Therefore, after a brief review of the literature on 'visual culture', I will explore how this approach emerged in the history of medicine, highlighting ideas and techniques that will be used and developed in my study. These are instruments for a central 'representational' history of sunbed consumption.

Visual culture scholars, such as Nicolas Mirzoeff, argue that the development and increasing use of technology in our everyday lives drove critical interest in visual mediums. The visual materiality in the digital world led to a proliferation of mass media. Quick to produce and easy to access, images continue to gain more importance than texts in western culture.⁷⁵ Academics such as Gillian Rose argue that western culture used to depend more on textual representations, whereas now visuals gain more attention, authorising immediate urgency and power.⁷⁶

⁷³ Jordonova continued that the 'written word has been given higher authority and status compared to the visual', which perhaps, combined with issues involving locating, analysing and contextualising visuals in the 1980s, was perhaps a reason why visual culture approaches were thought to be 'dreary', Ludmilla Jordonova, 'Masterclass in Visual Culture', Humanities Research Centre, University of York, (February 2017).

⁷⁴ Mirzoeff, *The Visual Culture Reader*, p.xxxii.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.xxxvi.

⁷⁶ Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials* (2nd edn.) (SAGE publications Ltd., 2007), p.3.

So, how did 'visual culture' analysis emerge as a widespread discipline and approach to writing history? Half a century ago, an academic interest in visual culture discourse notably emerged. Academics from humanities attribute this interest as a response to John Berger, an art critic, and his two renowned books, *A Fortunate Man: The Story of a Country Doctor* (1967) and *Ways of Seeing* (1972).⁷⁷ *Ways of Seeing* is best remembered for its focus on the different cultural representations of men and women. Berger argued that as both men and women examine other women, women based their actions on how they wish to be both viewed and represented.⁷⁸ In the 1980s, feminists critiqued this theory, both introducing and anchoring a critical analysis of visuals into academic discourse.⁷⁹

Decades after Berger's publications, academics continued to cite his beliefs in their texts. These included Stuart Hall, a cultural theorist, political activist and sociologist.⁸⁰ In his book, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (1997), Hall challenged the meaning, the

⁷⁷ John Berger, Jean Mohr, *A Fortunate Man: The Story of a Country Doctor* (Vintage International 1st edn.) (New York: Random House, 1997); John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (Penguin Classics, 2008), p.8; Daniel M. Fox, Christopher Lawrence, *Photographing Medicine: Images and Power in Britain and America since 1840* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), p.263; Victoria Bates, Alan Bleakley, Sam Goodman (eds), *Medicine, Health and the Arts: Approaches to Medical Humanities* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp.41-63.

⁷⁸ Berger, Mohr, *A Fortunate Man*, pp.46-64.

⁷⁹ Mirzoeff, *The Visual Culture Reader*, p.xxx; In the 1980s, the other renowned texts that provided a critical analysis of photography were: Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (2nd edn.) (Hill & Wang, 1981); John Berger and Jean Mohr, *Another Way of Telling* (London, Writers and Readers, 1982); The first original edition was published in 1973, Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York, RosettaBooks LLC, 2005).

⁸⁰ Mirzoeff, *The Visual Culture Reader*, p.xxx; Stuart Hall, (ed), *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (2nd edn.) (SAGE Publications, 1997), p.82.

representation, and the language used to interpret culture and visual depictions. He defines culture as a complex 'process'. Hall argued that the interpretation of a (visually represented) culture (or in my case an industry, a technology or its consumer) changes over time. The interpretation is dependent on the historical context, the community, and the subculture of the individual who is analysing. Consequently, a culture and its visual depiction (by an individual or community) is never 'fixed'.⁸¹ Hall mainly focused on the representations of gender, both developing Berger's literature and continuing the gender studies trend of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Hall also discussed class and race in greater detail, and mentions sexuality. The main notion that I wish to emphasise and include in my own work is Hall's comment that there is no single or 'correct' method to critique an image – whether this is the interpretation of an advert, a news article, or a talk show. Hall extended this idea, claiming that

'we do not have a straightforward, rational or instrumental relationship to meanings. They mobilise powerful feelings and emotions, of both a positive and negative kind... They sometimes call our very identities into question'.⁸²

Hall's acknowledgement of our subjectivities in relation to visuals did not discourage academics, and his book became a key text in the watershed of 'visual culture' discourse.⁸³

The Boom Period of 'Visual Culture'

During the late 1990s and 2000s, the term 'visual culture' gained major prominence, and came to the forefront of analytical investigation within the humanities and arts.⁸⁴ The approach continues to be popular amongst

⁸¹ Hall, *Representation*, p.9.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p.10.

⁸³ Evans, Hall, *Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*.

⁸⁴ Walker, Chaplin, *Visual Culture*; Mirzoeff, *An Introduction to Visual Culture* (1st edn.); Sturken, Cartwright, *Practices of Looking* (1st edn.); Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies*:

academics, and most visual culture *Introduction(s)* have been extensively reprinted and adapted into second, third and even fourth editions within less than two decades.⁸⁵ A brief review suggests that these large volumes tend to have one of two different approaches. One example of the well-known texts will explain these two approaches.

'Visual culture' guides, like Gillian Rose's *Visual Methodologies, An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*, are less common. Rose is one of the few scholars to explicitly define the term 'visual culture'. She notes that it 'refers to the plethora of ways in which the visual is part of the social life'.⁸⁶ Like Stuart Hall's *Representation*, Rose offers suggestions of how to interrogate visuals from a wide-range of mediums, including photography, television and objects.⁸⁷ She acknowledges that there is no 'sound methodology' to analyse visuals. Instead, she argues that a 'successful interpretation' requires the acknowledgement of our emotional connections, whether this includes 'pleasure, thrills, fascination, wonder, fear or revulsion of the person looking at the images and writing about them'.⁸⁸ Only then can

An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials (1st edn.) (SAGE publications Ltd., 2001); Richard Howells, *Visual Culture: An Introduction* (Polity Press, 2003); Peter Osborne, Deborah Cherry, *et al.* (eds), *Art: History: Visual: Culture* (John Wiley & Sons, 2005); Matthew Rampley, *Exploring Visual Culture: Definitions, Concepts, Contexts* (Edinburgh University Press, 2005); Margaret Dikovitskaya, *Visual Culture: The Study of the Visual after the Cultural Turn* (MIT Press, 2006); Anon., 'Theory, History, Critique', *Journal of Visual Culture*. Accessed 3 March 2017:

<http://www.journalofvisualculture.org/>

⁸⁵ Marita Sturken, Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (2nd edn.) (Oxford University Press, 2009); Nicholas Mirzoeff, *The Visual Culture Reader* (3rd edn.) (Routledge, 2013); Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies* (4th edn.) (SAGE publications Ltd., 2016).

⁸⁶ Rose, *Visual Methodologies* (2nd edn.), p.4.

⁸⁷ Hall, *Representation*, p.54, p.343; *ibid.*, p.7, p.xiii.

⁸⁸ Rose provides advice and further readings to explore advertising, film and medical images, Rose, *Visual Methodologies* (2nd edn.), p.xv, pp.263-265.

scholars unravel the economic, political and socio-cultural contexts in which visual and material cultures were created, and then re-interpreted.

Most 'visual culture' *Introduction(s)* explain how the field has grown, instead of teaching how scholars can apply different methodological approaches. In each chapter from Nicolas Mirzoeff's edited volume, *The Visual Culture Reader*, the reader is presented with a taster of the new 'visual' topics that have emerged across a wide-range of disciplines. Mirzoeff is not ignorant of the traditional themes of race, gender, sexuality, class and disability, yet focuses on proposing and exemplifying a diverse and creative range of 'visual culture' approaches.⁸⁹ Just as Hall defines the 'representation of culture', Mirzoeff asserts that 'visual culture' is not attached to a specific medium or object.⁹⁰

A key text for this dissertation was W. J. T Mitchell's chapter, titled 'There are no visual media'. Mitchell, an editor of the *Critical Inquiry*, argues that since the 1994 'pictorial turn', academics need to acknowledge that 'all media is mixed' as the term 'visual media' – and perhaps 'visual culture' - is 'highly ... misleading'.⁹¹ Sounds often accompany image(s), and objects imply both touch and sight. Consequently, Mitchell argues that we should use the term 'mixed media' in our discussions. Moreover, he asserts that we should be aware of

⁸⁹ Mirzoeff, *An Introduction to Visual Culture* (1st edn.); Mirzoeff, *The Visual Culture Reader* (3rd edn.), p.i.

⁹⁰ Mirzoeff, *The Visual Culture Reader* (3rd edn.), p.xxx.

⁹¹ In Mitchell's publication, *Picture theory*, he defines the 'pictorial' turn and argues that it took place in 1994. He argues that society shifted away from the 'linguistic turn' into the 'pictorial turn' within the human sciences. Mitchell remarks that academics after 1994 expanded their analysis from mainly textual representations of the arts, the media, and cultural forms, by more commonly including visual analysis, Mirzoeff, *The Visual Culture Reader* (3rd edn.), p.7, p.9; W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp.11-13; Alberto Martinengo, 'From the Linguistic Turn to the Pictorial Turn — Hermeneutics Facing the 'Third Copernican Revolution'', *Proceedings of the European Society for Aesthetics*, 5, (2013), pp.302-312.

how we acknowledge 'subvocalizing associations, judgements and observations' of others nearby when writing or speaking about 'mixed media'. He argues that the context of our location, and our nearby or future audiences often influence how we interpret the medium.⁹² Additionally, he states that we overemphasise the materials and technologies of the medium and often overlook the 'skills, habits, social spaces, institutions and markets' that have an influence.⁹³ Despite these complications on our readings, Mitchell strongly recommends that other writers apply the 'difficult' discipline. He 'insists on problematizing, theorizing, critiquing and historicising the visual processes as such'.⁹⁴

How did 'Visual Culture' Emerge in the History of Medicine?

Both Ludmilla Jordanova and Lisa Cartwright, Professors of Visual Culture and Arts, are notable authors in the study of visual culture. Jordanova came from a natural sciences, philosophy and art history background. She is best known for her analyses of eighteenth and nineteenth century portraits of reputable physicians. Similarly, Cartwright wrote on the relationship of art and medical history and critical theory, but also explores the visual culture of the body in science and technology, applying a feminist stance. Both Jordanova and Cartwright (with co-author Marita Sturken) wrote foundational texts establishing 'visual culture' as a key approach in the history of medicine.⁹⁵

⁹² Mirzoeff, *The Visual Culture Reader* (3rd edn.), p.8.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.9.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.12

⁹⁵ Ludmilla Jordanova, *The look of the past: visual and material evidence in historical practice* (Cambridge University Press, 2012); Ludmilla Jordanova, 'Chapter 3: Approaching Visual Material' in Simon Gunn, Lucy Faire (eds), *Research Methods for History* (Edinburgh University Press, 2012), pp.30-47; Ludmilla Jordanova, *Defining features: scientific and medical portraits, 1660-2000* (London: Reaktion, 2000); Sturken and Cartwright, *Practices of Looking* (1st edn.); Ludmilla Jordanova, *Nature Displayed: Gender, Science and Medicine 1760-1820* (London, Longman, 1999); Ludmilla

In trend with the academic focus on gender in the 1980s, Jordanova wrote *Sexual visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine between the Eighteenth and Twentieth centuries* (1989).⁹⁶ Jordanova explores how texts, accompanied by images from science and art functioned as 'mediators' of controversial gender issues.⁹⁷ Exploring the dichotomy of men and women's beliefs, Jordanova demonstrates how gender influenced research directions, yet these 'mediations' were in constant flux.⁹⁸ She argues that 'no domain can be devoid of symbolic forms' and what is presumed to be 'natural' is constructed. The 'natural'-ness of a sunbed tan reflects these changes in representations. In chapters one and two, which focus on the early 1980s, middle-to-upper class men and women radiated 'natural', 'healthy', 'sexy' and 'wealthy' 'sunbed tan[s]'. Yet by the mid-1990s, in chapters five and six, the 'orange' and 'tacky' 'tandoori sunbed tan', instead reflected class-based stigma and racist slurs, which the media mainly directed towards women and

Jordanova, 'Review Article: Medicine and Visual Culture', *Society for the Social History of Medicine*, (1990), pp.89-99; Ludmilla Jordanova, *Sexual visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); Lisa Cartwright, *Screening the Body: Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture* (University of Minnesota Press, 1995); Paula Treichler, Lisa Cartwright, Constance Penley (eds), *The Visible Woman: Imaging Technologies, Gender, and Science* (NYU Press, 1998).

⁹⁶ Jordanova, *Sexual visions*.

⁹⁷ For more work on the history of the body and visualising gender in relation to anatomy, see Thomas Lacqueur, *Making Sex: body and gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Harvard University Press, 1990); Londa Schiebinger, *The mind has no sex? : women in the origins of modern science* (Harvard University Press, 1989); Catherine Gallagher, Thomas Lacqueur, *The making of the modern body: sexuality and society in the nineteenth century* (University of California Press, 1987).

⁹⁸ These gender issues include the mediation of sex roles, gender identities, differences and social stability, and how they often created hierarchies, Jordanova, *Sexual visions*, p.2.

‘metrosexual’ or ‘gay’ men.⁹⁹

Since this publication, Jordanova like Rose, has critiqued and developed visual methodologies in many articles, chapters and books, offering historians new tools in the history of medicine.¹⁰⁰ These include incorporating the ‘behind the scenes’ questions of ‘who, when, what, why, how’, and also statistics, related to distribution or estimated levels of reception.¹⁰¹ More uniquely, she stresses the occupational hierarchies between the producers of the images, and how this influences the representation (and often location and quantity) of the final ‘mixed media’ product.¹⁰² I have adopted this insight to my analysis on the *Yellow Pages*. On first impression, the sunbed provider may appear to have the greatest influence on the categorical placing of their sunbed services, yet the *Yellow Pages* advertisers, who created and sold eportfolios to local businesses, typically created the ‘health’ framing of sunbed adverts (Chapter Two and Four).

Although historians may still prefer written sources, after the ‘pictorial turn’ and since the twenty-first century, the evaluation of ‘mixed media’ within the history of medicine is now extensive – ranging from fleeting references and brief analyses of individual images, to articles and books dedicated to a ‘visual culture’ and offering deeper analysis of a particular topic. In this thesis, I will evaluate the mediums that more traditional scholars have perceived as ephemeral and unimportant, such as the fictional representations of sunbeds on television programmes. Yet, I will demonstrate that these objects do have a history as they inform us about political, economic and socio-cultural changes.

⁹⁹ Eleanor Bailey, ‘Burning ambitious: Why the sun is going down on tanning’, *Guardian*, 27 January 1995, p.9; Yvonne Roberts, ‘Living unhappily ever after as a good and loyal little wife’, *Observer*, 28 May 1995, p.21; Jim White, ‘Partners in the crime cabaret: Diamond geezers or just murderous...’, *Guardian*, 23 June 1997, p.8.

¹⁰⁰ See footnote 87 of this chapter.

¹⁰¹ Jordanova, ‘Chapter 3: Approaching Visual Material’, in Gunn, Faire, *Research Methods for History*, p.30, p.36.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p.37.

This will undermine the false claim that textuality is somehow 'more real'. Health historians have explored visual cultures in health commerce and 'healthy bodies', explorations which I will extend in chapters one and two.¹⁰³ In Chapter Three, the framing of working-class sunbed consumers eventually led to moral panic, which extends the visual culture of class-based respectability or stigma concerning who, where, and how particular demographic groups were consuming.¹⁰⁴ Finally, chapters four, five and six will build on historians' work on how visual depictions of technologies and consumptions changed over time from 'healthy' and 'rational' to 'excessive' and 'addictive', leading to stigma and moral sanctions.¹⁰⁵ Most of these publications demonstrate how health messages used the same modes of cultural advertising, showing the strong

¹⁰³ Hand, 'Marketing health education'; Rima Apple, *Vitmania: vitamins in American culture* (Rutgers University Press, 1996).

¹⁰⁴ Jarrett Rudy, *Freedom to Smoke: Tobacco Consumption and Identity* (Montreal, MQUP, 2005); David W. Gutzke, *Women Drinking out in Britain since the Early Twentieth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014); Sandra Trudgen Dawson, 'Busy and Bored: The Politics of Work and Leisure for Women Workers in Second World War British Government Hostels', *Twentieth Century British History*, 21 (2010), p.31, p.34.

¹⁰⁵ Virginia Berridge, *Demons: Our changing attitudes to alcohol, tobacco, & drugs* (Oxford University Press, 2013); Allan M. Brandt, *The cigarette century: the rise, fall, and deadly persistence of the product that defined America* (New York, Basic Books, 2007); David T. Courtwright, *Forces of habit. Drugs and the making of the modern world* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Skelly, *Addiction and British Visual Culture*; Skelly, *The Uses of Excess in Visual and Material Culture*; David Serlin, Liping Bu, Lisa Cartwright, *Imagining Illness: Public Health and Visual Culture* (University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Jessica M. Parr, 'Obesity and the Emergence of Mutual Aid Groups for Weight Loss in the Post-War United States', *Social History of Medicine*, 27, (2014); Vicky Long, Hilary Marland, 'From Danger and Motherhood to Health and Beauty: Health Advice for the Factory Girl in Early Twentieth-Century Britain', *Twentieth Century British History*, 20, (2009); Dolly Smith Wilson, 'Postgraduate Essay Prize Winner for 2005. A New Look at the Affluent Worker: The Good Working Mother in Post-War Britain', *Twentieth Century British History*, 17, (2006).

interlinking of public health, the media, and the rise of experts and consumers after World War Two. I will now explore the developing strands of literature that link directly to my thesis on sunbed representation, particularly in relation to my sources.

A Note on Sources

Print Press (Newspapers, Magazines and Cartoons)

Adrian Bingham, a historian of twentieth-century British newspapers, has observed that historians now use the popular press as a dominant source. Before online digitisation of the print periodical press, popular journalism was perceived as a “predictable, trivial, unsophisticated, and politically and socially conservative’ medium – it was deemed unworthy of ‘sustained scholarly attention’”. The digitalisation of the print press has changed these attitudes. Bingham demonstrates that national newspapers reflect political and social-cultural narratives, and created discussions that influenced change.¹⁰⁶ Health historians, such as Claire Jones also argues that retail and medical historians should evaluate newspapers and their adverts to better understand historical household beliefs and consumptions.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Adrian Bingham, ‘The Digitization of Newspaper Archives: Opportunities and Challenges for Historians’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 21, (2010), p.228; Adrian Bingham, ‘Ignoring the first draft of history? Searching for the popular press in studies of twentieth-century Britain’, *Media History* 18, 3-4, (2012), pp.311-326; Bingham, Conboy, *Tabloid century*.

¹⁰⁷ Claire Jones also argues in her essay on the rubber contraceptives industry that manufacturers distributed adverts on an ‘unprecedented scale and in new forms within newspapers’. This commercial material - ‘produced in their thousands’ - is often ‘neglected’ in the history of health; however, it reveals the ‘the significance of ... small but growing industry(s)’, such as the sunbed industry, Claire Jones, ‘Under the Covers: Commerce, Contraceptives and Consumers in England and Wales, 1880-1960’, *Social History of Medicine*, 29, 4, (2016), p.7, pp.22-3; James Stark, “Recharge My

Pamela Swett, a historian of twentieth-century Germany and advertising remarked that the methodological limitations of adverts, such as the 'reception problem' has also discouraged their use as historical sources.¹⁰⁸ For instance, in terms of print press sunbed adverts, it is difficult to assess how many viewers saw these adverts; who these viewers were; whether they responded by purchasing these sunbeds, and if so, whether the household use of sunbeds was restricted to the purchaser? Nonetheless, an awareness of these national newspapers' readerships, cross-referenced with other sources, can overcome this ambiguity. For instance, during the 1980s, the *Financial Times* was mostly read by wealthy middle-aged men, and their female readership were typically 'traditional' housewives.¹⁰⁹ The *Daily Mail*, the largest circulated tabloid other than the *Sun*, targeted middle classes as well as working-class groups, and was aimed at both men and women from the offset. More importantly, the *Daily Mail* was one of the first newspapers to provide features specifically for women – and had strongly reflected 'women's consumer aspirations for ... goods and lifestyles' since the early twentieth century.¹¹⁰ From the early 1970s onwards, the *Daily Mail's* 'Femail' section, which regularly featured sunbed-related

Exhausted Batteries': Overbeck's Rejuvenator, Patenting, and Public Medical Consumers, 1924–37', *Medical History*, 58, 4, (2014), pp.498-518.

¹⁰⁸ One individual may purchase a newspaper, yet several people will read this one article as newspapers are often left in households, on buses and waiting room of dentists, doctors, hairdressers, coffee shops, to list a few. Moreover, the awareness and information of adverts from newspaper articles can be shared through verbal communication, Pamela E. Swett, *Selling Under the Swastika: Advertising and Commercial Culture in Nazi Germany* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), p.7.

¹⁰⁹ Colin Sparks, 'The readership of the British quality press', *Media, Culture & Society*, 9, 4, (1987), p.430, pp.432-3.

¹¹⁰ Deborah S. Ryan, "All the World and Her Husband': The *Daily Mail* Ideal home Exhibition 1908-39', in Maggie Andrews, Mary M. Talbot (eds), *All the World and Her Husband, Women In Twentieth-Century Consumer Culture* (London: Cassell, 2000), p.12.

advertises and articles during the 1980s, wanted to reflect 'women's agency' and 'earning power', while reflecting and feeding the growing middle-class preoccupation with health, diets, fitness, fashion and furnishing.¹¹¹ The more expensive and highly regarded *Guardian* (and *Observer*), however, was mostly read by men.¹¹² The *Liverpool Echo* was also well-read by Liverpool locals during the mid-to-late 1970s.¹¹³

To address questions about the 'reception problem', this readership awareness can be extended to the magazines and cartoons explored in this thesis. More information is included in the body of the thesis when the magazines are evaluated, but briefly: *Which? Consumer* magazine targeted 'rational consumers', who were interested in 'impartial, independent and scientifically-grounded factual information';¹¹⁴ *Cosmopolitan* magazine was purchased by middle-class women who were interested in beauty technologies

¹¹¹ Bingham, Conboy, *Tabloid Century*, pp.160-2, p.195.

¹¹² Henry Taylor, 'How old are you again? UK newspaper age demographics in 4 charts', *The Media Briefing*, 14 August 2014. Accessed 5 May 2017:

<https://www.themediabriefing.com/article/youth-audiences-newspaper-old-demographics-advertising>; Sparks, 'The readership of the British quality press', p.432.

¹¹³ Steve Dyson, What A Difference 40 Years Make, *Inpublishing*, 3 June 2016. Accessed 5 December 2019:

<https://www.inpublishing.co.uk/articles/what-a-difference-40-years-make-717>; The *Liverpool Echo* was only used in Chapter One to provide an insight of the sunbed industry, set within a smaller yet significant local to regional level, Helen Smith, 'Working-Class Ideas and Experiences of Sexuality in Twentieth-Century Britain: Regionalism as a Category of Analysis', *Twentieth Century British History*, 29, (2018).

¹¹⁴ In 1957, Michael Young and the Consumers' Association launched *Which?* magazine. The magazine's aim was to offer 'impartial, independent and scientifically-grounded factual information in order to promote rational choice in consumption', Alan Aldridge, 'The Construction of Rational Consumption in Which? Magazine: The More Blobs the Better?', *Sociology*, 28, 4, (1994), pp.899–912; Anon., '60 years of questioning. Which?', *Which?*, 2017. Accessed: 22 October 2019:

<http://explore.which.co.uk/timeline>

and products;¹¹⁵ both *Marketing* and *Campaigns* were distributed to marketing professionals working in consumer, business and customer sectors,¹¹⁶ and finally, *Punch* was a long-established British weekly magazine of humour, often using cartoons to satirise political and social affairs.¹¹⁷ These contexts demonstrate that sunbed adverts, articles and cartoons, placed in newspapers and magazines, were no doubt ‘consumed’ by a diverse range of demographic groups – both genders, all socioeconomic backgrounds, and wide-ranging ages. Nonetheless, medical historians have not yet explored women’s, consumer and marketing magazines (such as *Which?*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Campaigns* and *Marketing*) as widely as newspapers.¹¹⁸ On the rare occasion that a health historian has, the magazines are fleetingly referenced, and most twentieth century British historians do not unpick both the combined textual and

¹¹⁵ Dawn Currie, *Girl talk: Adolescent magazines and their readers* (University of Toronto Press, 1999), p.31; Stella Earnshaw, ‘Advertising and the media: The case of women’s magazines,’ *Media, Culture & Society*, 6, 4, (1984).

¹¹⁶ John Reynolds, ‘Marketing Magazine closes and folds content into Campaign because ‘silos are untenable’, *Press Gazette*, 30 March 2016. Accessed 19 November 2019: <https://www.pressgazette.co.uk/marketing-magazine-closes-and-folds-content-campaign-because-silos-are-untenable/>

¹¹⁷ Anon., ‘Punch’, *New World Encyclopaedia*, 16 June 2019. Accessed 5 December 2019: [https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Punch_\(magazine\)](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Punch_(magazine))

¹¹⁸ Only a few national British magazine archives have been recently digitalised, and most are yet to become accessible online. Also, not many magazines in national or private archives are consistently collected. The digitalised Women’s Magazine Archive Collection 1 and Women’s Magazine Archive Collection 2 are mostly American based and were launched online for scholars in 2015 and 2016 respectively, Women’s Magazine Archive Collection 1 and Women’s Magazine Archive Collection 2. Accessed: 5 December 2019: <https://proquest.libguides.com/womensmagazinearchive>; For examples of how cartoons have been evaluated in the history of public health in Britain, see Roberta Bivins, ‘Picturing Race in the British National Health Service, 1948-1988’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 28, (2017); Katey Logan, ‘Professional identity on the high street: investigating identity work of company pharmacists, navigating commercial, professional and public service identities’, Unpublished Thesis, University of Warwick, (2020).

visual meanings.¹¹⁹ The print press is an exceptional source, yet medical historians are yet to exploit the visual culture of adverts, headline photos and cartoons from newspapers and magazines, as this thesis will do.

Trade Directories

Since the early 1990s, historians of medicine have used medical directories and catalogues as valuable sources.¹²⁰ These historians have presented a diverse

¹¹⁹ Ruth Davidson, 'Family Politics: Campaigning for Child Benefits in the 1980s', *Twentieth Century British History*, (2018), p.18.

¹²⁰ Historians of medicine have focused largely on an increasing variety of medical directories to challenge misconceptions or extend theories about the medical profession. Most scholars focus on French, American or British early modern or late nineteenth to early twentieth century medical directories. The earlier works on the history of directories began with quantitative approaches, which is a typical method to this day. This source base continues to expand, and the accessibility has improved because of digitisation, Irvine Loudon, '2,000 Medical Men in 1847', *Bulletin Society for the Social History of Medicine*, (1983), p.33; Marguerite W. Dupree, M. Anne Crowther, 'A Profile of the Medical Profession in the Early Twentieth Century: The Medical Directory as a Historical Source', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 65, (1991); George Weisz, 'Mapping Medical Specialization in Paris in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', *Social History of Medicine*, 7, (1994); George Weisz, 'Medical Directories and Medical Specialization in France, Britain, and the United States', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 71, (1997); George Weisz, *Divide And conquer: a Comparative History of Medical Specialization* (Oxford University Press, 2006), pp.87-104; Claire Jones, '(Re-)Reading Medical Trade Catalogs: The Uses of Professional Advertising in British Medical Practice, 1870–1914', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 86, 3, (2012), pp.361-393; Medical historians have published dozens of articles on Nicholas Culpeper's directories, Victoria Sparey, 'Identity-Formation and the Breastfeeding Mother in Renaissance Generative Discourses and Shakespeare's Coriolanus', *Social History of Medicine*, 25, (2012), p.783; Edith Snook, "'the Women Know': Children's Diseases, Recipes and Women's Knowledge in Early Modern Medical Publications', *Social History of Medicine*, 30, (2017), p.6; Sean Morey Smith, 'Digitizing Doctors:

range of approaches to historicise medical directories and catalogues as key sources. The differences between the texts include a wide-range of depths of inquiry; types of directories; quantitative approaches; geographic focuses; periods; themes, and purposes. More recently, medical historians have begun to evaluate trade catalogues, yet this interest in trade directories and catalogues is still novel.¹²¹ These historians have typically contextualised the changes over time in both the directories purposes, reputations and contents. Scholars have also acknowledged and provided solutions to overcome the limitations of directories, such as missing information or an overwhelming volume of data.¹²² I applied these approaches in my research by correlating the *Mersey Yellow Pages* trade directory with the *Liverpool Echo* newspaper and a North-West television report to illustrate how the sunbed industry grew and how consumers responded to sunbeds. Moreover, each *Yellow Pages* published thousands of pages during its popular years. To break down this data, I extended the quantitative approaches applied by previous medical historians by

Methodologies for Creating a Database from Historical Directories of Physicians', *Medical History*, 61, (2017).

¹²¹ In 2005, Richard Coopey, Sean O'Connell, Dilwyn Porter, historians of industry and British culture, co-authored the first detailed history on British mail-order catalogues, Richard Coopey, Sean O'Connell, S. Porter, Dilwyn, *Mail Order Retailing in Britain: A Business and Social History* (Oxford University Press, 2005). For an American history of mail-order catalogues, see Robin Cherry, *Catalog: The Illustrated History of Mail-Order Shopping* (New York, Princeton Architectural Press, 2008), pp.38-39; Jacqueline Jenkinson, 'More 'Marginal Men': A Prosopography of Scottish Shop-Keeping Doctors in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', *Social History of Medicine*, 29 (2016); Nancy Tomes, *Remaking the American Patient: How Madison Avenue and Modern Medicine Turned Patients into Consumers* (University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

¹²² Dupree, Crowther, 'A Profile of the Medical Profession in the Early Twentieth Century', pp.211-216.

focusing on two decades and only quantifying the five categorical sections in which sunbeds featured the most (see Chapters One to Four).¹²³

Jacqueline Jenkinson has argued that the late nineteenth to early twentieth century medical marketplace was more heterogeneous than historians have previously acknowledged.¹²⁴ My research extends this claim to the late twentieth century, by illustrating how private businesses advertised health beliefs and ‘educated’ the public, which was then followed by their provision of ‘health-enhancing’ products and cures, such as sunbeds. For instance, sunbeds were continuously inserted in the ‘health clubs & centres’ section in the *Yellow Pages*. Later, when trading standards and medical concerns emerged in the 1990s, many skin specialists from ‘skin clinics’ continued to market sunbed treatments for skin conditions, which they certified as healthy through their listed medical credentials. As Jenkins argued in her own research, this was motivated by the overriding economic motives of ‘medical experts’, rather than the neglect of customer safety and care.¹²⁵

In 2016, Claire Jones created a new strand to the literature on catalogues by both exploring and encouraging the use of general trade catalogues as sources of ‘health’ information, services and products. In her article on the industrial history of rubber contraceptives, Jones provided a business history of health-related ‘commodities’. She used unconventional commercial sources, such as trade directories, to show ‘a range of consumers and sites of consumption’.¹²⁶ She explored the locations of these goods within trade directories, emphasising that ‘trade catalogues produced in their thousands [have] been largely neglected by historians’. Jones uncovered

¹²³ Marjan Kljakovic, Melanie Nolan, ‘A Professional Myth: Personal Continuity of Care and New Zealand General Practice in the Twentieth Century’, *Social History of Medicine*, 18, (2005), p.275.

¹²⁴ Jenkinson, ‘More ‘Marginal Men’’, p.89.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.93.

¹²⁶ Jones, ‘Under the Covers?’, p.2.

answers related to the acceptability and popularity of these commodities, the identities of the purchasers and consumers, and how this changed depending on time and the geographical location. I will apply Jones' approaches to the *Mersey Yellow Pages* to answer similar questions of sunbed providers and their consumers.¹²⁷

This thesis will be the first in the history of medicine to explore the *Yellow Pages*, demonstrating how an originally small sunbed provider later proliferated in Liverpool. Launched from 1966 until 2019, the *Yellow Pages* was both a British telephone trade directory and catalogue, consisting of contact information and later visual adverts. The Berkshire Records Office archive in Reading provides the different directories of the *Yellow Pages* for separate regions in the UK.¹²⁸ The main benefit of this trade directory lies in its consistent inclusion of the same local businesses, which shows chronological changes. In its earliest and most basic form, listings consisted of a title, telephone number and address per business. Later, additional information accompanied the basic information. These often included a description of the different types of services available; more advertising visuals and methods of payment, and at the end of the 1990s, the medical qualifications of providers or trading standard logos. The *Yellow Pages* is a recent and unusual commercial source, perhaps explaining why it has remained unexplored by historians. For examples of how I have quantitatively, categorically and both textually and visually evaluated this trade directory, see chapters One, Two and Four. This chapter also builds on the

¹²⁷ Ibid. p.7, p.22, pp.1-2.

¹²⁸ In 2004, the *Yellow Pages* telephone trading directory industry deposited almost all their regional directories from the mid-to-late 1960s to 1989, with very few years missing. Since then, each year they deposit one additional year. As a result, when I visited the archive for this chapter in 2017, I could access the directories up to 2002. The last print copy of the *Yellow Pages* was published in September 2019 because of the more widely used internet advertising. Consequently, by 2034, all the depositories, which will span over half a century of *Yellow Pages* history, will be available for future historians.

history of popular and controversial industries and consumptions, and how adverts can 'educate' and reinforce ideas of health.

Medical Journals

Since the late 1980s, unsurprisingly, medical journals and periodicals have been extremely popular sources for medical historians. In 1989, Adrian Desmond provided one of the first thorough evaluations of medical journals in his book, *The Politics of Evolution*. Desmond first provided contextual information regarding nineteenth century journals, such as why and when these journals emerged, their class-based reputations, purposes, political standpoints and their target audiences. Desmond then explained his narrow focus on five leading London medical journals within a ten-year period, to study the periodical's policy, readership, and favoured science to narrow down his giant source base.¹²⁹ Historians of medicine now regularly apply Desmond's quantitative overviews and qualitative evaluations on medical journals.¹³⁰ I will extend this approach by exploring two late twentieth century British medical journals, which I will cross-reference with sunbed-related print press, television and government sources. Medical journals are exceptionally useful as they reflect the viewpoints of healthcare professionals, and both their awareness and attitudes towards commercial industries and public health concerns.

In my thesis, I provide first a quantitative overview, followed by an in-depth qualitative evaluation of the *British Medical Journal of Dermatology (BMJD)* and the *British Medical Journal (BMJ)*. Using the term 'sunbed*', I

¹²⁹ Adrian Desmond, *The politics of evolution: morphology, medicine, and reform in radical London* (University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp.13-16.

¹³⁰ Hundreds of historians of medicines have qualitatively evaluated at least one *BMJ* in their research articles. For an example based on 1980s and 1990s Britain, see Janet Weston, Virginia Berridge, 'AIDS Inside and Out: HIV/AIDS and Penal Policy in Ireland and England & Wales in the 1980s and 1990s', *Social History of Medicine*, 33, 1, (2020), pp.247–267.

explored a two-decade time frame from 1980 to 2000.¹³¹ I selected these two medical journals because they are two of the largest, most reputable, well-read and long-standing medical journals. Moreover, they reflected strong ties with sunbed-related matters, and the authors were heavily involved in print press, television, government, policy and industry reports. I chose the *BMJD* as the journal's specialisms link to sunbed-related health and skin care concerns, such as psoriasis, ageing, wrinkling, and skin cancer, whereas the *BMJ* provided an example of mainstream medical and health concerns.

Subsequent qualitative analysis uncovered the changing and in-depth medical experts' opinions and attitudes towards sunbeds; how commercial industries, the media and government officials influenced these beliefs, and finally, how medical experts then fed their sunbed-related research back into the media. Media reporters, who were often medical and science correspondents in the print press, then translated these scientific research and health messages back to the public. My research demonstrates that the opinions of medical groups and the media, which reflect political, medical, moral and socio-cultural bias, cannot be separated. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches unravel the layers of how historical actors, including both healthcare professions and medical experts, influenced the changing representation of the sunbed industry, sunbeds as a device, consumers, the act of consumption and the meaning of the sunbed tan.

Television Sources

As previously discussed, a 'visual culture' approach is relatively new for medical historians when compared to traditional text-based source exploration. The use of 'audio-visual' (AV) sources in this field began even later, from 2000

¹³¹ I excluded one-off sentences related to the patient's history, in which healthcare professionals were simply documenting if patient had used or not used sunbeds.

onwards.¹³² Typically, the use of AV materials has been uncommon in the British history of medicine.¹³³ Moreover, the few historians of medicine who have explored Britain have primarily focused on either health education material or medical programs.¹³⁴ Even in the rare event that discredited yet valuable

¹³² In the early 1990s, Tilli Tansey and Michael Shortland published texts that provided ways in which to locate AV material, yet their suggestions were quickly outdated, Michael Shortland, *Medicine and Film: A Checklist, Survey and Research Resource* (Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine, 1989); Tilli Tansey, 'Film Sources in Medical History', *Journal of Audio-visual Media in Medicine*, 16, (1993); In 2005, two historians, Rosa Medina-Domenech and Alfredo Menendez-Navarro remarked that despite the 'growing consensus on the utility of audio-visual sources for the history of medicine and science, their use [was] still scant', Rosa M. Medina-Doménech, Alfredo Menéndez-Navarro, 'Cinematic Representations of Medical Technologies in the Spanish Official Newsreel, 1943–1970', *Public Understanding of Science*, 14, (2005), p.404.

¹³³ Medical historians in the last two decades have extended their lens on how either 'cinematic medical representations', 'medical films', and 'health education films' have been both created and presented by public health within Spain, America and more recently New Zealand, Medina-Doménech, Menéndez-Navarro, 'Cinematic Representations of Medical Technologies in the Spanish Official Newsreel, 1943–1970', *Medical History*, 53, (2009); Timothy Boon, Leslie J. Reagan, Nancy Tomes, Paula Treichler (eds), *Medicine's Moving Pictures: Medicine, Health, and Bodies in American Film and Television* (University of Rochester Press, 2007); Ondine Godtschalk, 'A Picture of Health? New Zealand-Made Health Education Films 1952–1962', *Social History of Medicine*, 25, (2012).

¹³⁴ Nathoo's research focuses on medical programmes and documentaries before or during the 1970s, Nathoo, *Hearts Exposed*, p.xiv; Katherine Dow evaluates a 1970s documentary to explore the representation of new medical technology. The first story of successful IVF treatment for the first test tube baby, presented to the public through a documentary on British television provides one example of how healthcare professionals and the media emphasised an unthreatening and acceptable representation of a new technology to make that lifestyle decision both acceptable and desirable – in turn, aiming to increase patient-consumer demand, Katherine Dow,

'fictional' television programmes are thoroughly explored, the focus primarily remains on broadcasts between World War Two and the 1970s.¹³⁵ In the last decade, historians of both health and 'visual culture' have gradually begun to explore AV material beyond the 1970s.¹³⁶ Nonetheless, for several reasons, most medical historians continue to overlook television sources, and even when they acknowledged British television broadcasts in-depth, analysis rarely extends beyond a brief reference.¹³⁷ When, rarely, historians have explored late

'Looking into the Test Tube: The Birth of IVF on British Television', *Medical History*, 63, (2019), pp.189-208.

¹³⁵ Elizabeth Toon is one of the only medical historians to have used an in-depth AV approach on 'fictional' television programs – although this programme was still a medical drama. In Toon's article on breast cancer treatment in 1970s Britain, she uses a 1975 teleplay medical drama, titled *Through the Night*, to demonstrate how the changing personal and political attitudes towards breast cancer had changed from the 1950s and 1960s. She argues that the teleplay 'explicitly encouraged viewers to see cancer treatment—and medical care in general— through the patient's eyes'. Despite being a fictional production, the programme had an 'estimated eleven million viewings', highlighting its cultural significance. This great reception prompted professional experts and everyday Britons to publicly discuss 'how patients were being treated by doctors, nurses and hospitals', leading to a greater awareness and improvement of patients experiences, Toon, 'The Machinery of Authoritarian Care', pp.560-564, p.558, p.557, pp.575-576.

¹³⁶ Timothy Boon, *Films of Fact: A History of Science in Documentary Films and Television* (London and New York, Wallflower Press, 2008); Hand, 'Visualising Food as a Modern Medicine'.

¹³⁷ Berridge and Loughlin discussed the anti-drink driving 'short lived (6 weeks) media blitz', in the print press and on television, during the Christmas period of 1964. This campaign became a blueprint for smoking campaigns, yet the audio-visual content was not explored, Berridge, Loughlin, 'Smoking and the New Health Education in Britain', pp.958-59; In subsequent publications, Berridge continues these brief references in how television became a 'main instrument' – either to advertise 'healthier' lifestyles. Or, in terms of public health attempts, to stop the advertising of 'unhealthy' industries, such as tobacco during the 1990s, and finally, to broadcast interviews from 'experts' in public health, to improve national exposure, Berridge, *Marketing Health*, p.73, pp.243-

twentieth century British television programmes, they are still restricted by either: limited access or expensive archives;¹³⁸ an overwhelming ‘avalanche of sources’;¹³⁹ difficulty accessing contextual information, such as viewership levels and responses; a limited range of time-periods and more importantly, the acceptance of fictional genres.

In 2000, Kelly Loughlin, a medical historian, published two articles on audio-visual sources. The first provided a helpful overview on the ‘role of audio-visual sources’ in the history of health and medicine in contemporary Britain. In Loughlin’s review of medical historians’ use of visual culture, she remarked that although most historians were comfortable with analysing ‘still images’, most avoided AV material. To encourage their use, Loughlin argued that ‘audio-visual media ...[became] *the* means of communicating ideas and information about health and medicine to a mass audience’ in the late twentieth century. Health-related news reports broadcast on national television, were far easier for the public to access, than both the medical and newspaper articles underpinning them. Yet, as Loughlin noted, medical historians rarely drew upon television as historical source material. She acknowledged that ‘film, television and video’

44; David Reubi, Virginia Berridge, 'The Internationalisation of Tobacco Control, 1950–2010', *Medical History*, 60, (2016), p.464; Martin Gorsky’s simply references Tony Blair’s ‘televised interview pledge to raise NHS spending to the European Union average’ in 2000, and the impact that this had on both funding distributions and expectations from the public, Martin Gorsky, 'The British National Health Service 1948–2008: A Review of the Historiography', *Social History of Medicine*, 21, (2008), p.447.

¹³⁸ Both Kelly Loughlin and Virginia Berridge remarked that there was a great loss of NICE health education AV material, Kelly Loughlin, Virginia Berridge, 'Whatever Happened to Health Education? Mapping the Grey Literature Collection Inherited by Nice', *Social History of Medicine*, 21, (2008); Moreover, although technologies are improving to allow cheaper conversions of AV material, they are typically privately owned and continue to be expensive for scholars, Rachel Moseley, Helen Wheatley, 'Is Archiving a Feminist Issue?: Historical Research and the Past, Present, and Future of Television Studies', *Cinema Journal*, 47, (2008).

¹³⁹ Loughlin, 'The History of Health and Medicine in Contemporary Britain', p.131.

were relatively new twentieth century developments, so accessibility was difficult, and approaches were less developed. Moreover, AV sources presented a 'greater degree of sensory complexity' (relating to both sound and image) and their receptions varied greatly, depending on where they were watched, and with whom.¹⁴⁰ These sources also needed to be 'understood in relation to a specific historical/cultural context'. Nonetheless, Loughlin maintained that AV sources should be prioritised and not overlooked, concluding that although AV sources would benefit from 'considered questioning and critical evaluation', such material was 'rich and valuable'. As one of the late twentieth century's most influential distributors of health messages, historical research excluding television materials would be severely lacking.¹⁴¹

Loughlin's article on 'Your Life In Their Hands' demonstrates how medical experts desired an increasing role in using AV broadcasts to communicate with the general public, thus demonstrating changes in the attitudes and responsibilities of public health officials.¹⁴² Moreover, this extended into the print press, in which medical experts 'reinforced sensationalised stories'.¹⁴³ These feedback loops became the norm, which led to health representatives often appearing as experts on news reports and documentaries from the early 1980s onwards (see Chapter Three), and later on talk shows by the mid-1990s (see Chapter Six). Loughlin observed that the accuracy of these programmes and medical 'experts' were not challenged by the public.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, if audio-visual recordings are taken out of context or

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p.131, p.133.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p.145.

¹⁴² The British television documentary series, aired originally from 1958 to 1964, explored the topic of surgery from the perspectives of both the surgeons and the patients. The series' purpose was to demonstrate new medical techniques; praise the medical profession, and to 'reassure' audiences watching at home, Loughlin, "Your Life in Their Hands", p.178.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p.183.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p.180.

edited, ‘virtually any message at all’ could be conveyed.¹⁴⁵ To overcome these source limitations, I also explored non-profit regional archives, and layered my interpretations with additional context, by cross-referencing information about the programmes, hosts, medical experts and guests from magazines, newspapers, online websites, and even medical journal and government reports. In the article’s conclusion, Loughlin argued that:

‘it is important to think not in terms of medicine in the media but medicine and the media. This linkage should allow our analysis to broaden out and consider that the management of medical information and medical publicity has been a quiet but nevertheless complex and influential activity for some time’.

Historians are now looking at television to explore representations, and how this shows political, economic and sociocultural changes.¹⁴⁶ I suggest that an evaluation of medical and behavioural messages conveyed on non-medical genres will be equally fruitful (see Chapter Six).

I argue that medical historians should extend their AV approaches to more contemporary timeframes, and a wider range of genres.¹⁴⁷ My thesis builds on the literature by applying these approaches on both ‘factual’ (i.e, documentaries, news reports) and more discredited ‘fictional’ or entertainment programmes, such as serials, soaps, comedies, business competitions, game shows and later talk shows. For example, some talk shows featured a whole array of experts, including medical experts, industry representatives, media agents, public audiences, current consumers, and former (patient-)consumers in the form of sunbed harmed ‘survivors’ - demonstrating a unique form of AV

¹⁴⁵ Loughlin, 'The History of Health and Medicine in Contemporary Britain', p.136.

¹⁴⁶ Lucy Robinson, "Sometimes I Like to Stay in and Watch Tv ...' Kinnock's Labour Party and Media Culture', *Twentieth Century British History*, 22, (2011), p.390.

¹⁴⁷ For a history of the representations of surgeons in popular culture, as demonstrated on the sitcom *Green Wing* (2004-2007, Channel 4), see Agnes Arnold-Forster, 'Surgery and Emotions'. Accessed January 2019: <http://www.surgeryandemotion.com/>

health promotion and campaign content.¹⁴⁸ Historians of medicine should not exclusively explore 'high-brow' television programmes, such as medical news reports and documentaries. Although these are valuable, they only show one layer of how technologies, consumptions and health messages are interpreted by both medical and media experts, whereas a talk show can also convey the perspectives and responses of the 'everyday' public. The television programmes that scholars have traditionally presented as 'low-brow' are influential, as they are highly memorable, often causing laughter or disbelief in their mass audiences.

A brief chronological overview of sunbed-related content (in these programmes genres alone) from the late 1970s to late 1990s, historicises a clear change in the socio-cultural sentiments towards sunbeds. As Tom Mills, a historian of the BBC, asserts audiences have to pay a license fee, and even if they only 'provide' but do not 'control' where the money goes, their cultural values and opinions have a significant influence on how producers create the AV material. First, the creators are a part of the audience – even if they have career focused motives to be 'original', they are not isolated from cultural beliefs.¹⁴⁹ Second, the BBC has to conform to cultural trends of what is popular and/or desired by audiences. The public must find the programme content 'acceptable' - not too controversial, sensitive, or political, and not against the majority opinion of the public, or the 'experts'. Otherwise, the program and those associated in its creation lose credibility - and in extreme cases their careers. Also, not all motives of the influential stakeholders are clear-cut or fixed. For instance, a 'medical expert' on a talk show could assert that they are speaking authoritatively against sunbed use because it is within their profession

¹⁴⁸ Despite the methodological issues, AV sources to investigate the past should not be disregarded, as Loughlin argues 'they played an important role in putting scientific claims into an activist context', Loughlin, 'The History of Health and Medicine in Contemporary Britain', p.139; Bernard M. Timberg, Bob Eler, *Television Talk: A History of the TV Talk Show* (University of Texas Press, 2002), p.6.

¹⁴⁹ Mills, *The BBC*, pp.24-5.

to do so. Yet they could be informing the public more passionately against sunbeds, because of their patients and their personal experience of an illness. Both 'factual' and 'fictional' portrayals of sunbeds in these popular series likely influenced the attitudes and beliefs of millions of viewers. By exploring a large range of sunbed-related programmes, my thesis will be able to more thoroughly show the changing representations and sentiments towards the sunbed industry, sunbed consumers and the act of sunbed use, by reflecting socio-cultural opinions, alongside the political beliefs relating to consumption, and the economic motives of medical or commercial organisations.

Contextualising Representations, Situating Sunbeds

The historicisation of sunbeds will consist of two main parts. The first, exploring the historical context, provides a background in which my case study is situated to map the changing representation of sunbeds. I explore how the political and economic contextual changes from the 1970s to late 1990s fed into the changing perceptions of individual and communal responsibility, risk, health, fitness and entrepreneurship. This, in turn, influenced the changing representation (and the influential actors) of the sunbed industry. The second part historicises a culture of tanning from the late nineteenth century within a western context, primarily focusing on Britain. Historians of tanning, sunlight therapies, sun-lamps and early commercial tanning for the body have provided a background that leads up to the post-war period. These histories both shape the history of the sunbed industry, sunbed consumers and the act of consumption.

Political and Economic Climate of Thatcher's Britain: The Rise of Popular Individualism

Political influences have often been overlooked when medical experts evaluate why the sunbed industry appealed to the general public throughout the 1980s. Political factors can mould and eventually change consumer attitudes – whether this is food, drugs, concepts of health and fitness, and even how individuals

identify the purpose or desired representation of their body or skin. Consequently, the sunbed industry in the 1980s cannot be addressed without considering Margaret Thatcher and the cultural attitudes of the time.

Emily Robinson and other scholars have argued that a notion of popular individualism and aspirationalism emerged at the beginning of the 1970s. According to Robinson, individual testimonies demonstrate that the public were increasingly determined about defining and claiming their individual rights, identities and perspectives; and that many were 'expressing desires for greater personal independence and self-determination'.¹⁵⁰ This was reflected in attitudes towards free enterprise and self-interest on a marketing and business level, trickling down to the rising desire of self-enhancing consumptions on both a societal and individual level.¹⁵¹

On a societal level, this led to an enthusiastic provision of new business opportunities and growing industries – especially within health, fitness, beauty and leisure-enhancing trades. The government strongly supported new and upcoming franchises, and independent entrepreneurs were encouraged by stories of economic promise and success. Thatcher's government encouraged this economic independence and determination, and the government produced small loans for small private businesses.¹⁵² Perhaps more so than other industries, the sunbed business appealed to both entrepreneurs and manufacturers because of its low start-up costs, the minimal training requirements, lack of legislation and regulation, easy distribution, and the flexible and diverse range of locations to consume, and hours to operate.

¹⁵⁰ Emily Robinson, Camilla Schofield, Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, Natalie Thomlinson, 'Telling Stories About Post-War Britain: Popular Individualism and the 'Crisis' of the 1970s', *Twentieth Century British History*, 28, (2017), p.302.

¹⁵¹ Neil Rollings, 'Cracks in the Post-War Keynesian Settlement? The Role of Organised Business in Britain in the Rise of Neoliberalism Before Margaret Thatcher', *Twentieth Century British History*, 24, 4, (2013), pp.637–659; p.193: Bingham, Conboy, *Tabloid Century*, p.90.

¹⁵² Anon., 'Turnover brisk in sunbeds', *The Times*, 25 September 1982, p.3.

Moreover, during the late 1970s and early-to-mid 1980s, recession affected manufacturing industries across England, which led to rising unemployment levels.¹⁵³ Masses of people desperately tried to find other forms of employment, such as the fast-emerging sunbed and health club industry (see Chapter One, Two and Three).

These businesses, on an individual level, fostered an empowered sense of self-worth and confidence, whilst reflecting the desirable identity of a disciplined, responsible and healthy individual. The body became further re-conceptualised as both a project and ‘investment’ of self-improvement, especially aesthetically.¹⁵⁴ Individuals wanted to embody a representation of wealth – whether materialistically to show economic independence, privilege, freedom and experience, and/or for health and fitness– all of which often required more skin and body exposure.¹⁵⁵ Advertising persistently educated the masses that an aspiring athletic body was a bronzed body in the late twentieth century for both men and women.¹⁵⁶ Unsurprisingly, the industries that boomed

¹⁵³ Dave Child, Mike Paddon, ‘Sheffield: Steelyard Blues’, *Marxism Today*, July 1984, p.18; Jörg Arnold, ‘Like being on death row’: Britain and the end of coal, c. 1970 to the present’, *Contemporary British History*, 32, 1, (2018), pp.1-17.

¹⁵⁴ For a history of athleticism, keep-fit classes and physical culture for women in Britain, see Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the body: beauty, health, and fitness in Britain, 1880-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, ‘The Making of a Modern Female Body: beauty, health and fitness in interwar Britain’, *Women’s History Review*, 20, 2, (2011), pp.299-317.

¹⁵⁵ From the 1980s, the tabloids increasingly fed public fascination with the luxurious lifestyles and properties of celebrities, which appealed to readers’ aspirations, Bingham, Conboy, *Tabloid Century*, p.195, p.159.

¹⁵⁶ Kenneth Dutton, *The Perfectible Body: The Western Ideal of Physical Development* (London: Cassell, 1995), p.312; Jennifer Maguire, in her book *Fit for consumption*, supports this notion by remarking that fitness in the late twentieth century was ‘no longer defined or experienced as purely a physical activity, which [could] be medically monitored’. Instead, fitness became a ‘aesthetic quality’ that involved ‘living up to an

in the 1980s were often 'body'-related and (visual) advertising industries, often linked to health clubs, fitness equipment, skincare, hair removal, and general clothing, beauty or health – even the porn industry was interlinked.¹⁵⁷ These industries often interlinked, both supporting each other and strengthening a body culture that encouraged sunbed use. For instance, the sunbed industry ascended with the commercialisation of the fitness 'boom' in the late 1970s. Advertising for the latter reinforced the association between tanned skin and athleticism (see Chapter One and Two). This, in turn, created a lucrative environment for emerging sunbed companies.

Political and Economic Climate of 1990s Britain: The Backlash Against Consumerism

The 1990s political, economic and consequently consumer climate contrasted to the 1980s. Despite the declining popularity of the print press (national newspapers and especially magazines), the rapid spread of the internet, mobile phones and computer technology provided consumers with a wealth of media content.¹⁵⁸ As consumerism was accessible for all by the 1980s, a backlash against this 'yuppie' culture emerged, which began to praise a new 'virtuous' type of consumer who practiced 'self-denial'. From the early 1990s, this 'puritan' consumer approach to beauty, health and fitness consumptions was increasingly valued. The individual 'mass consumer' was typically presented as

expectation' and 'looking a certain way', Jennifer Smith Maguire, *Fit for consumption: sociology and the business of fitness* (Routledge, 2008), p.4, p.1.

¹⁵⁷ Stephen Driver, Andrew Gillespie described the state of late 1970s print publishing as 'parlous', yet this was followed by the late 1970s 1980s saw a revival of advertising spending, leading to a significant growth in magazine publishing. This boom was short-lived, and by 1991 the collapse of advertising revenues forced publishers to cut back, Stephen Driver, Andrew Gillespie, 'Structural change in the cultural industries: British magazine publishing in the 1980s', *Media, Culture and Society*, 15, (1993), p.185; Rebecca M. Herzig, *Plucked: A History of Hair Removal* (NYU Press, 2015), p17.

¹⁵⁸ Bingham, Conboy, *Tabloid Century*, p.20.

grotesquely excessive and narcissistic.¹⁵⁹ This ironically tied in with the 1980s sense of fighting to be in control and responsible of our own consumption practices and bodies, but this time, against the persistent advertising that pressured consumption.¹⁶⁰

Moreover, within this overwhelming volume of media content, reporters prioritised sharing the experiential experts' opinions, emotions and experiences of beauty, health and lifestyle affairs to support and reach out to the public, as this was what public readers and viewers often wanted and could better empathise with. This, in turn, supported the rise of the consumers' voice and confessional culture.¹⁶¹ Everyday lifestyle decisions were now more readily exposed to the 'ordinary' public, and that public was empowered to judge, comment and try to change these members lifestyles, as they now had the easily accessible media platforms to do so. Unsurprisingly, consumers gradually became activists in medical discussions. Consumers either supported or challenged medical experts through the media, believing that it was their right to offer their perspectives and make demands, which the press encouraged, illustrating another continuous feedback loop (see Chapter Six).¹⁶² This blurred the boundaries between private and public spheres further. The media both exposed and commented on the lives of others, particularly politicians, medical

¹⁵⁹ Amy Pennay, 'Carnal pleasures and grotesque bodies: Regulating the body during a "big night out" of alcohol and party drug use', *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 39, 3, (2012), pp.399-401.

¹⁶⁰ Arline Usden, 'The New Puritans', *Daily Mail*, 26 July 1990, p.12; Val Hennessy, 'Who dares, wins. Val Hennessy finds there are still some Yuppies not ashamed to spend', *Daily Mail*, 30 March 1991, p.23; Moseley, 'Slimming One's Way to a Better Self?', p.9; Katrina Louise Moseley, 'Food, Body weight and Everyday Life in England, c. 1954–1990', Unpublished Thesis (University of Cambridge, 2020).

¹⁶¹ Jennifer Crane, *Child Protection in England, 1960–2000* (Springer, 2018), p.172.

¹⁶² Laura L. Dawes, 'When Subjects Bite Back: The Bristol Cancer Help Centre Study and Increasing Consumer Involvement in UK Medical Research in the 1990s', *Social History of Medicine*, 25, 2, (2012), pp.500–519.

experts and celebrities lifestyle and consumer choices (see Chapter six).¹⁶³ From the mid-1990s onwards this led to the creation of more ‘professional bodies’ and ‘regulation standards’, as medical, government and policy authorities were attempting to re-establish their credibility and recommendations.¹⁶⁴ These political, economic and cultural changes from the 1980s and 1990s were reflected in the changing attitudes and responses towards sunbed consumers and the act of sunbed use.

Historicising Tanning Culture

Scholars of tanning and sunlight technologies, from a diverse range of disciplines, have provided contextual histories of the commercialisation and medicalisation of tanned skin from the late nineteenth century onwards. This culture prompted the development of technologies that led to the birth of the ‘sunbed’ industry. I will briefly address other influential factors, such as the overall changes in technology.¹⁶⁵ These factors were not isolated driving points, instead, they all created an interacting web of influence that promoted tanned skin.

In western culture, the acceptance and the desirability of a tanned complexion, as opposed to the previously favoured pale skin, emerged at the end of the nineteenth century and increased throughout the twentieth century. Historians of sunlight - Simon Carter, Daniel Freund, Hansen Devon, Sally Romano, Kerry Segrave and Tania Woloshyn – explore different contributing factors for the prevailing admiration of tanned skin during this period.¹⁶⁶ Most of

¹⁶³ Bingham, Conboy, *Tabloid Century*, p.89.

¹⁶⁴ Berkshire Records Office, *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1997/1998, pp.527-530; Mold, Clark, Millward, Payling, *Placing the Public in Public Health in Post-War Britain*.

¹⁶⁵ For a parallel history of tanning, see Lynn N. Thomas, *Beneath the Surface: A Transnational History of Skin Lighteners* (Duke University Press, 2020).

¹⁶⁶ Simon Carter, *Rise and Shine: Sunlight, Technology and Health* (Oxford: Berg, 2007); Devon Hansen, ‘Shades of Change: Suntanning and the Twentieth-century American Dream’, Unpublished Thesis, Boston University, (2007); Sally Romano, ‘The

these historians address the increasing use of artificial tanning, but only Segrave and Freund specifically mention 'sunbeds', and both texts are restricted to the US.¹⁶⁷ Only Carter and Woloshyn explore artificial tanning in a British context. Like Carter, Woloshyn's research expands the literature on artificial tanning from the first half of the twentieth century, and Woloshyn also focuses on the history of sun-lamps. Neither scholar addresses the emergence of the 'sunbed'. Nonetheless, Woloshyn applied a visual culture approach, which will be developed here to historically examine late twentieth century British sunbed consumption.

The Increasing Visibility (and Popularity) of Tanned Bodies in Twentieth-Century England.

The increasing everyday presence of a tanned complexion and the tanning technology available before this period needs to be addressed. After World War Two, sun lamps and smaller artificial tanning devices were sold by large companies in Britain, such as Boots and Philips.¹⁶⁸ Evidently, the act of tanning

Dark Side of the Sun: Skin Cancer, Sunscreen, and Risk in Twentieth-century in America', Unpublished Thesis, Yale University, (2006); Kerry Segrave, *Suntanning in 20th Century America* (McFarland & Company, Inc., 2005); Tania Woloshyn, *Soaking Up the Rays: Light Therapy and Visual Culture in Britain, c. 1890-1940* (Manchester University Press, 2017). Also, only one book has been entirely dedicated to indoor tanning machines, however, was written by two psychologists, Heckman, Manne, *Shedding Light on Indoor Tanning*.

¹⁶⁷ Daniel Freund, *American Sunshine: Diseases of Darkness and the Quest for Natural Light* (University of Chicago press, 2012), pp.167-169; Segrave, *Suntanning in 20th Century America*, pp.153-179.

¹⁶⁸ This information can be found through searches on eBay and *The Advertising Archives*, in which the main brands of sun lamps between the 1950s and 1970s were sold by Boots and Philips. Both businesses used photographs of tanned men and women in their advertisements, *The Advertising Archive*, Image No.30513227 (Electrical Magazine Advert), 'Start your tan before you go holiday. And join in the fun straight away', 1975. Accessed 20 April 2017:

had emerged as a luxury before this period, and although sunbeds were innovative and original, the strong desire for a tanned complexion by many in British culture was not new.

Woloshyn argues that the phenomenon of absorbing ultraviolet light to tan our skin – whether naturally or artificially - has had a longstanding history since the 1890s in Britain. Health officials often endorsed sun-tanning as a cure against many infections or skin diseases (mainly tuberculosis, rickets and psoriasis) and mental health issues (e.g. Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and depression). Important figures from sun cults also encouraged tanning for aesthetic reasons, such as the 1930s sunlight league, which strongly publicised claims that a bronzed complexion was linked to beauty, happiness and wellbeing.¹⁶⁹

On the other hand, both health and media officials have made efforts to broadcast the contested debate about the long-term carcinogenic effects of tanning since the early twentieth century. Yet most of the twentieth century upheld a tanned complexion as a luxury. As tanning was a sought-after privilege and positive status marker, the visual act of seeing tanned bodies in everyday life increased through various means. Gradual but instrumental changes occurred after the mid-twentieth century in both the ease of acquiring and seeing a tan. In the twentieth century, the public purposely spent more time sun-tanning outdoors. More specifically, the popularity of oversea holidays increased in the 1950s.¹⁷⁰ Cosmetic fashions changed from paler ‘ashes of

http://www.advertisingarchives.co.uk/en/asset/show_zoom_window_popup.html?asset=8265&location=grid&asset_list=87514964,87514952,57296,56592,50182,45624,35847,28159,28156,28155,28154,27809,27808,27807,22650,22055,14493,14452,14034,14026,10461,8265,7705&basket_item_id

¹⁶⁹ Tania Woloshyn, ‘Le Pays du Soleil: The Art of Heliotherapy on the Côte d’Azur’, *Social History of Medicine*, 26, 1, (2013), pp.74–93; Woloshyn, *Soaking Up the Rays*.

¹⁷⁰ Cheap holiday packages, which included air travel, began in 1955. By the 1960s, the holiday industry boomed in Britain as it became cheaper to travel to Spain and Italy, rather than remain in Britain. This steadily increased over time. In 1986, for

rose' (1935) to 'Riviera Tan' face powders and darker lipsticks (1952) – 'Riviera' hinting exotic luxury and foreign trade.¹⁷¹ Fake tan lotions emerged and improved in quality, while 'sun lotions' claiming to protect skin encouraged prolonged durations of sun exposure.¹⁷² Changes in fashion and clothing also allowed more bodily exposure (see Chapter Five).¹⁷³

In England, changes in print press technologies and visual media also promoted the 'seeing' of more tanned bodies in public spaces. Television became a household norm after the late 1950s, and colour television became the standard by the late 1960s.¹⁷⁴ Following this, the inclusion of colour and improved graphics in the printing press gradually became easier and cheaper with technological developments.¹⁷⁵ In advertisements, photographs of real bodies replaced line drawings of bodies. Tanned complexions became easier to

instance, Thomas Cook recorded 14.4 million British travellers abroad and in 1987 this was followed by 16 million, Bill Cormack, *A History of Holidays, 1812-1990* (London: Routledge and Thomas Cook Archives, 1998), p.108, p.112.

¹⁷¹ Boots Archive, *Merchandise Bulletin*, 1935; the 'Riviera Tan' powder featured in volumes 261 to 271, and 283, *Merchandise Bulletin*, 1952; H. J. Davis, P.P.S, (editor), *The Bulletin*, 270, 21 March 1952, (Issued by Sales Department: Private and Confidential'), p.270; Box A76 to A80 of uncatalogued nostrums demonstrate that two other tanned face powders in strong public demand, which were titled 'Sun Glow' (1956) and 'Tawny' (1957).

¹⁷² Romano, 'The Dark Side of the Sun'.

¹⁷³ Cherry acknowledges the 1970s and 1980s catalogue advertising of the tanning industry in America. These products included tanning oils, tanning cosmetics, and even sunscreens; yet tanning machines, such as sunbeds, were not mentioned, Cherry, *Catalog*, pp.38-39.

¹⁷⁴ R.R. Gulati, *Monochrome and Colour Television* (Daryaganj: New Age International Pvt. Ltd., Publishers, 2005), p.3.

¹⁷⁵ Before sunbed colour adverts became the norm during the 1980s, the public had to post a coupon or phone call a sunbed manufacturer to request and pay for colour leaflets, Anon., 'Colour printing costs - Classified Ad 21 -- No Title', *Observer*, 26 September 1982, p.30; Anon., 'TANFAST - Multiple Display Advertising Items', *Daily Mail*, 14 December 1981, p.27.

artificially produce with photo-editing technologies, which allowed more vividly tanned bodies to appear during the period of mass advertising in 1980s' Britain. These photographs of tanned celebrities encouraged consumers to compare themselves, and to desire the image, identity, values and lifestyle depicted by these commercial fantasies.¹⁷⁶ Moreover, this strengthened the positive associations of tanning with wealth, health and beauty.

In relation to the tanning industry, improvements in technology and mass manufacturing allowed a smoother transition from medical experts to layman to purchase first facial sun lamps and then larger and more powerful sunbeds for body tanning. The mass circulation of sunbed advertising ephemera also improved during the 1980s - emphasised by the late 1970s fitness boom. In both newspapers and magazines, tanned bodies sold fitness and wellbeing. In densely populated urban areas, they were unmissable on billboards and posters, and constantly on nationally viewed media (see Chapter Two).¹⁷⁷ Also, the fickle, and often cold, rainy and sunless British weather, particularly in the North-West, would have increased the British demand for the sunbed industry (see Chapter One).

These subtle and overt societal changes in culture and consumption amplified the visual act of seeing tanned bodies on display. Therefore, the invention of sunbeds could be seen as an inevitable progression from the sun lamp industry. But evidently in British culture, the societal demand to become tanned originated decades before ultraviolet tanning technologies had been invented. An exploration of the visually rich sunbed advertisements from print press and televisual material will extend the history of Britain's long-lasting fixation with a tanned complexion. A lens on sunbeds, from the late 1970s to late 1990s, will further expose these re-conceptualisations of the tanning phenomenon, and unravel other interwoven histories linked to financial,

¹⁷⁶ C. Biskup, G. Pfister 'I would like to be like her/him: Are athletes role-models for boys and girls?', *European Physical Education Review*, 5, 3, (1999), pp.199–218.

¹⁷⁷ Maguire, *Fit for consumption*, p.4, p.1; Dutton, *The Perfectible Body*, p.312.

political, and cultural changes, which influenced attitudes towards businesses and consumption (and consequently tanning).

Thesis Overview

As I have hinted above, my thesis consists of six chapters, equally split into two parts. Each part roughly covers a decade and proposes two distinct periods of sunbed representation. Each chapter examines a two-to-four-year transitioning period. The first part of my thesis explores the emergence of the 'sunbed' industry, demonstrating how UV-tanning consumption was convincingly portrayed as a 'positive' health-enhancing activity from the 1970s to late 1980s. Although concerns about the sunbed industry are present ab initio, the narratives were understated and rarely broadcasted by media reporters. Media reporters, instead, preferred to prioritise the voices of the varying sunbed providers and sunbed consumers.

In Chapter One, I contextualise the tanning technologies (and terminologies) of the 1970s and the gradual emergence of 'revolutionary' sunbeds in 1978. A case study of a local health and beauty salon in Liverpool offers an example of the original industries that provided sunbeds. An evaluation of the *Mersey Yellow Pages*, the *Liverpool Echo*, and a Mersey-based television report (*Reports Politics*) provides a microhistory of Jean Graham's pioneering business. Health and beauty establishments, like Graham's, had credible reputations. Graham, as a healthcare provider for her community, kept up-to-date with the most recent 'luxurious treatments', and sunbeds were an extension. The public used sunbeds in lavish, relaxing and revitalising environments. The expected sunbed consumers were affluent women who could afford these new 'health-enhancing technologies'. These customers were concerned with their skin, bodies and overall health. They were willing to invest and pro-actively self-discipline and maintain their beauty and health. Generally, during this period, sunbeds were glamorous, in vogue and in demand. This reflects the emerging entrepreneurial Thatcherite spirit of the late 1970s and early 1980s, and the freedom and support offered to new markets to prosper, encouraged through the media.

The demand for sunbeds heightened further, as demonstrated in

Chapter Two exploring the period from 1980 to 1982. Both the sunbed and fitness industry ‘boomed’. They supported each other and strengthened the ‘health’ and ‘fitness’ associations linked to sunbeds. Sunbed-related rhetoric, (audio-)visuals, and material culture, in the print press (mostly the *Financial Times*), trade directories, catalogues, and on television and as a toy, educated consumers that sunbed use was part of a moral routine of bodily transformation – re-invigorating and therapeutic. These mixed media sources also portrayed the white but deeply tanned sunbed consumer as a rich, rational, responsible and resourceful individual. Reportedly, these sensible consumers, both men and women, could assess what was most beneficial for their long-term fitness, health, beauty and finances. During the early 1980s, the media and general public believed sunbeds were a worthwhile investment – the machines were unthreatening, luxurious and safe. Private sunbed use was a privilege, and a desirable way for an individual to create a bodily representation of wealth. In this chapter, public healthcare providers, commercial enterprises and the media were working together to ‘educate’ and encourage ‘rational’ consumers to be responsible for their own bodily health.

In Chapter Three, I use newspapers, magazines, company records, commercial archives, film and television sources to explore the period from 1983 to 1987, in which the sunbed market saturated. An uproar of public demand; increasing competitive pricing between sunbed providers; cheap manufacturing prices, and falling start-up costs for a sunbed business, led to market saturation as the industry had become both an appealing and ‘promising’ entrepreneurial idea. This was especially true in the North-West, hard hit by the rising unemployment levels amongst the working population from the early 1980s to 1984. ‘Cowboys sunbed salons’ and ‘mobile sunbed vans’ emerged, creating a very different reputation for sunbed providers. Often these new types of salons temporarily flourished and further drove down competitive prices. The vast majority, however, could not pay outstanding debts and became bankrupt, leading to liquidation. As the type of sunbed providers changed (and reshaped the reputation of this industry), so did the types of customers. With cheap prices, lower standards and extraordinary accessibility for all, a specific target audience of ‘wealthy clients’ was no longer sustainable.

Both cheap, accessible and unrestricted public and home tanning became 'practically within everyone's reach'. More sunbed consumers were younger and were gradually drawn from the lower-middle and middle classes. These changes in the types, and thus the representations of sunbed providers and consumers prompted an increase of thorough medical investigations, evidenced from medical journals. In a BBC survey on the attitudes towards cancer and health, skin cancer and sunbeds were now included (1987/1988). This chapter highlights the tipping point to the 'negative' slide of the sunbed industry, leading to Part Two.

The second part of my thesis explores the transition to a 'negative' perception of sunbeds, during which, from the late 1980s onwards, consumption became framed as detrimental to health and was first stigmatised, then condemned. Medical research from 1988 played a much greater role influencing the representation of sunbeds, especially in relation to the severity of risk, which the media transmitted to the public. During this period, too, other stakeholders gradually ignored or challenged the representatives from the sunbed industry, including the consumers who originally supported them.

Chapter Four explores the rise of medical research and (media induced) moral panic concerning sunbed consumption from 1988 to 1990. In the media, sunbed industry representatives almost disappeared and were replaced with dermatologists who primarily argued against sunbeds. Articles in the medical press accused sunbed providers with not providing information about the high risks of sunbed-induced skin cancer, which damaged the sunbed industry's reputation further. In 1988, a television series on the developments of science and technology, *Tomorrow's World*, provided another cautionary narrative of discouragement on their 'Sun bed Safety' report. The Health Education Authority (HEA) launched a campaign to increase young women's awareness of sun-caused skin cancer. Yet greater awareness did not discourage tanning habits, and sunbeds remained in everyday spaces of health and fitness. By the end of the chapter, sunbed consumers were increasingly stereotyped as

typically working class, young, vain and “immoral” members of society.¹⁷⁸ Aiming to discourage sunbed use, consumers were depicted as “bimbos”, “barbies” and “gold diggers” in the media – mainly in cartoons and on radio shows, television soaps and later films. The misogynistic emergence of this stereotype illustrated the subconscious inclusion of anti-sunbed health warnings within popular culture, aiming to encourage everyday consumers to develop healthier and more ‘moral’ lifestyles.

Chapter Five explores the rise of the ‘fake’ tan industry, the revival of tanning culture, and the birth of ‘tanorexia’ in the print press by focusing on the next transitioning period from 1991 to 1994. In newspapers, the competing fake tan industry presented the sunbed industry as an exploitative service, supported by the media and medical experts. Moreover, scientists began to research new tanning technologies to protect against skin cancer. Yet ironically these actors, along with the journalists who promoted bronzed skin as attractive, were reviving tanning culture and amplifying the desirability of a golden tan. Dermatologists also used the media to spread perceptions that the sunbed industry were misleading consumers about ‘safe’ sunbeds, instead confirming that they were life-threatening. Yet consumers and sunbed providers (such as gyms) did not respond. In 1991, a senior consultant psychiatrist in Glasgow, Dr Prim Misra, claimed he was the first medical authority to coin the term ‘tanorexia’ in Britain.¹⁷⁹ Both journalists and healthcare providers developed stereotypes to define who was supposedly most susceptible to ‘tanorexia’: ‘Female’ or ‘feminine’ consumers were pathologised and presented as

¹⁷⁸ Mike Williams, “Silicone of course ... And then I had my brain ‘scooped’ and replaced with polystyrene chippings and to be honest, Amanda, I wish I’d had it done years ago.”, *Punch*, 25 May 1990.

¹⁷⁹ The term ‘Tanorexia’ was described by Dr Prim Misra (translated through a newspaper article) as a ‘psychological addiction to sunbathing – either on a sunbed or in the sun - .. that affects young women, and some young men. ... tied to a sense of self-esteem and a desire to be liked and reinforced by praise from other people’, Patsy Westcott, ‘I’d rather be wrinkled and brown than white and smooth’, *Daily Mail*, 21 July 1992, pp.24-25.

'narcissistic' and 'self-destructive'. The act of using sunbeds was ultimately perceived as 'cancer causing' and greatly stigmatised. In this chapter, medical experts and the media began to introduce medical theories of 'addiction' to explain why women 'irrationally' used sunbeds (both linked to and arising from studies on tobacco, alcohol and drugs).

The final chapter explores the emerging 'global war' against the rise of skin cancer, which triggered more attacks against the sunbed industry and its consumers, now on television. Medical experts, the fake tan industry, and now legal authorities acted against the sunbed industry, usually through the media, painting the sunbed industry as financially exploitative and uncaring about the health of their consumers. Yet these discouragements were weakened by contradictions within these broadcasts, and sunbed use persisted. In turn, journalists and medical experts intensified their focus on changing the attitudes and consuming habits of sunbed users. From 1995 to 1997, medical experts (mainly dermatologists and now psychologists), media agents and the general public confidently reinforced 'sunbed addiction' as a gender-specific life-threatening condition. Depictions of 'sunbed addiction' also spread from national newspapers and magazines to mainstream television, reaching a wider audience. The act of sunbed use was not only stigmatised, but strongly condemned by the general public. The emergence and popularity of talk shows, featuring an array of medical, media and consumer experts (the latter by experience), demonstrates a further break down of private and public spaces. The public were encouraged to comment on the everyday lifestyle and consumer choices of other individuals.

These chapters contextualise why twenty-first century attitudes towards the sunbed industry, sunbed consumers and the act of consumption, are now stigmatised and condemned within media and medical discourse. This history of sunbeds also exposes the relationships and influences between media-medical actors and everyday public life events, which in turn reflects the changing responsibilities and approaches of public health and the media. The changing fortunes of sunbeds illustrate the changes in who constitutes as an 'expert(s)', and the 'rise' of consumers, and consequently the understandings of 'healthy'

and 'unhealthy' lifestyles and consumptions. I argue that media-medical and commercial industry relationships, and their feedback loops, demonstrate that popular culture and discourse reciprocally influences public health.

Part One

Chapter 1: The Emergence Of ‘New Revolutionary’ Tanning Technologies for Affluent Consumers

Introduction

‘For a Suntan ... in just two weeks you can look healthier, wealthier and sexier with a great suntan. It will boost your confidence sky high.’

A sunbed advertisement for Jean Graham’s salons, Liverpool Echo, 14 October 1980.¹

This chapter presents one of the first detailed histories of a local sunbed business by focusing on the mixed media representation of one health and beauty establishment. Based in Liverpool, the salons were both named as and owned by Jean Graham. For almost two decades from the 1970s, Graham offered an array of ‘tanning technologies’, both located and consumed in public spaces. From 1991 onwards, Graham began to offer sunbed hires for unrestricted private consumption within households.² This chapter focuses on the representation of publicly provided sunbeds as opposed to the domestic sunbed machines used at home (Chapter Two explores the emergence of domestic sunbeds). Through this microhistory, I argue that sunbeds were originally a site for self-making, both for their providers and customers.

During the 1980s, the industry, media and the public most commonly used the term ‘sunbed’ to describe commercial UV tanning technologies. Consequently, I will use the terms ‘sunbed shops’ and ‘sunbed salons’ to

¹ Anon., ‘Advertising Feature. WHAT EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW. Jean Graham’, *Liverpool Echo*, 14 October 1980, p.8.

² ‘Saunas & Solarium Eqpt – contd.’, *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1991, p.844.

capture the history of the ultraviolet tanning industry in England.³ The term 'sunbed' first appeared in 1978 within the print press; however, Graham first advertised her general services in 1969. An evaluation of Graham's pioneering salon provides an overview of the early 'tanning technologies' - these were publicly available throughout the 1970s (such as 'sun-ray', 'sun lamp', 'solarium' and 'solaria' machines), leading to the introduction of 'sunbeds'. Graham would advertise sunbed services in both the *Liverpool Echo* and *Mersey Yellow Pages* until 1999.⁴ This chapter explores the *emergence* of the industry, focusing on the 1970s and early 1980s. Using Graham's salons as a case study, I will illustrate the original types of local businesses drawn to providing sunbeds and the customers attracted to using them.

To capture this history, I evaluate Graham's direct and indirect advertising strategies, identified and tracked via the *Liverpool Echo* newspaper; the *Mersey Yellow Pages* archive, and finally a television report about sunbeds from *Reports Politics*. These sources will be cross-referenced with other sources from the same time period to demonstrate that Graham's local salon can be regarded as representative of national trends in sunbed representation and sentiments. These will include magazines; an episode from a television series, *To the Manor Born* (November 1979, BBC); both the *BMJ* and *BMJD*, and finally, coverage in national newspapers. A multi-media approach will unveil the several layers of both diverse and influential sunbed stakeholders within these 'beauty' and 'health' settings – businesses were selling new sunbed technologies as both safe and attainable.

³ In the United States sunbed businesses were better known as 'tanning parlours' or 'tanning booths', Women's Magazine Archive, Collection 1, Lynne Lamberg, 'TANNING BOOTH DANGERS', *Better Homes and Gardens*, 63, 9, September 1985, p.54.

⁴ 1999 is the latest year that researchers can explore the *Liverpool Echo* from the British Newspaper Archive, Anon., 'Echo Leisure Guide. Health & Beauty. Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 1 July 1999, p.48; 'Sauna & Solarium Eqpt.', *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1999, p.972.

A history of Graham's salons demonstrates that many of the original sunbed providers were well-regarded. These businesses could afford to introduce and were trusted to provide the latest 'revolutionary' technologies; they had established a network of 'wealthy' clients; they demonstrated expert knowledge about health and beauty therapies; and they were both influential and engaged contributors in their communities. Graham's salon suggests that the original sunbed consumers were imagined to be middle-to-upper class, middle-aged to older, white women. Our readings of which demographic groups of gender, age and race used sunbeds, however, can be problematised when cross-referenced with other sources. Nonetheless, the original customers at Graham's salon were indisputably concerned with 'investing' and maintaining their bodies to create or enhance an outward representation of health, beauty and wealth. Typically, the original consumers were wealthy and had disposable incomes. The general public and most influential sunbed industry stakeholders (including sunbed providers, advertisers and the media) perceived sunbed use as an upmarket, aspirational, glamorous, fashionable, relaxing and luxurious past time.

Historicising Tanning Culture in Liverpool

Liverpool was the most appropriate location for the first local sunbed history case study for many historical and contemporary reasons. These factors include Liverpool's typically cloudy climate, working-class urban environment and social-cultural trends. These factors permitted an originally prosperous retail environment for sunbeds, and later, an enduring prominence of sunbeds. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, most sunbed-related print press material, interviews and television broadcasts were based in, or focused on the North-West, especially Merseyside.⁵ This created an abundance of wide-

⁵ For studies from different disciplines on sunbeds see Sarah Jane Felton, 'The Risks and Benefits of Cutaneous Sunlight Exposure', Unpublished Thesis, University of Manchester, (2016), pp.62-64; Paul Mackenzie, 'An exploration of the attitudes and risk taking behaviours amongst young people who are regular users of sunbeds and the

ranging primary source material, offering both stimulating and controversial narratives for historians to explore.

An extremely relevant factor in Liverpool's primacy as a site for studying sunbeds, easily overlooked from the perspective of the archive, is the regional differences in weather. The North-West is notorious for its 'sunless', cold and rainier climate – even when compared to the rest of England. Weather records from the Met Office revealed that the summer of 1976 was the second hottest and driest summer (after 1911) of the century.⁶ On the 3 July 1976, many places in England reached a record breaking thirty-five point nine degrees Celsius.⁷ Severe water shortages occurred. The tabloids published photographs of women in bikinis lounging on balconies that overlooked Hyde Park.⁸ The summer of 1977 was also warm and sunny, particularly in the North-West.⁹ By

development of a prevention strategy', Unpublished Thesis, University of Liverpool, (2014); Jennifer Taylor, 'Making sense of sunbed tanning: A social representations approach', Unpublished Thesis, University of Keele, (2016), p.8, p.196.

⁶ The Meteorological Office Monthly Weather Report, Met.0.896, UC 511 506 1 (41-4), Vol.93, No.6, June 1976; The Meteorological Office Monthly Weather Report, Met.0.896, UDC 511 506 1(41-4), Vol.93, No.7, July 1976; The Meteorological Office Monthly Weather Report, Met.0.896, UDC 511 506 1(41-4), Vol.93, No.8, August 1976.

⁷ Jason Rodrigues, 'UK heatwave timeline, 1911-2015. How the UK coped with soaring temperatures in the last century', *Guardian*, 1 July 2015. Accessed 3 December 2018: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/from-the-archive-blog/2015/jul/01/heatwave-uk-weather-summer-timeline> ;

⁸ Sue Arnod, 'Hot Weather and Even Hotter Tempers', *Observer*, 11 July 1976, p.2; Viv Groskop, 'Was the summer of 1976 the best Britain ever had?', *Guardian*, 30 July 2016. Accessed 3 December: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/jul/30/was-summer-1976-best-britain-ever-had>; Keir Mudie, '1976 was Britain's best ever year according to new study', *Mirror*, 21 July 2013. Accessed 3 December: <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/1976-britians-best-ever-year-2070469>

⁹ The weather report stated that June 1977 was 'Cool: very wet in places, but dry and sunny in the North West'. The Meteorological Office Monthly Weather Report, Met.0.908, UDC 511 506 1(41-4), Vol.94, No.6, June 1977; The Meteorological Office Monthly Weather Report, Met.0.908, UDC 511 506 1(41-4), Vol.94, No.7, July 1977;

contrast, the summers of 1979 and 1980 were disappointing.¹⁰ The *BBC News* declared 1980 as the 'dullest summer,' marking a record low 396 hours of sunshine.¹¹ A heightened culture of outdoor tanning had been encouraged by the previously hot summers. The sunbed industry, emerging during the following cold, rainy and sunless summers, would have satisfied the public's craving for a tanned complexion. In the sunless North-West, the locals would have been more affected by these contrasting summer spells.¹²

Liverpool city was also densely urban and deprived, often hard-hit by recessions. The late 1970s and early-to-mid 1980s recession, affecting both the coal and manufacturing industry, caused rising unemployment levels in the North-West.¹³ The sunbed industry, with its low initial capital requirements, was both an easy-entry business idea and a comfortable industry to join for many manufacturing workers (see Chapter Three).¹⁴ In an urban environment with

The Meteorological Office Monthly Weather Report, Met.0.908, UDC 511 506 1(41-4), Vol.94, No.8, August 1977.

¹⁰ June 1979 was said to be 'Mostly unsettled; thundery at times', The Meteorological Office Monthly Weather Report, Met.0.930, UDC 511 506 1(41-4), Vol.96, No.6, June 1979; The Meteorological Office Monthly Weather Report, Met.0.930, UDC 511 506 1(41-4), Vol.96, No.7, July 1979; The Meteorological Office Monthly Weather Report, Met.0.930, UDC 511 506 1(41-4), Vol.96, No.8, August 1979; Lynda Lee-Potter, 'We're still singing in the rain', *Daily Mail*, 11 June 1986, p.7.

¹¹ Anon., 'Summer 'wettest in 100 years', Met Office figures show', *BBC News*, 20 August 2012. Accessed 3 December 2018: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-19427139>

¹² Anon., 'How much does it rain in the UK? Find out how much rain we get in the UK and where gets the most rainfall', *Met Office*, 11 October 2017. Accessed 3 December 2018: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/learning/precipitation/rain/how-much-does-it-rain-in-the-uk>

¹³ Arnold, 'Like being on death row': Britain and the end of coal, c. 1970 to the present', pp.1-17.

¹⁴ Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive, BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Richard Duckenfield, snf, talking to Cyril Nield, Receiver, about the extraordinary collapse of Wakewood Sunbeds firm after a rapid rise to become Europe's fastest growing firm.', Film Item 3, 26 January 1983; Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive,

greater demand, accessibility, and cheap start-up costs, competition increased and prices fell. Unsurprisingly, after the early 1980s, a tanned complexion became a normative expectation of 'beauty' in North-West British culture.¹⁵

On a social-cultural level, from the late 1970s, Liverpool developed a reputation as possessing an extremely visible sunbed using stereotype. These 'sunbed blondes' apparently walked the city's streets, day and night.¹⁶ Even into the twenty-first century, Liverpool continued to be renowned for its infamous tanning culture. The 'beautifying' ritual of tanning remained popular for Liverpool's stereotypical inhabitants, and the salons appeared in 'excess' on most retail streets.¹⁷ A historical exploration of a Liverpudlian sunbed supplier will provide more long-awaited explanations for Liverpool's notorious tanning culture.

Jean Graham's Salon(s)

Graham's business offers an exceptional case study to historicise early sunbed suppliers. Graham was a pioneer – her changing methods of sunbed provision were representative of wider sunbed industry trends in England. Graham's

BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Martin Henfield, snf, reporting on the success of a sun bed manufacturing company started by a redundant Leyland worker in Preston. He spoke to Phil Wood, Production Director, Mike Wakelin, Chairman, Sue Wakelin, Marketing Director, Margaret Hughes, Company Secretary, and Janet Wood, Personnel Director.', Film Item 5, 4 May 1982.

¹⁵ Nina Jablonski, *Skin: A Natural History* (University of California Press, 2006), p.3.

¹⁶ Andrew Lees, *Liverpool: The Hurricane Port* (Mainstream Publishing, 2011), p.253.

¹⁷ Paula Grey, 'A look to die for? How Liverpool council is fighting sunbed obsession', *Guardian*, 12 August 2013. Accessed 2 December 2018:

<https://www.theguardian.com/local-government-network/2013/aug/12/liverpool-council-fighting-sunbed-obsession>; Dominic Hughes (Health Correspondent), 'Liverpool campaigns for sunbed salon licensing powers', *BBC News*, 14 May 2014. Accessed 2 December 2018: <https://www.theguardian.com/local-government-network/2013/aug/12/liverpool-council-fighting-sunbed-obsession>

salons also provided a long chronology from the peak to bust sunbed era, helping trace these changes. Finally, Graham's salons attracted unusually rich print press and television coverage. These revealed both a background of pre-sunbed tanning technologies and a deeper insight to Graham's professional business approach and identity.

Graham's business permits a focus on an archetypal early form of sunbed provision. The salon was a local beauty and health business, which had purchased a sunbed as an extension of their original services. Yet, Graham also fits into the typical long-term sunbed industry narrative (see chapters Two and Three): the increasing popularity and wide-spread use of sunbeds in the early 1980s soon led to the creation of sunbed shops and sunbed salons. In the early 1980s, Graham's four salons upscaled to a regional operation, all of which created larger spaces for sunbed rooms, and soon she dedicated one salon entirely to sunbed provision. Her later loss of this salon when the market saturated was also emblematic of the mid-to-late 1980s, followed by her early 1990s provision of household sunbed hires, which imitated another distribution trend of other providers. In short, the trajectory of Graham's salons mirrored that of the industry in the North-West.

In some ways, however, we must not risk generalising all sunbed businesses as identical to Graham's. Graham was clearly very successful and represented herself as a caring provider of sunbeds to her customers. She had the financial resources to include 'revolutionary' technologies; she innovatively made great efforts to remain up-to-date with health and beauty trends, and she catered to the desires and demands of her customers. The *Liverpool Echo* described Graham as a 'positive', 'power[ful]', and aspiring business-woman.¹⁸ She wanted to uplift, empower and inspire other women into 'economic, social and domestic bliss'.¹⁹ Graham also went to great lengths to separate herself

¹⁸ Anon., 'WHAT EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW'.

¹⁹ Anon., 'Jean Graham. "THE POSITIVE WOMAN"', *Liverpool Echo*, 18 September 1979, p.5.

from 'cheap' and 'meagre' sunbed providers.²⁰

Of course, this self-representation was a performance. As a businesswoman, Graham had to make a living to support both herself and her family. Nonetheless, Graham's reputation - publicised by the media, medical experts, her staff and customers – was consistently positive. She went to great lengths to provide both safe and superior services for her community. This contrasts with the depictions of early 1990s sunbed providers, who were increasingly presented as exploitative, only caring about profit and not the health of their consumers (see Chapter Five and Six).

Despite these unique features, in some ways Graham's business also represent the general 'type' of beauty and health salons wanting to provide sunbed services in their establishments. Graham was the first provider in Liverpool to provide new tanning technologies, yet other health and beauty salons in Liverpool were soon advertising similar services in the *Liverpool Echo* and *Mersey Yellow Pages*. Moreover, Graham's textual content was representative of how sunbeds were depicted at the time. The early sunbed providers, consumers and the general public regarded sunbeds as an upmarket and 'wealth'-denoting form of consumption. A focus on Graham's traditional sunbed enterprise offered a valuable insight of how a sunbed provider could grow from a 'local' to 'regional' business.

An evaluation of Graham's salon during the 1970s provides a history of how precursor commercial tanning technologies, used within public spaces of health and beauty consumption, were replaced by 'revolutionary sunbeds.' Both the *Liverpool Echo* and *Mersey Yellow Pages* date from 1970 to 1999, offering ample articles and adverts to contextualise the decade leading to Graham's introduction of sunbeds. In the yearly *Mersey Yellow Pages*, Graham's adverts featured across many different categorical sections. These included the 'Beauty'; 'Hair dressers'; 'Sauna & Solarium Equip', and finally 'Saunas and

²⁰ *Reports Politics*, (Director: Peter Carr), Granada, 23 June 1980.

Solaria' sections. Most other health and beauty businesses did not advertise every year, or they only advertised in one categorical section.

Graham was also one of the rare sunbed providers interviewed for a comprehensive programme investigating the sunbed industry. On the 23 June 1980, a programme called *Reports Politics* aired on Granada Television. Granada Television, a regional North-West television company based in Manchester, was one of the 'Big five commercial companies' of ITV broadcasting for the North-West. *Reports Politics* was a news-style current affairs programme, mainly watched by a wide regional North-West audience.²¹ This particular *Reports Politics*' episode featured two reports. The first report on sunbeds featured Graham's sunbed services, which portrayed her as a responsible businesswoman. Her salon emanated an atmosphere of 'luxury', warmth and 'safety'.²² This footage complicates our assumptions of which 'historical actors' influenced the positive acceptance of both the commercial sunbed industry and the 'health enhancing' perception of sunbeds, at least in its early years. Graham's interview appeared between interviews with 'other' healthcare professionals, such as a qualified therapist, Penny Langstaff, and a Consultant Dermatologist at the University Clinic in Liverpool, Dr Tom Stewart. Langstaff and Dr Stewart confirmed that Graham was a 'qualified beauty therapist,' and therefore supported her sunbed services for the public.²³

The Origin of Jean Graham

An evaluation of Graham's adverts provides an insight to both Graham's

²¹ Lez Cooke, 'Granada Television', in *A sense of place* (Manchester University Press, 2018).

²² Lizzie Thynne, 'Women in Television in the Multi-Channel Age', *Feminist Review*, 64, 1, (2000), p.66.

²³ The second part of the show presented a discussion about Margaret Thatcher's first year as Prime Minister by two reputable journalists of politics, Peregrine Worsthorpe and Simon Hoggart. This continued the professional tone of authority, *Reports Politics*.

personal background and her business approach. Graham highly likely originated from a middle-class family. Throughout the 1970s, Graham both gradually and diligently worked and invested to introduce and maintain an upmarket beauty and health enterprise. She went to great lengths to distinguish her superior services from 'cheap' salons.

In 1969, Graham first started working in her Blundellsands home.²⁴ Blundellsands was a wealthier northern region of Liverpool. The modern three- or four-bedroom houses had 'garages and gardens'.²⁵ During the summer of 1970, Graham continued to advertise her services in the *Liverpool Echo*. In a small 'personal services' column, a basic and cheap (if not free) plain-listing advertised Graham as a qualified 'beauty therapist', with 'M.A.B.Th' credentials. From the outset, Graham was interested in both therapies for the skin and the latest accessible technologies for her customers. Graham advertised these services as health improving, or at least enhanced a representation of health through 'beautifying', such as the rejuvenation of skin. The first services she offered in this advert were 'scientific facials including face lifting, skin peeling, wrinkling [and] acne', alongside the latest slimming technologies such as 'Slendertone', often covered in the print press as the fashion of the 1970s. Determined and flexible, Graham advertised that she could see clients from '10am to 9pm' Monday to Sunday.²⁶

In November 1970, in the *Liverpool Echo*, Graham announced the opening of her first salon in Liverpool's city centre on Bold Street. Graham's advert was positioned centrally at the bottom of the 'personal services' section. The advert was deliberately eye-catching for page turning readers as it was the

²⁴ Anon., 'WHAT EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW'.

²⁵ Anon., 'Homes for Sale. Blundellsands.', *Liverpool Echo*, 4 November 1969, p.11.

²⁶ History of the Advertising Trust, Cosmopolitan Collection, Anon., 'When it comes to figure exercising some women are just lazy' (Slendertone advert), *Cosmopolitan*, September 1979, p.31; Anon., 'Personal Services. Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 5 June 1970, p.19.

only advert in bold with large font. Graham had newly introduced the 'latest machines and techniques' for sauna and steam baths to her services.²⁷ In December, preparing for pre-Christmas discounts, Graham again purchased the only bold advert on the 'personal services' section. This time, the larger advert was more textually varied in eye-catching contrasting fonts. Graham described her salon as 'new [and] beautifully equipped', and later 'luxurious', demonstrating upmarket services.²⁸ During the 1970s, the *Liverpool Echo's* 'TV guide' section often only featured Graham's adverts.²⁹

In 1970 Graham placed her first advert in the *Mersey Yellow Pages*' 'Beauty Salons and Specialists' section. Graham wanted to distinguish her services as superior to other salons. During the 1970s, she was the first and only salon to follow the *Yellow Pages*' 'trade mark listings' advice.³⁰ Her adverts were not free plain-listings. To draw readers to her upmarket services, Graham invested in larger adverts with visuals, positioned in the centre of the page.³¹ Only in 1980 did 'Herbert of Liverpool Beauty Salon' begin to compete with Graham by publicising their adverts in a similar fashion.³²

Despite the print press style limitations of the 1970s *Yellow Pages*, Graham's visual advert, used from 1973 to 1976, displayed an air of sophistication. A side-profile of a woman's Grecian classical-looking silhouette, wrapped in a white towel, faced the text. Her body was petite and slim. The

²⁷ Anon., 'Personal Services. Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 5 November 1970, p.14.

²⁸ Anon., 'Personal Services. Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 1 December 1970, p.8; Anon., 'Personal Services. Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 2 December 1970, p.16'; Anon., 'Personal Services. Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 3 December 1970, p.14'; Anon., 'Personal Services. Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 28 December 1970, p.10.

²⁹ Anon., 'TV GUIDE. Your chance to Ask the experts about beauty', *Liverpool Echo*, 27 April 1976, p.3

³⁰ Anon., 'BOOST YOUR BUSINESS WITH A YELLOW PAGES ADVERTISEMENT', *Mersey Yellow Pages* 1970, p.16.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p.13.

³² Anon., 'Beauty Salons and Specialists', *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1980, p.17.

woman's head, crowned with blonde hair tied in a bun, tilted upwards, her face sketched delicately with sharp features. Although not artistically complex, the simplicity is elegant, particularly when contrasted to the visually empty plain-listings of the other beauty, hair and health salons (**Figure 1.1**).³³ Graham had the financial resources to introduce and maintain a high-end presence. She did not want to present cheap and low-range services or offer an 'ordinary' salon atmosphere. In 1981, the cost of one 'professional sunbed' ranged from £2000 to £17,000 on average.³⁴ The original price of a new professional sunbed between 1979 to 1980 would have been much greater.

Tanning Technologies and Terms Leading to 'sunbeds'

Both medical and commercial tanning technologies existed long before the introduction of sunbeds.³⁵ The medical introduction of tanning technologies established a 'curative' and 'health-improving' association for their commercial successors. However, some commercial businesses wanted to create a separation from their 'treatment' orientated predecessors. From the early 1980s onwards, adverts for these machines were visually playful with holiday-associated graphics (such as palm trees).³⁶ Nonetheless, the gradual change from medical 'sun-lamps', 'sun-rays', 'solarium' and 'solaria' to finally more cosmetic and commercial 'sunbeds' did not wholly disrupt the health associations of 'therapy' and 'treatment', experienced by the customers. Moreover, other commercial businesses used these former medical associations to further promote their commercial tanning technologies.

³³ Mersey Yellow Pages, 1973, p.13.; *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1976, p.15.

³⁴ Anon., 'The Financial Times examines the problems confronting small companies manufacturing sunbeds and solaria.', p.9; Doyle, 'The hidden dangers beyond the pale', p.38.

³⁵ Woloshyn, *Soaking Up the Rays*; Anon., 'Carbon Arch Sun Ray Lamps, 1950's', *Museum of Technology*, (2009 to 2018). Accessed 7 December 2018: http://www.museumoftechnology.org.uk/objects/_expand.php?key=142

³⁶ *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1982, pp.249-50.

Figure 1.1 The advert used for Jean Graham's salon from 1973 to 1976.



Source: 'Beauty Salons and Specialists', *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1976, p.15 (Berkshire Records Office Archive, Reading).

Throughout the 1970s, the *Liverpool Echo* and *Mersey Yellow Pages* advertised several different terms and types of commercial tanning technologies. In order of first appearance, the terms 'solarium', 'sun-ray', 'sun-lamp', 'solaria', and finally 'sunbed' were used by businesses to identify and sell indoor tanning machines. Many of the original publicly accessible tanning technologies were designed to exclusively tan small parts of the body or the face (mainly 'sun-lamps' and 'sun-rays'), but from the mid-1970s, public use

of these smaller devices became phased out in preference for much larger 'sunbed' resembling machines designed to tan both the body and face. The fast growth of the sunbed industry also resulted from technological 'breakthroughs.' Before the introduction of body-sized sunbeds, ultraviolet exposure from sun-lamps required 'six or seven minutes' sessions,' whereas with the 'new' sunbeds of 1978, consumers could relax under tanning treatments for up to thirty minutes at a time.³⁷

The changes in tanning technology terms and where they were advertised in the *Mersey Yellow Pages* illustrates the continuous blurring of medical, cosmetic and later commercial use of UV devices.³⁸ Since December

³⁷ Williams, 'Holiday threatens sunset for tanning lamp manufacturers', p.9.

³⁸ Woloshyn, *Soaking Up the Rays*.

1971, Graham offered 'sun-ray' services.³⁹ In the *Mersey Yellow Pages*, Graham's was the only salon to reference (and perhaps offer in public spaces) these 'sun-ray' services. From 1973 until 1976, she advertised 'sun-ray' facilities in the categorical section 'beauty salons and specialists' (**Figure 1.1**).⁴⁰ These machines were usually introduced as a 'treatment', reflecting a medical sounding therapy.⁴¹ To reinforce this association, from 1976 to 1980, 'sun-rays' were included in the 'Health Clubs and Centres' section.

In the *Liverpool Echo* on the 6 February 1979, Graham announced that her salon was the first in Liverpool to introduce 'the revolutionary new S O N T E G R A method of sun-ray treatments'. Her clients could achieve a 'beautiful all-over tan' in 'only 7 days.' The emphasis on 'all-over' and 'only 7 days' suggest that these new sun-ray machines were larger and significantly more powerful.⁴² In the *Liverpool Echo* from early 1979 to the end of 1980, Graham used the terms 'sun-ray', 'solaria' and 'sunbed' interchangeably to advertise her 'Sontegra' machine

Figure 1.2 A 'Sontegra Solaria' or 'Sunbed' advert (1979).

SONTEGRA SOLARIA
*Don't just have a bath—
 have the real FIESTA*

For a safe and healthy year-round sun tan. HOT WHIRL SPA POOL available in many sizes and colours.

We also supply:
 Exclusive quality saunas with the new direct heating system "SOFT SENSATION"
 Ultra-Violet water treatment plant eliminating chemicals in pool water

For further details please telephone or write to:
SUN HEALTH COMPANY LTD.
 163 Forest Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent
 Tel: 0892—37731

Source: Anon., 'Sontegra Solaria', *Financial Times*, 17 April 1979, p.14.

³⁹ Anon., 'Personal Services. Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 2 December 1971, p.12; Anon., 'Personal Services. Jean Graham', 11 April 1973, *Liverpool Echo*, p.16.

⁴⁰ *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1973, p.13; *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1976, p.15.

⁴¹ 'Sauna Bath Construction and Equipment', *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1973, p.265.

⁴² Anon., 'Jean Graham. Brown but not burned with SONTEGRA', 6 February 1979, *Liverpool Echo*, p.3

(**Figure 1.2**).⁴³ After 1980, the term ‘sunbed’ replaced ‘sun-ray’ in all categorical sections.⁴⁴ From 1981, the term ‘sunbed’ became the most favoured and common term to describe indoor tanning machinery in England. Sunbeds remained in the ‘Beauty’ and ‘Sauna’ sections until their disappearance in the 2015/2016 *Mersey Yellow Pages* catalogue.

The Location of Graham’s Salons

The geographic locations of Graham’s four salons (and potentially one or two extra shops selling sunbeds) within Mersey demonstrates that she had and used her the financial resources to attract wealthy customers (**Table 1.3 and Figure 1.4**). The location of the first salon (66 Bold Street) was historically regarded for decades as an extremely busy and accessible location within the city centre. Bold Street was the main high street that people passed through when walking from Liverpool’s central train station to the Bombed-Out Church - a prominent local landmark with many public transport links. For half a kilometre on Bold Street, city strollers would see coffee shops, restaurants, salons, bars, bookshops, a large range of retail shops and gyms.⁴⁵ Graham’s first salon was halfway up this street, which was also the T-junction from Slater street, allowing even greater visibility and attention from more viewpoints. Unsurprisingly, the Bold Street salon lasted the longest out of Graham’s four salons - the adverts continued until 1999.

⁴³ Anon., ‘WHAT EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW’.

⁴⁴ ‘Health Clubs and Centres’, *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1976, p.184; ‘Health Clubs and Centres – Private’, *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1980, p.224.

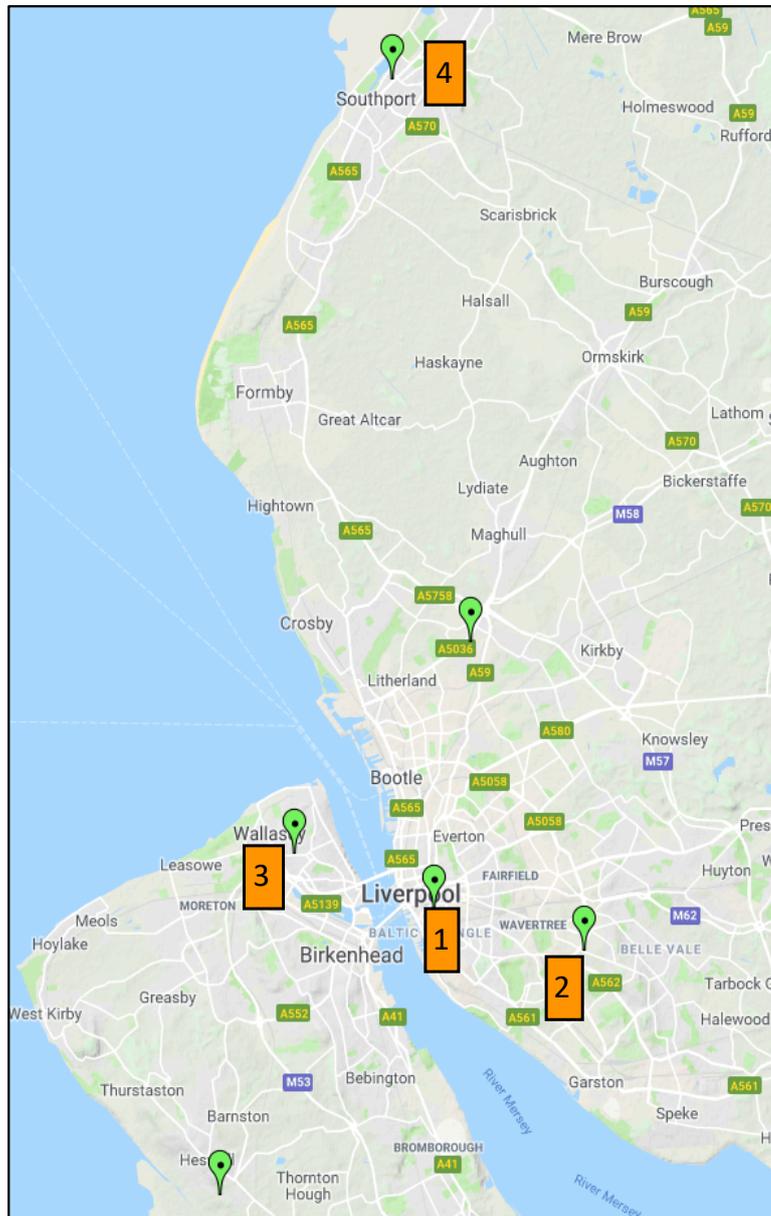
⁴⁵ Elisabeth Sedgewick, ‘A historic look at bold street’, 25 November 2015. Accessed 9 December 2018: <https://signaturesliverpool.co.uk/a-historic-look-at-bold-street/>; For photographs of bustling displays of the public walking along Bold street from the 1960s to 1980s see Anon., ‘Old Photographs of Liverpool in Colour’, *Liverpool picture book*, December 2018. Accessed 9 December 2018: <https://www.liverpoolpicturebook.com/search?q=bold+street>; Chris Couch, *City of change and challenge: urban planning and regeneration in Liverpool* (Routledge, 2017), p.ix-x.

Table 1.3 The locations of Jean Graham's salons (1970 to 1999).

| | Years Active | Business Name | Street Name | City | Post Code |
|---|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| 1 | 1970 - 1999+ | (CENTRAL) Jean Graham Salon | 66 Bold Street | Liverpool | L1 4EA |
| 2 | Nov 1972 - May 1984 | (EAST mersey) Graham Salon | 253 Woolton Road, Childwall | Liverpool | L16 8NA |
| 3 | Oct 1979 - 1988 | (WEST mersey) Graham Salon | 136 Wallasey Road | Liscard, Wirral | CH44 2AF |
| 4 | Aug 1981 - May 1984 | (NORTH mersey) 'Touch of Class'(sunbeds only) | 589 Lord Street | Southport | PR9 0AN |
| 5 | March 1981 - May 1984 | ? 'Bronuva' supplier | Wakefield Road, Aintree | Bootle | |
| 6 | 1981 - 1984? | ? (Also supplied 'Bronuva Solarium equipment') | Gayton House, 46 Well Lane | Heswall, Wirral | CH60 8NG |

Source: Mersey Yellow Pages and the Liverpool Echo (1970 to 1999).

Figure 1.4 The locations of Graham's salons in Liverpool.



Source: Mersey Yellow Pages and the Liverpool Echo (1970 to 1999).

Graham's second salon opened in November 1972, on 253 Woolton Road in Childwall, in-between two main roads, Queens Drive and Menlove Avenue. This second salon, positioned on the outskirts of the city, was located east from the first salon. This salon catered for students as it was close to Liverpool Hope University and their student accommodation.⁴⁶ The third salon opened mid-October 1979, on the West side of the River Mersey on 136 Wallasey Road in Liscard, the Wirral.⁴⁷ This salon outlasted the second and fourth salon due to its location in a wealthier area.

In August 1981, the fourth salon opened under both Graham's name and a 'Touch of Class'. This 'sunbed only' salon was the furthest north of the salons, located on 589 Lord Street, in Southport.⁴⁸ Similar to Bold Street, Lord Street was easy to access and regularly visited as it was one of the main shopping and most historically visited streets in Southport.⁴⁹ This salon opened during the 'boom' period of the industry. After a bankruptcy note, the salon closed in May 1984, in trend with other retail and sunbed salon losses caused by the recession. From March 1981 until mid-May 1984. Graham also shared the ownership of another sunbed shop with her husband, Tom Birchall. Their shop in Aintree (called 'Bronuva') sold Solarium Equipment.⁵⁰

From 1970 to 1981, Graham had independently established four sunbed-providing salons and had ties to one other shop supplier. By the summer of

⁴⁶ Anon., 'Personal Services. Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 30 November 1972, p.15.

⁴⁷ Anon., 'Personal Services. Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 21 August 1979, p.3.

⁴⁸ During the early 1980s, sunbed salons regularly emphasised that their sunbeds were 'classy' in their advertising campaigns, Anon., 'SLIP INTO SOMETHING SMALLER. Jean Graham.', *Liverpool Echo*, 18 August 1981, p.5.

⁴⁹ Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive, BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Film of sunbeds which are being manufactured by a local firm in Kirkby for tourists in Southport.', Film Item 4, 14 January 1982.

⁵⁰ Anon., 'Health & Beauty, Spring '81. Bronuva', *Liverpool Echo*, 3 March 1981, p.14; Anon., 'Legal Notices: Bankruptcy Acts 1914 and 1926 In the Liverpool County Court In Bankruptcy No. 105 of 1980. Re: Graham Birchall', *Liverpool Echo*, 17 May 1984, p.38.

1981, she ran five sunbed providing locations. This Merseyside sunbed provision was significant given that a 'sunbed shop' often provided more than one sunbed. Often dozens were fitted, and in the case of Graham's Southport salon, a total of 60 sunbeds were operating by February 1984.⁵¹ Although Graham's two main sunbed shops had closed by May 1984, the remaining salons on Bold Street and in the Wirral provided sunbeds until 1988.⁵² In 1989, Bold street provided a total of 18 sunbeds.⁵³ Graham's sunbed services continued for a subsequent decade.⁵⁴

Graham provided prominent and accessible salons on busy main streets: in a densely populated urban city like Liverpool, the advertising – and not just print material, but also the embodied advertising of tanned skin - reflected extreme competition. The proximity of unregulated rival shops would have reduced the cost of sunbed services. The selling of sunbeds as luxurious health necessities would have been persuasive for the Mersey public.⁵⁵

Making Celebrity Body Culture Accessible at Graham's Upmarket Salons (early 1970s)

In Graham's advertising, she mentioned that celebrities were using the same fashionable beauty and health services that her salons provided for customers.⁵⁶ She read women's fashion magazines to keep up-to-date with

⁵¹ Anon., 'Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 29 February 1984, p.18.

⁵² *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1988, p.689.

⁵³ Anon., 'Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 2 May 1989, p.16.

⁵⁴ Anon., 'Echo Leisure Guide. Health & Beauty. Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 1 July 1999, p.48.

⁵⁵ In this silent film masses of sunbed adverts in shop windows from a street are shown. Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive, BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Film of sunbeds', Film Item 2, 1 December 1980.

⁵⁶ Businesses have used celebrity figures to endorse their products since the late nineteenth century, B. Zafer Erdogan, 'Celebrity Endorsement: A Literature Review', *Journal of Marketing Management*, (1999), 15, 4, p.292.

these latest trends and to learn which celebrities were using new beauty and health technologies. For instance, in a 1970 *Liverpool Echo* newspaper, Graham advertised that she was selling 'West End Treatment[s]'.⁵⁷ Similarly, in 1973, Graham was selling a 'Time Wrap' weight loss service. In her advert, Graham referenced a fashion and feminist magazine, 'Annabel', to proclaim that Barbara Eden, a film star, used the same new weight loss technology that she was providing.⁵⁸ Moreover, in 1976, on Liverpool's *Echo* radio chat show, Graham offered her 'expert advice' about a famous cosmetic shop based in London, called Face Place. Graham spoke about the cosmetic shop's owner, Joan Price in tones of confident familiarity, by endorsing Price's credible background. Price was a former magazine beauty editor for *The Queen* (later *Harper's & Queen*) during the 1950s and 60s.⁵⁹

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Graham continued to demonstrate that her services were used by celebrities, aiming to both inspire and attract clients. She achieved this by referencing when her services featured in women's magazines, such as *Woman's Own*, *Women's Journal*, *Vogue*, *Harpers and Queen*, and *Good Housekeeping*.⁶⁰ Graham, consistently

⁵⁷ Anon., 'Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 1 December 1970, p.8.

⁵⁸ Anon., 'Jean Graham Salon. The Relaxing Way to Slim', *Liverpool Echo*, 11 April 1973, p.16; Sabine Bitter, 'Grand old Lady: Women's magazine «Annabelle» turns 75', *Swiss Radio and Television*, 28 February 2013. Accessed 17 October 2019: <https://www.srf.ch/kultur/gesellschaft-religion/grand-old-lady-frauenzeitschrift-annabelle-wird-75>

⁵⁹ Anon., 'That rosy glow no woman wants. The Echo Chat Show in Print. Beauty', *Liverpool Echo*, 30 April 1976, p.10; Telegraph Obituaries, 'Michael Constantinidi, genial adman and traditional sports enthusiast who helped to widen the appeal of Eton Fives – obituary', *Telegraph*, 8 March 2019. Accessed 17 October 2019: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/obituaries/2019/03/08/michael-constantinidi-genial-adman-traditional-sports-enthusiast/>

⁶⁰ Anon., 'Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 18 September 1979, p.5; Graham sold 'Maria Galland's facial treatment'. Galland was a Parisian dancer, beautician and celebrity, who established a premium professional skin care brand, Anon., 'Jean Graham',

presented her salon as both refined and reflective of exciting 'new revolutionary' technologies. She was the first businesswoman in Liverpool to launch a sunbed. Consequently, her sunbeds were framed as a high-status technology, and the act of tanning as stylish.⁶¹

An 'Expert' in Skin Health and Beauty (mid-1970s)

From the mid-1970s onwards, Graham's credibility as a health and beauty 'expert' was both recognised and reinforced in newspaper articles and a radio chat show, airing on Liverpool's *Echo* radio station. In April 1976, the *Liverpool Echo* featured an article titled 'Your chance to Ask the experts about Beauty.' The article explained that *Echo* radio were broadcasting one of their popular chat shows to discuss beauty and skin care the following day. To receive 'expert' advice, the newspaper reporter encouraged locals to call in and ask questions. On the chat show, the presenter, Moya Jones, was accompanied by two 'North-West leading beauticians' who led a 'beauty panel' in responding to questions. Graham was introduced as the first beauty expert. Many of her experiences and credentials were listed. She was described as 'a teacher in beauty therapy, and a member of both the Association of Applied Cosmetology committee for education and the Liverpool Education Committee for Life Sciences'. Graham's 'International CIDESCO Diploma in Beauty therapy' and her two 'beauty specialist' salons were cited.⁶² Karen Irvine was the second

Liverpool Echo, 29 October 1979, p.3; Anon., 'Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 23 April 1982, p.20.

⁶¹ Anon., 'Jean Graham. Brown but not burned with SONTEGRA', *Liverpool Echo*, 6 February 1979, p.3.

⁶² CIDESCO stands for Comité International d'Esthétique et de Cosmétology, who were founded in 1946. Since 1957, CIDESCO has remained one of the world's leading international beauty therapy and aesthetics organisations. Swiss-based, the qualification is recognised internationally and was set up by beauty therapist who were concerned with the falling standard. Graham was one of seven of her year group to be awarded this prized diploma from France. In 1980, she was the only one to have achieved this diploma in England. Anon., 'WHAT EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW'.

expert. Her credentials required half the space of Graham's and she only owned one salon. The *Liverpool Echo* published the chat show conversation two days later.⁶³

In the chat show newspaper article, both the photograph and the content reinforced Graham's reputation as an unrivalled expert, who cared more about the health of her community than her profit margins. In the photograph of the two beauticians, Graham was wearing an elegant hat, and both neck and wrist jewellery. She was sat in front of a table, holding a telephone to her ear, leaning forwards. Irvine sat to her left, smiling yet empty handed. After an introduction of their qualifications, the main callers were formally introduced, and their questions were categorised into different subjects. Advice was offered on: Rosacea, scarring, smoking and open pores, dry skin, nail-biting, 'unbiased advice on different brands of make-up', puffy eyes, and finally, 'ruddy complexion(s) from sunshine'.

The interaction between Graham and Irvine, as they explained both the causes of and possible solutions to these 'beauty and health issues', strengthened the impression that Graham was the leading skin health expert in the North-West. Graham provided either all or most of the advice after the questions. She comprehensively offered potential 'causes', other 'symptoms', and a range of solutions. Irvine offered the occasional sentence or simply agreed with Graham.

Most of Graham's solutions also discouraged additional cosmetics or beauty and health services, generating her credibility as more than a salesperson. Instead, she offered free and practical solutions, such as 'drinking hot water' to 'stimulate the kidneys to function more efficiently'. Both the chat show and article concluded that there was more to 'beauty counselling and treatments' than advice on the latest trends of cosmetics. *Liverpool Echo* confidently supported Graham, stating that experts, such as Graham, could

⁶³ Anon., 'TV GUIDE'.

help, and that 'money [was] not wasted' if the advice resulted in a 'confidence boost'. The concluding sentence read: 'despite the hippie cults ... we are still judged by our appearances'.⁶⁴ Three years later, in February 1979, Graham introduced sunbed services for the first time. As a locally renowned skin health expert, famous for her 'natural' and 'scientific' anti-cosmetic health treatments, it was unsurprising that Merseyside locals trusted Graham when she claimed that her sunbeds were 'completely safe'.⁶⁵ Often, Graham's credentials were listed next to claims that goggles were not necessary and that there was no risk of burning from using her sunbeds.⁶⁶

In June 1980, Graham's discourse of certified professionalism and 'safety' regarding her sunbed 'treatments' was reinforced in an interview on *Reports Politics*. In the interview, Graham remarked that all her staff were trained beauty experts; they had a minimum of two years training. This two-year training cosmetology course included modules in physiology, chemistry, physics and the training of practical treatments to learn the basics of body health. The British Association of Beauty therapy and cosmetology set the exams. Graham was also qualified with a teacher's diploma and trained her own staff to a high standard.⁶⁷ By the summer of 1980, Graham had trained many of her part-timers and most of her twelve full time-staff.⁶⁸

Doctors and the media also supported Graham's 'paramedical' services for affluent clients. The *Liverpool Echo* publicised the fact that Graham was 'work[ing] with doctors, particularly in the treatment of skin complaints like psoriasis, and circulation problems, including arthritis, rheumatism and varicose veins'. The reporter asserted that Graham's 'skin clinic' was 'relieve[ing] the burden' on the 'health service', as it was 'over-stretched with all the cut-backs'.

⁶⁴ Anon., 'That rosy glow no woman wants'.

⁶⁵ Anon., 'Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 6 February 1979, p.3.

⁶⁶ Anon., 'Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 1 May 1979, p.3.

⁶⁷ *Reports Politics*.

⁶⁸ Anon., 'WHAT EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW'.

Graham provided private health therapies, such as ultra-violet treatments, which were 'successful ... irrespective of the cost'. The more affluent Liverpool locals who had disposable incomes, and either refused to wait for National Health Service (NHS) treatment or could not be cured by their doctors, were the patient-consumers using Graham's private treatments.⁶⁹

An Approachable and "Positive" Provider in the Community (mid-to-late 1970s)

Graham wanted to portray herself as more than a beauty and health expert – she wanted to be a member of the community who both inspired and supported other women. In previous sections of this chapter, Graham's support for her community was evident through several *Liverpool Echo* newspaper articles, the *Echo* radio show and *Reports Politics* on television. Graham may have contacted media agents to propose this publicity, or media authorities may have invited her as a personable North-West beauty salon spokeswoman. Nonetheless, Graham used her public profile to inspire women. She wanted women to 'improve' themselves, and she offered sunbed 'treatments' as a method to undergo this transformation.

In September 1979, Graham placed an unconventional advert in the *Liverpool Echo*. Aiming to disseminate her salon's 'positive' ethos to Liverpool's newspaper readers, Graham's advert cited a *Woman's Own* magazine – 'The Positive Woman' was the main theme and title. At the time, *Woman's Own* was

⁶⁹ Ibid.; Anon., 'Relief from Psoriasis at Jean Graham salons', *Liverpool Echo*, 14 September 1981, p.5; Although Graham's 'paramedical' services were supported by doctors they were not available on the NHS. A newspaper article explained that a local woman, Brenda, had trialled all available NHS therapies for ten years looking for a cure for her skin condition to no avail. Brenda visited Graham's salon after hearing about Graham's high cure rate from three hundred and fifty successful patients. Graham was working closely with dermatologists, both researchers and those working in the hospitals, Judi Goodwin, 'Skin-deep joy for Brenda', *Liverpool Echo*, 25 October 1985, p.8.

'Britain's Top Selling Weekly Magazine for Women'.⁷⁰ In a September edition, the magazine had published two lengthy articles to discuss the lifestyles of 'positive women'.⁷¹ Graham's 'positive woman' advert was published one month after the opening of her third salon in the wealthier region of Mersey, the Wirral. Using this prominent national magazine, Graham wanted to attract both middle-aged and affluent women, who had disposable incomes and leisure time.

The *Woman's Own* target readers were women in their thirties or forties, as the first article explained that the 'Positive Woman' had experienced 'all the fun and frenzy of the 60s' and endured the 'challenge of the inflation-ridden 70s'. The 'positive woman' was now confident, comfortable and assured. Described as both 'elegant' and 'ageless', she had freedom to 'choose her own lifestyle,' whether this prioritised work, staying at home with the family, or combining these two options. A bodily appearance of 'luxury' and 'pure simplicity' was encouraged. The in-trend tones, textures and colours of clothes, such as 'Sunarama tights', hinted a soft naturalness. The act of tanning skin (whether naturally or artificially on a sunbed) to depict a simple, soft and subtle representation of wealth, independence and financial stability would have suited this fashion. Graham regularly advertised that her sunbeds made her clients feel 'wealthier', which 'boost[ed] [their] confidence sky high'. At the time, the association of both sunbeds and 'wealth' was a typical selling point deployed by other salons.⁷²

⁷⁰ In 1980, 26 per cent of all adult women read each issue of *Woman's Own* magazine. In 1978, the average age of these women were early 40s. *Woman's Own* reached a large amount of upper class women (23% of the 'adult female population') yet the magazine also reached roughly the same amount of women from all lower to middle-class groups, Stella Earnshaw, 'Advertising and the media: The case of women's magazines,' *Media, Culture & Society*, 6, 4, (1984), p.411. pp.414-6.

⁷¹ London School of Economics Archive, Reference: GB 106 PC/05, Anon., 'The Positive Woman' and 'The Positive Woman's Guide to Beauty: The Body Programme: This Week: Skin and Health', *Woman's Own*, 8 September 1979, p.1, p.11, pp.40-8.

⁷² Anon., 'Jean Graham. Beauty Often Needs A Helping Hand.', *Liverpool Echo*, 14 October 1980, p.8.

The second 'Positive Woman' article recommended a 'Body Programme', focusing on 'skin and health'. Positioned in the centre of the magazine, this nine-page spread would have been seen by most *Woman's Own* readers. This article described both emerging new technologies and therapies (such as an array of 'health baths'), and everyday 'natural' remedies and fitness routines. The tanned models, healthy-looking without make-up, were photographed blissfully indulging in these therapies and routines. The lengthy article soothingly described how new technologies could improve women's 'natural' skin health and beauty. Positive women were apparently 'skin conscious,' and although smoking, drinking and not exercising were presented as detrimental to skin health, sun exposure or tanning technologies were not.⁷³

Graham remarked that the two 'Positive Woman' articles 'focus[ed]... attention on everything ... Graham ha[d] strived to instil into every woman who attend[ed] her Health and Beauty Salons'. This included 'good health – beauty – personal success and happiness'. Graham's advert continued, 'under these four headings lies the key to economic, social and domestic bliss'. Graham included a short description of her services, some of which matched the technologies promoted in the *Woman's Own* articles. These therapies, which included sunbed 'treatments', would apparently help women 'present a completely new image' to their friends and associates. Graham encouraged her clients to become a 'lovelier' version of themselves, by becoming 'slim – tanned [and] radiant'.⁷⁴

⁷³ Anon., 'The Positive Woman', *Woman's Own*, pp.40-48.

⁷⁴ Anon., "'THE POSITIVE WOMAN'"; For a late twentieth-century history of gender and 'beauty' and 'health' industries, see Moseley, 'Slimming One's Way to a Better Self?'; Moya Lloyd, 'Feminism, aerobics and the politics of the body', *Body & Society*, 2, 2, (1996), pp.79-98; Nora Jacobson, *Cleavage: Technology, controversy, and the ironies of the man-made breast* (Rutgers University Press, 2000).

In October 1980, Graham continued this aspirational health and beauty discourse for women. The *Liverpool Echo* interviewed Graham for a large article titled 'What every Woman Should Know ...'. At the top of the article, a photograph of Graham smiling was captioned: 'Graham: every woman's friend'. The article explained that her salon's catchphrase was 'beauty through health'.⁷⁵ The reporter cited Graham's decade-long success and Graham described herself as the 'power' behind this success. Women who aspired to similar success may well have been drawn to her salons.

A Renowned and Professional Provider for Wealthier Clientele (early to mid-1980s)

The summer of 1980 marked the peak of the sunbed industry (see Chapter Two).⁷⁶ Recognising this, *Reports Politics* (June 1980), investigated the sunbed industry. Graham was selected as a suitable representative of a sunbed salon provider as she was media savvy, had a decade-long reputation of being an approachable 'beauty and health expert' and owned three successful salons. Moreover, Graham's success as a major provider of sunbed 'treatments' was also the result of being married to Tom Birchall - one of Liverpool's most successful 'Sunbed clinic proprietors'.

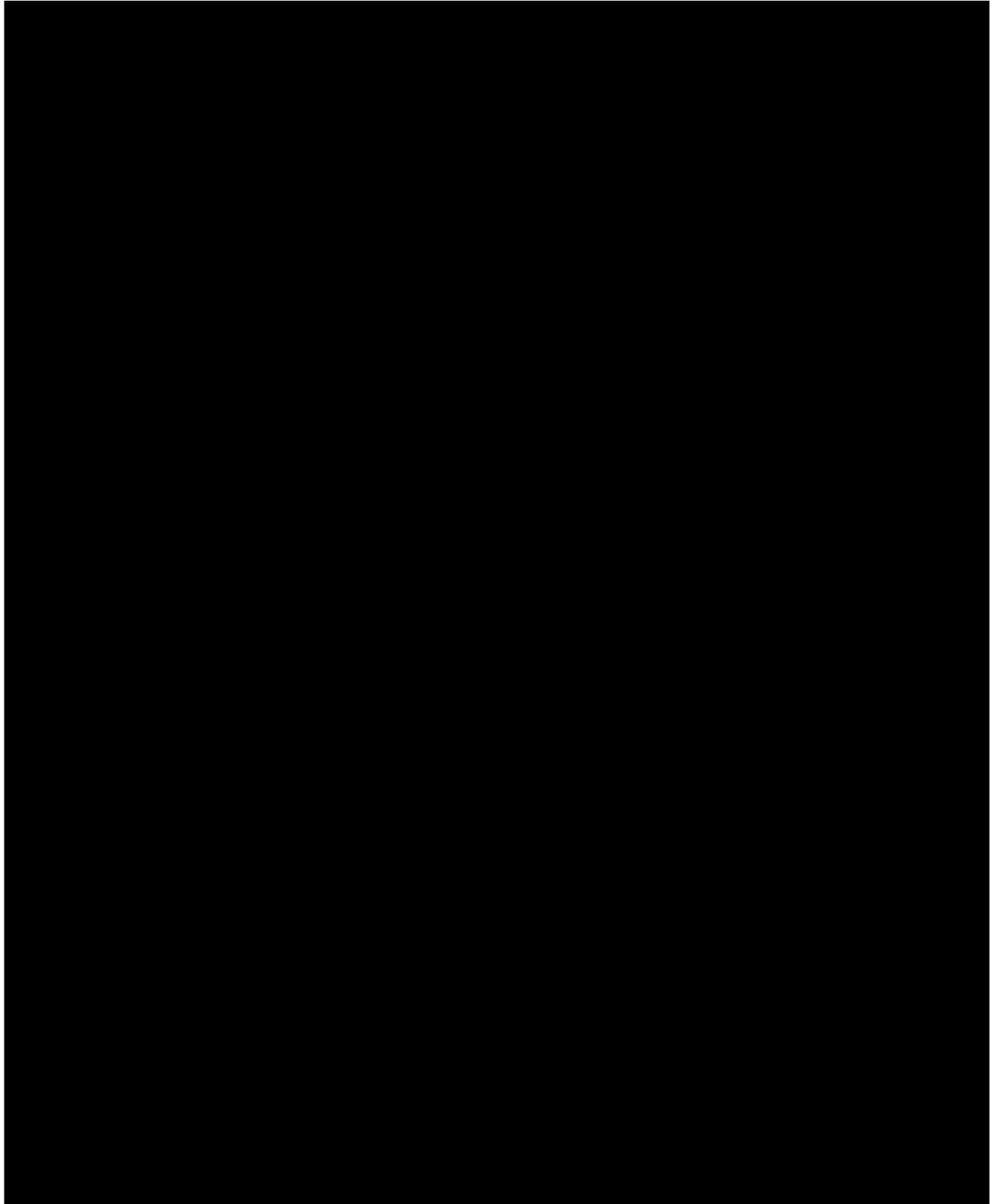
Intriguingly, despite Graham's visible wedding ring, *Reports Politics* did not present Graham and Birchall as husband and wife. Any hint of a relationship was entirely absent in all media (except for the small print at the bottom of some sunbed adverts which provided 'Graham-Birchall' manufacturing information). Although the married couple sat next to each other during the interview, they were framed individually when they spoke (**Figure 1.5**). Graham and Birchall shared the same positive perspective when speaking about the sunbed

⁷⁵ Anon., 'WHAT EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW'.

⁷⁶ I define the 'boom' of the sunbed industry as the two-year timeframe - during 1980 and 1981 - in which the positive representation, sales and many sunbed-selling businesses soared.

industry, yet they did not interact with each other. This created a more professional and reliable tone for audiences. Two individuals, from separate

Figure 1.5. Tom Birchall and Jean Graham on
Reports Politics (June 1980)



*Source: Reports Politics, Granada, 23 June 1980.
(British Film Institute, Stephen Street Archive).*

factions of the sunbed industry (from manufacturing to public provision), shared the same opinion, which created the impression of two independent authorities on sunbeds. Their different speech mannerisms would have attracted a wider range of tele-viewing interest. Birchall had a noticeable Liverpoolian accent and open body language, which contrasted with Graham's received pronunciation and ladylike poise, her hands lightly crossed over her legs. From another perspective, the local communities familiar with Graham's salon would have recognised Graham and her husband supporting each other.⁷⁷ This added a personal, familial, social and communal feel for local viewers to both relate to and admire.

Overall, these interviews were effective publicity stunts for Graham's salons. The presenter (Roger Blythe), the background narrator, and both Graham and Birchall immediately emphasised the difference between the provision of sunbeds from 'luxurious clinics, like [Graham's]', or those 'installed in the most meagre of surroundings'. The verbal commentary, that Graham respected both her tanning equipment and customers by providing up-to-date safety precautions and sanitary facilities, was supported by the visuals of her lavishly decorated salon.⁷⁸ The following summer in 1981, Graham's fourth

⁷⁷ From the 1970s to early 1980s, Graham's story demonstrates the beginning of women confidently leading in business. Her approach was both representative of the time and unique. Her wedding ring, displayed on television, reflected a traditional setting of requiring a man by a woman's side to be respectably presented on television. Yet, Graham was one of the only women to visibly both own and run salons in Liverpool. The other women-owned businesses did not publicise that they were 'powerful' businesswomen and their salon names were not tied to their personal name. In contrast, most of the men who owned beauty, health or fitness clubs assertively included their names, such as 'Bob Sweeney's Gym', 'J & J's gym', or 'Sid's Sports Centre'. For a history of late twentieth-century women at the forefront of commercial industries, see Moseley, 'Slimming One's Way to a Better Self?'

⁷⁸ *Reports Politics*.

establishment – the ‘sunbed only’ salon in Southport -, opened.⁷⁹ Reaping the commercial success from her televised professional appearance.

In December 1983, the *Liverpool Echo* confidently proclaimed Graham as a local celebrity. She was ‘a household name in the beauty business’, and her four salons were ‘famous’ in Mersey. Whether for personal, profit or publicity reasons - or all three combined -, Graham continued to be a provider in the community. The locals continued to suffer from the drastic unemployment levels caused by the early 1980s recession, and many women struggled to find jobs and could no longer indulge in beauty and health services.⁸⁰ Graham responded by offering treatments at new ‘budget prices’. She also offered a group of teenage girls ‘strict and thorough tutoring’ to start beauty business careers after she noticed that both her customers and employees had benefited from two work-experience volunteers. Photographs publicised Graham supporting her community. The *Liverpool Echo* featured a photograph of five young women during their training, dressed in white uniforms looking both focused and professional. One girl massaging a customer’s neck was smiling towards the camera.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Anon., ‘SLIP INTO SOMETHING SMALLER. Jean Graham.’, *Liverpool Echo*, 18 August 1981, p.5.

⁸⁰ Bernard Porter, ‘“Though Not an Historian Myself ...”: Margaret Thatcher and the Historians’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 5, 2, (1994), p.249; Geoffrey K. Fry, ‘Commentary: ‘A bottomless pit of political surprise’?: The Political ‘Mystery’ of the Thatcher Era’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 21, 4, (2010), pp.551-2; Sarah Kenny, ‘A ‘Radical Project’: Youth Culture, Leisure, and Politics in 1980s Sheffield’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 30, 4, (2019), pp.557–584.

⁸¹ Anon., ‘Advertising Feature. “good ideas”. A Regular Reader Service From Merseyside Advertisers. Jean Graham’, *Liverpool Echo*, 16 December 1983, p.16.

Graham's Customers

In this section I ask, do 'traditional' stereotypes of sunbed users (i.e, young white women and homosexual men)⁸² match the demographics of users from the birth of the industry? These preconceptions are not substantiated by the historical evidence, which complicates who were targeted in sunbed adverts, and who were attracted to using sunbeds.⁸³

Advertising depicted white, affluent, married, middle-aged and older women as both the main target audience and the sunbed using patient-consumers. These types of women featured in Graham's advertising, the women in the radio chat show, and the photographs and televised recordings of her customers. Yet these textual, verbal and visual representations cannot confirm that only middle-aged and older women visited Graham's salons. First, most sunbed adverts – and other health and beauty technologies - portrayed slim and youthful adolescent women, aged between their twenties and thirties. Consequently, young women would have seen these adverts and visited Graham's salons, if they could afford the treatments. Moreover, the 'positive woman' article, cited by Graham, asserted that 'positive women' could be aged '18 to 80'. A woman's interest in radiating her elegance, financial independence and freedom was a more influential sunbed using factor than her age. The reason why middle-aged to older women were captured attending Graham's salon was because they were perhaps the main demographic group who could afford the cost of her 'therapies' when they were first introduced.

Ironically, women on opposite ends of the age-spectrum sought to use sunbeds for the opposite aspirational reasons. Younger women used sunbeds because a tanned complexion demonstrated independence, maturity and a bodily wealth of travel and experience. This desire was frequently deployed in

⁸² *Tantastic*.

⁸³ Anon., 'Artificial Tanning Sunbeds', *World Health Organisation*, 2018. Accessed 23 November 2018: <http://www.who.int/uv/intersunprogramme/activities/uvartsunbeds/en/>

the advertising discourse to encourage customers: '*in just two weeks you can look healthier, **wealthier** and sexier with a great suntan*'.⁸⁴ This statement illustrated that successful, affluent and typically older women had greater access to tanning opportunities, either through holidays or tanning technologies. Graham's statement supported this, by asserting that her sunbeds were 'NOT THE CHEAPEST – BUT ... THE BEST'.⁸⁵ In contrast, middle-aged and older women wanted a sunbed tan to radiate a regeneration of youth, vitality and to appear 'sexier'. Sunbeds were said to create a 'health-giving glow that ma[de] you look and feel like a new person'. In sunbed adverts, the sketched or photographed bodies of confident, young, toned and bronzed models reinforced this desirable image of 'health'. Both young and old women aspired to be tanned - they were told that this aesthetic 'improvement' was the 'key to economic, social and domestic bliss'.⁸⁶ This contrasted to the dominant assumption that young and/or working-class class women were the main sunbed consumers. From the late 1980s, this assumption increased in the media with the growing stigmatisation of sunbed use (see chapters Four, Five and Six).

Moreover, typical of the 1970s, a comedy-romance sitcom, *To the Manor Born* (1979 to 1981), also reflected the association of tanned skin and wealth. The sitcom revolved around the protagonist - Audrey, a middle-aged upper-class widow – who lost her fortune, yet tried to maintain her pretence of wealth. She had to move from her manor house to the small lodge at the bottom of her estate. In November 1979, two months after Graham's 'Positive woman' advert, Audrey announced at a party that she was going on an expensive holiday to Spain in an episode called 'The Grape Vine'. As Audrey could not afford this holiday, the episode centred on Audrey hiding in the lodge, whilst using a home tanning unit. Elegantly yet comically poised in a black swimming costume, jewellery and black goggles, Audrey sits on a reclined chair, tanning as she

⁸⁴ Anon., 'WHAT EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW'.

⁸⁵ Anon., 'Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 7 April 1981, p.5

⁸⁶ Anon., 'Jean Graham', *Liverpool Echo*, 1 May 1979, p.3.

attempts to learn Spanish. Audrey tanned her body to feel healthy, relaxed and most of all to uphold her upper-class reputation to her neighbours.⁸⁷ *To the Manor Born* demonstrates how consumers were drawn to using tanning technologies to either create or maintain a representation of wealth during the 1970s and early 1980s. The mark of a tan to create this representation of affluence continued for decades to come, reflecting the associations made in Graham's advertising.⁸⁸

During the 1970s and 1980s, in all sunbed-related Liverpool-based media, the races of sunbed consumers were not disclosed. Most of the women visiting Graham's salons, captured in *Liverpool Echo's* photographs and on *Reports Politics*, were white (though on *Reports Politics* one of the interviewed sunbed customers was ethnically ambiguous with black hair and tanned skin). While Graham's image-based sunbed adverts suggested that the aspirational consumer was white, this may not have been the case. Throughout the twentieth century in Britain, white women's bodies were used to advertise most health, beauty and household products, services and technologies.⁸⁹ Moreover, Liverpool has been a renowned port city for centuries, creating a hub of mixed nationalities and races, which complicates the presumption that only white women used Graham's sunbeds. Additionally, on early 1980's television, the white women advertising sunbeds were typically 'skin type one' (typically ginger,

⁸⁷ *To the Manor Born*, Episode: 'The Grape Vine', (Director: Gareth Gwenlan), BBC, 4 November 1979.

⁸⁸ Even up to the late 1990s, in many work industries that were separate from the beauty industry, employers inserted sunbeds in public work spaces. Employees were encouraged, and in some extreme cases were expected, to use these sunbeds. In advertisements for jobs, sunbeds were referenced as a 'free perk' or 'bonus'. Moreover, as a natural 'golden' glow was a marker of wealth and sophistication, bosses wanted their employees to positively represent the company's reputation when visiting clients. Anon., 'A foot hold on the ladder to success', *Daily Mail*, 25 March 1986, p.36; Anon., 'Gorgeous Girls Wanted', *The Strand*, 7 August 1997, p.24.

⁸⁹ Sean Redmond, 'Thin White Women in Advertising: Deathly Corporeality', *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 3, 2, (2003), pp.170–190.

freckled pale skin, light coloured eyes - always burns easily and severely, tans little or not at all and peels) or 'skin type two' (typically blonde, white skin, blue eyed - usually burns easily and severely, and tans minimally or lightly, and peels).⁹⁰ According to one article from the *BMJD*, sunbed users who had paler skin types experienced adverse skin reactions and did not tan. The dermatologists remarked that these individuals were therefore least likely to use sunbeds. This study, however, may be speculative as it was based on only five women with 'skin type one'.⁹¹ In contrast, both men and women with 'skin type three' (burns moderately and tans moderately) and above were less likely to develop adverse skin reactions after sunbed use. Therefore, dermatologists suggested that these consumers were therefore more likely to use sunbeds regularly.⁹² This complicates the assumption that white members of the public were the only or most dominant sunbed consumers. Instead, people from more diverse racial backgrounds would have been drawn to using sunbeds.

Another assumption is that only women used sunbeds. Again, historical context and other sources complicate this assumption. The bodies of white women have sold health, beauty and household technologies and products for decades (particularly cigarettes and alcohol), even for products used by or explicitly for men, as "sex sells".⁹³ Also, men regularly used sunbeds in

⁹⁰ Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive, BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Film of sunbeds which are being manufactured by a local firm in Kirkby for tourists in Southport.', Film Item 4, 14 January 1982; East Anglia Film Archive, ITV Anglia News Item, 'Exhibition Of Sunbeds And Saunas', Cat. 110979, Summer 1980.

⁹¹ *Reports Politics*; M.S. Devgun, B.E. Johnson, C.R. Paterson, 'Tanning, protection against sunburn and vitamin D formation with a UV-A 'sunbed'', *British Journal of Dermatology*, 107, (1982), pp.277-80; B.L. Diffey, 'Use of UV-A sunbeds for cosmetic tanning', *British Journal of Dermatology*, 115, (1986), p.69.

⁹² Devgun, Johnson, Paterson, 'Tanning, protection against sunburn and vitamin D formation with a UV-A 'sunbed'', pp.277-280; Diffey, 'Use of UV-A sunbeds for cosmetic tanning', p.69.

⁹³ Bingham, Conboy, *Tabloid Century*, p.19; Brandt, *The cigarette century*, p.69.

'masculine' public spaces, such as health clubs, gyms, betting shops and 'even garages' (see Chapter two).⁹⁴

Sunbeds' Unexpected Supporters

The 1990s narrative of the sunbed industry, mainly promulgated by the media, asserted that sunbed providers were responsible for the long-lasting popularity of sunbeds because of the pressurising adverts launched from the outset. Yet this chapter has demonstrated that there were many other historical actors contributing to the popularity of sunbeds. Graham's salons revealed that many unexpected groups within the community, such as sunbed consumers, manufacturers, advertisers and medical experts, contributed to the original positive representation of sunbeds.

Firstly, the levels of provision show that consumers clearly wanted sunbeds. Secondly, many manufacturers and suppliers were excited to produce new 'revolutionary' sunbeds, and believed they would improve the wellbeing of both their sunbed-using employees and customers.⁹⁵ Thirdly, journalists, editors, advertisers, directors, reporters and presenters from various media outlets, including the print press, trade directories, radio and television, enthusiastically publicised the health, beauty and 'wealth' reflecting claims of sunbed use. Like any industry, there were individuals within these broad groups who opposed sunbeds. For instance, Liz Hodgkinson from the *Daily Mail* published an article titled 'Before you say 'Yes' to an Instant Suntan', which

⁹⁴ An advert for a 'North West Health' club offered 'sunstream sunbed' courses for men and women, 'Health Clubs and Centres – Private', *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1981, pp.254-255; *Reports Politics*.

⁹⁵ Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive, BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Martin Henfield, snf, reporting on the success of a sun bed manufacturing company started by a redundant Leyland worker in Preston. He spoke to Phil Wood, Production Director, Mike Wakelin, Chairman, Sue Wakelin, Marketing Director, Margaret Hughes, Company Secretary, and Janet Wood, Personnel Director.', Film Item 5, 4 May 1982.

interrogated whether sunbeds were as healthy as the adverts claimed.⁹⁶ Yet this subtle challenging of the sunbed industry was both largely absent in Mersey and extremely rare in the national media. Finally, and most surprisingly, many medical professionals supported sunbed providers. For instance, dermatologists, such as Dr Stewart from *Reports Politics*, endorsed well-regarded salons, such as Graham's. Moreover, despite the knowledge that suntanning could cause skin damage, during the 1970s and early 1980s, dermatologists hesitated to even tentatively discourage sunbed use. In turn, this allowed an incautious use of sunbeds by the public.

As early as 1970, the *BMJ* published an article confirming that suntanning was 'unhealthy' but did not warn against UV tanning technologies.⁹⁷ Almost a decade later, the first health warning against the use of sunbeds emerged, but in a consumer magazine, not a medical journal. In May 1979, the *Handyman Which?* magazine published a detailed article about sunbeds, titled 'Artificial sun? Tests & Verdicts, Moving home'.⁹⁸ The anonymous author reviewed different types of artificial tanning devices, presenting to readers their overall benefits and detriments. The author used a relatively neutral tone to provide an 'unbiased' review. Nevertheless, the author asserted that artificial tanning devices could cause 'sunburn, conjunctivitis, prematurely-aged skin and, in extreme cases, skin cancer'.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Liz Hodgkinson, 'Before you say 'Yes' to an Instant Suntan', *Daily Mail*, 19 May 1980, p.13.

⁹⁷ Anon., 'Unhealthy Tan', *British Medical Journal*, (1970), pp.494-5.

⁹⁸ In 1957, Michael Young and the Consumers' Association launched *Which?* magazine. The magazine's aim was to offer 'impartial, independent and scientifically-grounded factual information in order to promote rational choice in consumption', Alan Aldridge, 'The Construction of Rational Consumption in *Which?* Magazine: The More Blobs the Better?', *Sociology*, 28, 4, (1994), pp.899–912; Anon., '60 years of questioning. *Which?*', *Which?*, 2017. Accessed 22 October 2019:

<http://explore.which.co.uk/timeline>

⁹⁹ Anon., 'Artificial sun? Tests & Verdicts, Moving home', *Which? With Handyman Which?*, May 1979, p.268.

By 1980, some dermatologists had become slightly concerned about the risks of sunbed use. In March 1980, in the informal 'Reading for Pleasure' section of the *BMJ* the term 'sunbed' was mentioned for the first time. In a small paragraph, under the heading '*What are the hazards of ultraviolet "sun tan" lights?*', an anonymous author both cited and responded to the *Which?* sunbed article with a personal viewpoint.¹⁰⁰ The author remarked: 'although UVA was at first thought to be without risk there is some evidence ... of [skin] cancer,' yet they reassured readers that the evidence was 'vague'. The author advised the use of protective goggles and lightly discouraged 'commercial' sunbed providers from publicising claims that sunbeds did not cause 'skin cancer, ageing, or eye changes'. Nonetheless, the informality of both the location and author's personal viewpoint demonstrates that sunbeds were not yet a serious concern of dermatologists.

Instead, many dermatologists did not want to condemn sunbed use as they supported the use of ultra-violet therapies by trained experts, as demonstrated on *Reports Politics*. In January 1981, the first official and detailed article about sunbeds and 'skin cancer' was published in the *BMJD*. The authors, Greaves and Briffa, still had not confirmed a causal link between sunbeds and skin cancer. They claimed that UV-B radiation caused adverse skin reactions, not 'UVA' sunbeds. Greaves and Briffa remarked that their opinions about commercial sunbeds were inconclusive as they needed to see thorough research.¹⁰¹

Conclusion

This chapter both challenges and complicates the stereotyped image of the

¹⁰⁰ Anon., 'What are the hazards of ultraviolet "sun tan" lights?', *British Medical Journal*, (1980), p.633.

¹⁰¹ M. W. Greaves, D. Vella Briffa, 'UV-A and the skin', *British Journal of Dermatology*, 105, (1981), p.478.

sunbed industry and its users. Between the late 1970s and early 1980s, sunbeds, especially 'professional' sunbeds, were expensive. Only well-resourced and established health, fitness and beauty providers could afford to provide professional sunbeds. Consumers also used sunbeds for several aspirational reasons – users wanted to 'fix' a positive representation of health, beauty, youth, fashion and wealth by acquiring a sunbed tan. Sunbed use was not restricted by gender, age or race. Additionally, the historical actors who influenced the original positive representation of sunbeds were not simply the 'providers' and 'consumers'. Many other stakeholders contributed to this perspective, such as the media and healthcare professionals.

This chapter also sheds light on Liverpool's controversial relationship with the sunbed phenomenon. The years leading up to the birth of the sunbed industry provided record-breaking warmer and sunnier summers (even in the more sunless, colder and rainier North-West), and with the British fixation for suntanned skin, the public would have become accustomed to summer tanning habits. Yet the climate during the following years was particularly dull – Liverpudlians would warmly welcome novel sunbed technologies and their credible providers. The economic opportunities of the sunbed industry, advertised through self-made success stories, were even more appealing for both prospective North-West providers and consumers. In an urban and densely populated city, the advertising would have been cheaper and more easily circulated. The famous 1970s and 1980s North-West nightlife culture, which encouraged body exposure, and the association of tanned skin and affluence, would have encouraged city dwellers to develop and show off glowing complexions within public spaces. A quick-fix sunbed session, as a reliable form of tanning, would have appealed to all genders, ages and most races. Finally, the incessant and easy to access multi-media advertising (from print press and trade directories to radio and television broadcasts) confirmed that sunbed tans were healthy, safe and attainable. From the late 1970s, the

North-West environment nurtured the success and demand for the sunbed industry - this prevailed into the early twenty-first century.¹⁰²

¹⁰² In 2006, the *South West Public Health Observatory* conducted a study to calculate the distribution of sunbed outlets within the UK. When divided into nine regions within England, the North-West had the largest portion of outlets. Roughly, the regional average of outlets was eleven percent, yet the North-West held twenty-four percent – which was both double the regional average and almost a quarter of England’s total, A. Walsh, S. Harris, et al., ‘Sunbed outlets and area deprivation in the UK’, *South West Public Health Observatory*, (2009), p.21; Moreover, *The All Party Parliamentary Group on Skin* in 2014 also revealed Liverpool City Council’s predicament ‘that [they] simply could not track the number of sunbeds in use. They were powerless to institute a registry system’ and they emphasised that ‘over 100 local authorities ... reported having the same ... problem’, *The All Party Parliamentary Group on Skin, Inquiry into Sunbed Regulation in England: Consultations Summary and Final Recommendations to The Department of Health*, London, (May 2014), p.8.

Chapter 2: A 'Healthy investment' for Rational Consumers: The 'Boom' of the Health, Fitness and Sunbed Industry (1980-1982).

Introduction

'Well we call it the sun-tanning industry, or health industry, or ... body health industry', Kaj Jenson's interview about the 'Exhibition of Sunbeds and Saunas', ITV Anglia News, Summer 1980.¹

From 1980 to 1982, sunbeds were enthusiastically introduced in 'health' and 'fitness' spaces, which strengthened their positive representation to the public. In the summer of 1980 on ITV Anglia, a news item investigated a sunbed and sauna exhibition. In the interview, Kaj Jenson, the exhibition manager, introduced the 'sun-tanning industry' as part of the 'body health industry'. The 'boom' of the fitness and health club industry both drew on and shaped the success of the sunbed industry. Reciprocally, sunbeds helped promote health club membership.

The providers of these industries sold sunbeds as an additional 'health' service – an activity which rhetorically, environmentally, visually, materially and sensually fitted into a desirable, respectable and even moral routine of bodily transformation, associated with gym culture. Providers advertised sunbeds as a safer, quicker, cheaper and more reliable alternative to sunbathing, which had been confirmed as 'carcinogenic' for over a decade.² Health club employees and sunbed purveyors were positively portrayed as practical 'health and fitness

¹ East Anglia Film Archive, ITV Anglia News Item, 'Exhibition Of Sunbeds And Saunas', Cat. 110979, Summer 1980.

² Robert G. Freeman, John M. Knox, 'Skin Cancer and the Sun', *A Cancer Journal for Clinicians*, 17, 5, (1967), pp.231-238.

experts' who cared about the wellbeing of their clients. Indeed, most sunbed providers radiated a positive representation of their products as a luxurious 'health' service, with outliers condemned and isolated for breaches of hygiene.

Adverts portrayed their sunbed users as superior and rational consumers. They were depicted as self-disciplined, motivated, competent and resourceful for prioritising their sunbed habit. In the early 1980s, even dermatologists perceived sunbeds as 'expensive' to purchase.³ Yet, intelligent consumers saw the purchasing of a household sunbed, or using a public sunbed, as a worthwhile 'investment': when assessing time and cost, sunbeds were the ideal long-term solution to maintain an all-year-round tan. Moreover, the *Financial Times*' (one of the leading and 'high quality' newspapers in England)⁴ repeated approbation of sunbeds demonstrated the high regard for tanning culture among privileged groups. Sunbed units were framed as a health and fitness technology. The warm, comforting and tantalising visual and material domestication of sunbeds strengthened their appeal. The machines slotted readily into both health routines to 'enhance' the body at the consumers' convenience, and the interiors of energising fitness environments.

This chapter explores a narrow time period, allowing an intense focus on the momentous 'boom' period of the sunbed industry. I define the 'boom' of the sunbed industry as the two-year timeframe (from 1980 to 1981) in which the positive representation, sales and many sunbed-selling businesses soared. This narrow time period was the most positive in the history of sunbeds because of the industry's unrestricted, rapid and successful international growth. Sunbed consumers, the media, the government and public health scarcely challenged the sunbed industry.⁵ The previous chapter illustrated how new 'sunbed' technologies gradually spread from a local to a regional level.

³ Devgun, Johnson, Paterson, 'Tanning, protection against sunburn and vitamin D formation with a UV-A 'sunbed'', p.275.

⁴ Sparks, 'The readership of the British quality press', p.430, pp.432-3.

⁵ Brenda Polan, 'Some like it a bit too hot', *Guardian*, 12 January 1982, p.8.

This chapter provides an in-depth exploration of how the sunbed industry upscaled further, illustrating the shift from regional to national and international growth. In the Netherlands, Philips (one of the largest electronics companies in the world, focused in healthcare and lighting) distributed English-language sunbed catalogues to Britain to attract 'British exports'.⁶ These shed further light on the international prominence of the sunbed industry.

Sunbeds were readily and wholly absorbed into the early 1980s' health and fitness culture. Historian of health and visual culture, David Serlin argued: '*where* visual culture takes place is often as important, if not more important, than *what* the content of the image is itself'.⁷ The '*where*[abouts]' of sunbed visual culture and how the physical units were depicted in public and private spaces communicates their deeper meanings in addition to their superficial content. This chapter unpacks where sunbeds were located and how these spaces influenced a desirable representation of health, fitness, luxury, domesticity and safety associated with sunbed use.

The chapter opens with a brief history of late twentieth century health clubs, demonstrating that the emergence of the sunbed industry was firmly situated within the health and fitness industry from the outset - an abundance of sunbed references were 'fixed' within the underexamined 'health' and 'fitness' sections of early 1980s' trade directories and national newspapers. The second section explores health, fitness and sports clubs, and leisure centres and swimming pools, through cross-referencing trade directories, newspapers, and television content. Sunbed consumption was immersed within a body culture of

⁶ Anon., 'Handy housewares PHILIPS', Direct Export Philips Catalogue, ca.1980, pp.1-2.

⁷ The significance of the '*where*' in visual culture was originally developed from Anna McCarthy's, a media scholar, initial propositions, Serlin, *Imagining Illness*, p.xxviii; Anna McCarthy, *Ambient Television: Visual Culture and Public Space* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2000).

routine and self-discipline - this was reflected in the layout, interior and convenience factors of these public 'health' facilities.

The third section illustrates how both the visual and material culture of sunbeds framed the equipment as seductively natural, unobtrusive, practical and user friendly. The visual and material representation sold an allure of domestic relaxation and empowerment for household consumers. These representations appeared on television, in newspapers, archived photographs, Philips and *Argos* catalogues and more unorthodox material cultures, such as a 'Keeping Fit' Sindy doll set. This leads onto the fourth section, which explores the sunbed-associated body and clothing culture. Tanned athletic bodies and swimming costumes radiated energy, fitness and beach culture. Commercial industries and the media encouraged consumers to 'rationally' plan their exercise and sunbed use routines, encouraging a developing 'stronger' body for preventive or 'protective' measures. The incentive was to avoid burning on holiday or social humiliation.

The fifth section explores medicalised discussions of sunbeds, shared by dermatologists on television reports and in the *BMJD*. Sunbed providers and the media used these discussions to advertise their sunbeds as the healthiest, safest and most 'practical' way to tan. Similar to Chapter One, a final section untangles the juxtaposed layers of unsuspected yet interlinked stakeholders whose collective support enabled the sunbed boom.

Sunbeds Situated within the Health Club and Fitness Industry

The birth of Britain's' health club chains can be traced back to the 1960s and 1970s. A health club was an interactive social space which provided both exercising facilities and fitness services to help the public achieve physical, mental and social wellbeing.⁸ Before the health club and sunbed industry

⁸ Jesper Andreasson, Thomas Johansson, 'The Fitness Revolution. Historical Transformations in the Global Gym and Fitness Culture', *Sport Science Review*, XXIII,

reached the heightened 'boom' period of the early 1980s, the steady emergence of health club chains overlapped with the public provision of commercial tanning technologies. During the mid-1970s, health club services and fitness routines, alongside 'solarium' and 'solaria' services, were increasingly mentioned in newspapers and on television.⁹ From the late 1970s to early 1980s, health clubs began to attract significant British media and consumer interest.¹⁰ In October 1980, Jan Shure writing for the *Daily Mail's* 'Femail' section remarked that the 'MAJOR health and fitness boom' in Britain was 'on a par with fad-crazy California'. Shure estimated that twenty-five health clubs for both women and men existed in 1974, whereas in 1980 this grew to three-hundred-and-fifty and was rapidly increasing. Most of these health clubs contained sunbed rooms.¹¹ The health, fitness and sunbed industry were strongly interlinked by providers, the media and consumers from the outset as they were conceptualised as complimenting each other.¹²

'Placing' Sunbeds in 'Health and Fitness' Spaces: The Ephemeral Printed Media

In print press advertising, sunbeds absorbed the associative wellbeing of the 'health' and 'fitness' spaces that introduced them. These connotations were then read by the everyday public, both informing and educating their 'healthy'

3-4, (2014), pp.91-112; Roberta Sassatelli, *Fitness culture: Gyms and the Commercialisation of Discipline and Fun* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p.13; Moseley, 'Slimming One's Way to a Better Self?', pp.1-27.

⁹ Lucia van der Post, 'In perfect trim', *Financial Times*, 24 July 1976, p.7; Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive, BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Richard Duckenfield snf reporting on the sauna & solarium for women employees of Stylewear factory at Birkenhead.', Film Item 6, 10 March 1976.

¹⁰ Sassatelli, *Fitness culture*, p.4.

¹¹ In 1988, an estimate of 650 to 1500 health and fitness clubs were located in the South of England alone, Jan Shure, 'Choosing a Health Club', *Daily Mail*, 14 October 1980, p.12; David Churchill, 'Health of Nations', *Financial Times*, 30 July 1988, p.12.

¹² ITV Anglia News Item, 'Exhibition Of Sunbeds And Saunas'.

understanding of sunbeds. Sunbeds were placed in advertising spaces for health clubs, health farms, both household and public swimming pools, and leisure centres, as evidenced by the *Yellow Pages*, national newspapers, and briefly on television.

Health Clubs and Centres (Yellow Pages)

Tanning technologies were introduced to the public as 'healthy' in part because they first emerged in health and fitness-related advertising spaces. In the *Mersey Yellow Pages*, the 'health clubs and centres' page emerged in 1973 – this section was the first to introduce 'sun-ray' lamps in 1976, 'solariums' in 1978 and 'sunbeds' in 1980.¹³ The 'health' page in 1976 marked two changes – this was the first year that the section became fitness-orientated and sunbeds were introduced.¹⁴ From 1976 onwards, the amount of fitness services encouraging clients to be physically active increased.¹⁵ When the noticeable upsurge of 'health clubs and centres' emerged between 1980 to 1982, so did their *advertised* inclusion of sunbed services (**Bar Chart 2.1**). The health clubs that were not advertising sunbeds as a main service could have also provided them. From 1980 to 1981, the 'health clubs' page mentioned the largest number of 'sunbed' references among the top five sections that regularly promoted

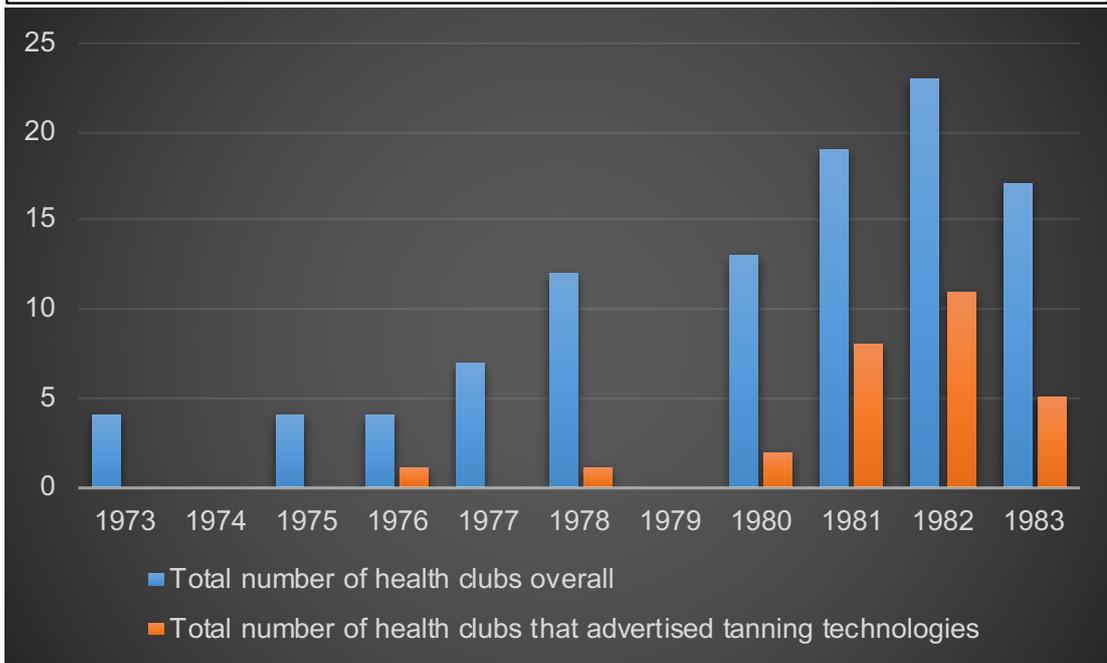
¹³ *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1976, p.184; *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1978, p.207; *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1980, pp.223-4.

¹⁴ Before 1976, the services listed in the 'health section' were somewhat vague. The 'health' section of the *Mersey Yellow Pages* was not actively 'fitness' orientated, and a re-direction to the 'physical culture' section was suggested. In 1973, a 'Figure Clinic' called *My Fair Lady* only offered exercise-free methods of weight-loss, such as 'thermal accelerated therapy.' In 1975, only one advert offered a 'health' service, which was Indian yoga, *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1973, p.173; *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1975, p.215.

¹⁵ For women, this included exercise to achieve 'slenderising, bustline development, figure contouring and weight gaining', whereas for men, this included 'reducing, muscle toning, fitness conditioning and body development', *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1977, p.189.

sunbeds (see A Note on Sources).¹⁶ Most of these adverts were small with limited space for textual content. Yet most health club owners prioritised the listing of their sunbeds over other services, demonstrating their importance for consumer appeal.

Bar Chart 2.1 The provision of tanning technologies from the 'Health [and Fitness] Club' section, *Mersey Yellow Pages* (1973 to 1983).



Source: *Mersey Yellow Pages* (Berkshire Records Office)

Health Farms (Newspapers)

Moreover, from the early 1980s, adverts for fitness-orientated country hotels and 'health farms' (often resembling weight-loss boot camps) regularly featured in national newspapers. In an advert for 'Suttons Manor Health Farm', sunbeds were integrated as an incentive and healthy reward for clients to exercise and lose weight.¹⁷ For 'every 1lb lost', '£7-10' was deducted from the bill. This

¹⁶ *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1980, pp.223-4; *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1981, pp.254-255; *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1982, pp.249-50.

¹⁷ Anon., 'You owe it to yourself! "SPRINGTIME SLIMAWAY", Overdale Health Hotel', *Guardian*, 7 May 1981, p.26.

encouraged individuals to attend and rigorously commit to the programme. The use of sunbeds fitted within their daily routine of self-discipline and exercise. When the health farm visitors went home, the cultural association of tanned skin and athleticism would have improved their conviction that their bodies now radiated fitness and health.¹⁸ These 'health farms' remained popular until the mid-1990s but declined in the early 2000s.¹⁹

Household Swimming Pools (Newspapers and Yellow Pages)

In both the *Financial Times* and *Observer* from the late 1970s onwards, domestic sunbed adverts featured on the same page as swimming pool articles and adverts. In the *Financial Times*, two reporters published articles discussing whether household swimming pools and their 'luxury' associated surroundings (i.e., saunas and sunbeds) were a worthwhile 'investment' for their readers. In 1979, the first reporter, Arthur Sandles, in a 'Swimming Pool' article asked if these spatial and technological 'investments' enhanced 'health, property value, or even simply lifestyle?' He presented both sides of the argument by discussing whether these 'investments' were a 'dream or practicality? An indispensable part of normal domestic life, or a money-wasting extravagance?' This article included two large sunbed adverts - one from Paines Beauty Products and another from the Sun Health Company. In 1980, Clay Harris was the new writer for the 'Swimming Pool' page. The quantity of sunbed adverts on this page doubled to four. This included adverts from the Sun Health Company, Interscan, Nordic and Dalesauna. In this article, Harris remarked that 'a tan acquired from the sun bed' allowed purchasers to 'now feel and look like a world traveller without having left home'.²⁰ Additionally, on the 'Swimming Pool

¹⁸ Anon., 'ARE YOU OVERWEIGHT? DO YOU NEED REST AND RELAXATION? WHY NOT COME AND STAY AT SUTTONS MANOR HEALTH FARM', *Daily Mail*, 28 September 1981, p.25.

¹⁹ Anon., 'Sunbed fine', *The Times*, 11 April 1995, p.2; Amy Anderson, '5 years younger in 4 weeks', *Daily Mail*, 21 August 2000, p.40.

²⁰ Clay Harris, 'SWIMMING POOLS Financial Times Report', *Financial Times*, 8 March 1980, p.19.

Suppliers and Contractors' page in the 1981 *Mersey Yellow Pages*, a company called *Atlantic Pools* offered sunbed installations, typical of this period.²¹

Swimming pool and sunbed culture were both interlinked and conceptualised at least by advertisers as an 'investment' – they reflected spatial and bodily wealth and health, sold in the form of a home luxury for privileged purchasers.²²

Public Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools (Yellow Pages)

During the 1980s, public swimming pools and leisure centres too sold sunbeds as an important service.²³ In the 1981 *Mersey Yellow Pages*, the 'Swimming Pools and Public Bath' section re-directed readers to the 'Leisure Centres' page, where sunbeds were often provided as a public service.²⁴ The demand for sunbeds within these public facilities was significant enough to attract media attention and was noteworthy in the personal accounts of leisure centres. For instance, in 1980, on an ITV Anglia news item, a large group of housewives threatened to boycott their town's leisure centre if the sunbeds were removed as a part of council cuts. These women, holding their children's hands, were filmed walking from the reception area to the car park of their local Leisure and Sports Centre, in Peterborough.²⁵ Similarly, in 1986, in an interview about Ennerdale leisure centre during the summer of 1984, the interviewee

²¹ *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1981, p.437.

²² Arthur Sandles, 'SWIMMING POOLS BUYER'S GUIDE', *Financial Times*, 14 April 1979, p.14; Harris, 'SWIMMING POOLS Financial Times Report', p.19; Anon., 'Swimming Pools', *Observer*, 11 February 1979, p.63.

²³ For a history of British Leisure Centres, see Otto Saumarez Smith, 'The Lost World of the British Leisure Centre', *History Workshop Journal*, Vol.88 (2019), pp.180-203.

²⁴ *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1981, p.438; *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1986, p.394.

²⁵ East Anglia Film Archive, ITV Anglia News Item, 'Spalding Deeping St. James, Leisure And Sports Centres, HOUSEWIVES HAVE THREATENED TO BOYCOTT THE TOWNS LEISURE CENTRE IF THE SUNBED IS REMOVED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL CUTS', Cat. 209033, 1980.

remembered a room full of 'Nordic Sunbenches' next to the TV lounge.²⁶

Visitors both noted and appreciated the inclusion of sunbeds at their local leisure centres, and some members of the public saw sunbeds as an important service for their comfort, satisfaction and wellbeing.

Sunbed adverts in the print press, as on these televisual accounts, were typically positioned adjacent to other images and textual references of 'health and fitness' services and machinery. The 'health' services included saunas, log cabins and relaxation chairs. The fitness machines included cycling machines, toning tables, weight machines and 'tummy pull up' machines.²⁷ The collective *whereabouts* of sunbeds in the print press reflects how sunbeds rose with the 'boom' of the fitness industry, which explains why newspaper reporters regularly published articles discussing the two industries together.²⁸ From the early to mid-1980s, print press editors 'fixed' sunbed adverts within their health, fitness and sports sections.

The Physical Integration of Sunbeds within Health and Fitness Venues

*'All those new super sunbeds, and I'm stuck with that old [washing machine] thing', Lottie (The Health Club Cleaner), The Olympian Way, BBC1, July 1980.*²⁹

²⁶ A description of '1986, Ennerdale Centre, D-block, GB-508000-432000'. Accessed 12 April 2017:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/domesday/dblock/GB-508000-432000/page/5>

²⁷ Harris, 'SWIMMING POOLS Financial Times Report', p.19; Anon., 'Swimming Pools', *Observer*, 11 February 1979, p.63; *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1980, pp.224; Shure, 'Choosing a Health Club', p.12.

²⁸ David Churchill, 'PRIVATE HEALTH CARE: 'Health boom brings in the profits' and 'Suntan Parlours'', *Financial Times*, 12 January 1983, p.17.

²⁹ British Film Institute Stephen Street Archive, *The Olympian Way*, (Director: Lovett Bickford, Script Writer: Tara Prem), (Directed in Birmingham from December 1980 to March 1981), BBC 1, 'Episode 4: FAMILY BUSINESS', July 1981.

The decision to situate sunbeds within ‘health and fitness’ locations was not restricted to the print press editors and advertisers. As the previous section has demonstrated, the owners of health and fitness clubs also confidently placed sunbeds within exercise-associated environments. When health club clients visited these fitness-fuelled spaces, the visible sunbeds received the same positive reaction. Sunbeds were perceived as another method to produce a desirable bodily ‘transformation’ in a practical, healthy and convenient manner. Sunbed use was a worthwhile ‘investment’ for both mind and body, and an outward representation of discipline, routine, maintenance and wealth. Health club members had both the time and disposable income to regularly exercise and use suntanning technologies. This section explores the typical layout, interior and convenience factors of health clubs, demonstrating how these environments influenced a positive representation of the sunbeds situated within them.

Health clubs of the early 1980s provided an abundance of diverse ‘health’ facilities and rooms for both women and men. In the *Mersey Yellow Pages*, North West Health Figure and Fitness Clubs, J&J’s Gym and Sauna, and Bob Sweeney’s Olympic Figure and Fitness Club provided rich examples. The rooms listed in these businesses’ adverts were typical of clubs, sports and leisure centres across England. These venues typically provided: at least one gym full of exercising equipment;³⁰ a massage room; a sauna or steam cabinet room; sunbed rooms; a bath, jacuzzi or whirlpool room; ‘plunge’ or swimming pools; changing and showering room facilities with lockers; a ‘special care department’ for healthcare consultations; a ‘dining facility & coffee lounge’, and finally, ‘relaxation’ or waiting rooms (with vending and arcade game

³⁰ The exercising equipment typically consisted of a ‘rowing machine, jogging [machine], bike, weights and an abdominal board’, Shure, ‘Choosing a Health Club’, p.12; *The Olympian Way*, ‘Episode 1: HAPPY BIRTHDAY’, Aired on BBC1, 7.45pm, 1 July 1981.

machines).³¹ Most health club venues had a combination of these rooms and services, if not all. Some of the more expensive and lavish clubs also offered outdoor facilities, such as golf courses, and squash or tennis courts.³² These 'health and fitness' facilities were conveniently enclosed and accessible. After purchasing a health club membership, employees encouraged regular attendance. The personal trainers' instructions became a part of a self-motivated routine. The use of sunbeds and saunas were a healthy pre-or-post workout option to loosen body tension and relax the muscles. They created a comforting and rewarding experience – all with the goal of body improvement and 'enhancement.'

In a *Daily Mail* article, Jan Shure shared her health club experiences to advise readers about the types of environments and services that customers should expect. She visited venues that were 'clean [and] well maintained', which was a basic expectation.³³ She described one club, the 'Corinthian Club', as a 'gleaming white oasis in the concrete desert of central Birmingham'. A white spiral staircase led to a bright, white reception area, decorated with a display of 'disco and jogging clothes' for sale. A staff member assisted Shure in a tour of the 'spacious sauna [room], an 'enormous room crammed with sunbeds and a well-equipped gym'. Shure concluded that this 'super environment' was 'conductive to feeling fit and healthy'. The next club, 'Gym & Trim' in Ipswich, was described as 'huge' and 'airy'. Again, the décor was mainly 'sparkling white', and noticeably 'mirrored', with the occasional 'brilliant yellow and radiant green'. She described the atmosphere as more 'informal and relaxed', yet she still felt a liveliness of encouragement and dedication. These depictions of health club interiors and consumer responses reinforced that sunbeds were situated within environments conducive to reinvigorating and healthy lifestyles.

³¹ '1986, Ennerdale Centre, D-block'; Anon., 'Business for Sale: Sports Centre at Lytham St Annes, Lancashire', *Financial Times*, 29 January 1985, p.13.

³² Anon., 'Meon Valley Hotel', *Daily Mail*, 19 December 1981, p.24.

³³ Shure, 'Choosing a Health Club', p.12.

In Merseyside, health clubs, gyms, fitness and sports centres were popular and well-attended during the early 1980s. They usually opened at 10am and closed at 10pm.³⁴ Jane Randall, a key figure from *Corline* (the 'biggest health and fitness group in Britain'), had observed that memberships had increased by three hundred per cent from 1975 to 1980. In this five-year span, the number of members visiting each week to workout had increased from an average of '1,000 a week to 3,500 a week'.³⁵ After the early 1980s, sunbeds remained a popular part of health clubs, whereas other types of fitness routines and machinery, such as dance classes and toning tables, fell out of fashion. Sunbeds were persistently described as an appropriate, attractive, adaptable and convenient feature of health clubs, desired by both the health club owners and their visiting clients.³⁶

The Seduction of Sunbeds: A Visual and Material Culture

In the summer of 1980, ITV Anglia news dedicated a seductive three-minute broadcast to investigate an 'Exhibition of Sunbeds and Saunas'. For half of the film, the reporter both introduced the exhibition and interviewed the exhibition manager, Kaj Jenson. The other half of the broadcast consisted of ten silent segments capturing the sunbeds from the exhibition. This allowed the viewer to focus on the different sunbed units. In these segments, the shots of the sunbeds were either stationary, or the camera zoomed in and out, up and down, or around the sunbed in slow motion. This allowed viewers to see in detail how each sunbed model functioned. In the first five segments the sunbeds were turned off. In the final five segments the sunbeds were being used by women and turned on. The models in bikinis lay on the glowing sunbeds, embodying slight undertones of sexuality. The women graciously

³⁴ *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1980, p.224; By the 1990s, the remaining health clubs were opening earlier and closing later.

³⁵ Shure, 'Choosing a Health Club', p.12.

³⁶ Churchill, 'Health of Nations', p.12.

turned and twisted, making eye contact with the camera, illustrating how to tan evenly. The smiling models also pressed buttons to demonstrate the different ways in which the machines operated and moved, further domesticising and sexualising their movements. One segment showed a naked woman's silhouette behind a frosted glass showering between use. This audio-visual broadcast captured a rich overview of the visual and material culture of sunbeds.

These early 1980s' sunbeds were designed and presented as a tameable, practical and convenient household 'appliance' - suitable for everyday use. The material and visual culture framed sunbeds as desirably comforting, unthreatening and glamorous objects, aiming to become a seductive yet submissive possession for the home. The representations of sunbeds will be demonstrated through an evaluation of where and how the units were positioned in rooms; their colour schemes; frames; positioning in relation to their users; the warmth and associations of ultraviolet lights; methods of functioning, and finally their 'props' found in both adverts and more 'authentic' photographs.³⁷ Cross-referencing with 1930s commercial ultraviolet machines also reveals similarities in how they were domesticised: however, sunbed designs, half a century later, show that this "domestication" was developed further.³⁸

The Sunbed in (the Corner of) the (Small) Room

In all visual representations of sunbeds - whether fictional, in adverts or in more 'authentic' captures from television or photographs -, they slotted into the

³⁷ My use of the term 'prop' refers to the objects and external material culture accompanying the use of sunbeds and their representation.

³⁸ Woloshyn builds on the discussion argued by historians, such as Carolyn Thomas De la Pena, that technologies undergo a process of "domestication" by their manufacturers, which presents the devices as "suitable for the home". Woloshyn illustrates how this "domestication" applied to the designs of the commercial ultraviolet lamps for households, Woloshyn, *Soaking up the Rays*, p.172.

everyday lives of their customers both effortlessly and conveniently. The units were often large enough to enclose an adult's entire body; some machines were ten-feet long and five-foot high, and consequently difficult to visually ignore.³⁹ Yet sunbed providers and advertisers sold sunbeds as unobtrusive - they were positioned in both the corners and sides of large rooms, never in the centre.

The media encouraged viewers to place sunbeds within small and 'unusable' rooms to make practical, profitable and healthy use of 'wasted' spaces. In *The Olympian Way* (1980), a fictional serial of a health club, the sunbed was placed in a very small and dark room, which was sectioned off from a large whirlpool room. This discreet placing of sunbed rooms also featured in the late 1970s photos of 'Sid's Sports Centre,' documented at Tameside archive. The first photograph captured a large waiting room with tables, chairs and an arcade machine. The second photograph showed a small sunbed room, which only permitted enough space to open and close the door (**Figure 2.2**).

Figure 2.2 Sid's Sports Centre, public waiting area and sunbed rooms, late 1970s.



Source: Sid's Sports Centre, sunbed rooms and waiting area. Later renamed Castle Hall, now demolished, [Photograph, late 1970's] GB131.t09843. Sid's Sports Centre, view of a sunbed. [Photograph, late 1970's] GB131.t09844. (Tameside Local Studies and Archives).

³⁹ Anon., 'Classified Ad 192 - SUNBED BREAKTHROUGH', *Observer*, 22 March 1981, p.30. However, smaller overhead canopies, exclusively for the body and not the face, could be around five foot in length.

From the early 1980s onwards, advertisers also sold sunbeds as a way to make use of small household rooms (Figure 2.3).⁴⁰ Small domestic sunbeds could also be folded or lowered for storage in cupboards or under beds.⁴¹ The

Figure 2.3 Room conversion advert (1990).

Convert a damp, cold, miserable, unhealthy, unusable old cellar ...

into a dry, healthy, useful room.

IN YOUR HOME you can create a home-gym, sunbed room, sauna, play-room, utility room, dining kitchen, bedroom, study, party room or bar.

IN YOUR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY you can provide extra space in offices, factories, warehouses, shops, hotels, public buildings etc.

The damp preventative is applied by BAF experts to the inside walls. (Outside walls can also be treated and made waterproof).

BAF stop penetrating damp on walls below ground and guarantee all workmanship and materials for 20 years.

The BAF team of installers operate nationwide.

FOR FREE SURVEY & ESTIMATE
FREEPHONE
0800
262 154
OR POST COUPON
(no obligation)

PLEASE SEND DETAILS ON THE BAF DRY WALL SYSTEM
 Domestic Commercial Please tick in box
 MISS/MRS/MR (BLOCK CAPITALS)
 ADDRESS
 POSTCODE _____ PHONENO _____
BAF DRY WALL SYSTEM, FREEPOST,
UNION STREET, BISHOP AUCKLAND, DL14 8DU. **NO STAMP NEEDED** G71

Source: Anon., 'Convert a damp, cold, miserable, unhealthy, unusable old cellar ... into a dry, healthy, useful room', *Times*, 19 May 1990, p.42.

designers and advertisers persistently introduced sunbeds as adaptable, useful and unobtrusive. A suntanned body radiated wealth, yet manufacturers designed sunbeds to be easily hidden so that users could claim that their tanning was 'natural'.

An exploration of where and how sunbeds were placed in different environments demonstrates that sunbeds were not designed to be the focus point of the room.

⁴⁰ Sunbed providers suggested converting larger units into 'an ideal guest bed,' by using a 'simple addition of a mattress.' During the 1980s and early 1990s, wealthy households popularly converted small rooms into sunbed rooms, Anon., 'Display Ad 170 – Beautiful Suntan ... Beautiful Suntanner' and 'Convert your loft into an extra room', *Observer*, 17 May 1981, p.30; Anon., 'Convert a damp, cold, miserable, unhealthy, unusable old cellar ... into a dry, healthy, useful room. IN YOUR HOME. IN YOUR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY', *Times*, 19 May 1990, p.42; Gareth Parry, 'There's always a place for it: Do It Yourself', *Guardian*, 18 February 1989, p.A21.

⁴¹ Jane Heighton, her sisters, and her mother shared their family sunbed, which they folded and stored under the bed when not in use, Jane Heighton, *Personal communication*, 2016.

Sunbeds were rarely placed in the centre of rooms and did not command visual attention.⁴² This subtle insertion of sunbeds discouraged consumers from seeing these body-sized machines as intimidating and overwhelming. Sunbeds were designed to blend into environments of domesticity and health.

'Natural' and Elegant Colour Palettes of Sunbeds

Advertisers also merged sunbeds into their surroundings by blending the same colours in both print press adverts and on television. For instance, on Philip's 1980s adverts, the colour schemes of the photographed sunbed units matched their glossy backgrounds.⁴³ In one 1980 advert, the creamy wooden base of the sunbed was camouflaged by the cream carpet in the bottom half of the image.

⁴² The only visual depiction of a sunbed in the centre of the room is in the film *American Psycho* (2000). The room is empty, except for Bateman. As Bateman uses the sunbed, he narrates that he has all the characteristics of a human being yet is emotionally empty except for 'greed and disgust.' As the viewer sees a slow pan of Bateman on the sunbed, he continues remarks: 'something horrible is happening inside of me' as he feels 'lethal' and on the 'verge of frenzy.' This mise en scène depicts disordered sunbed use by the narcissistic protagonist, *American Psycho*, (Director Mary Harron), Released 21 April 2000 (UK).

⁴³ Anon., 'HP 3141: UV-A SUNCOUCH' and 'COMBINATION HP 3140 and HP 3141', English product information leaflet, Philips, 1980 or 1984; Anon., 'UV-A SUNCOUCH 3143' and 'Combination HP 3142 and HP 3143', English product information leaflet, Philips, 1985; Anon., 'UV-A SUNCOUCH HP 3504', English product leaflet, Philips, 1987.

In the top half, the black top canopy, suspended above, was engulfed by a black background (Figure 2.4).⁴⁴



Figure 2.4 'Handy housewares PHILIPS', Direct Export Philips Catalogue, ca. 1980.



Source: Anon., 'Handy housewares PHILIPS', Direct Export Philips Catalogue, ca. 1980, pp. 1-2. (Philips International Company Archive, Eindhoven, The Netherlands).

⁴⁴ Anon., 'Handy housewares PHILIPS', pp. 1-2.

The colour schemes of 1980s sunbeds were typically neutral and natural, reflecting hygiene and cleanliness. They were also sophisticatedly 'sleek'.⁴⁵ The neutral colour schemes of sunbeds were intended to evoke timeless elegance - the base units were often coated in chrome whites, creams and greys (**Figure 2.5**).⁴⁶ The more 'natural' looking sunbed frames were wooden coloured,

Figure 2.5 ITV Anglia News Item, 'Exhibition Of Sunbeds And Saunas', Summer 1980.



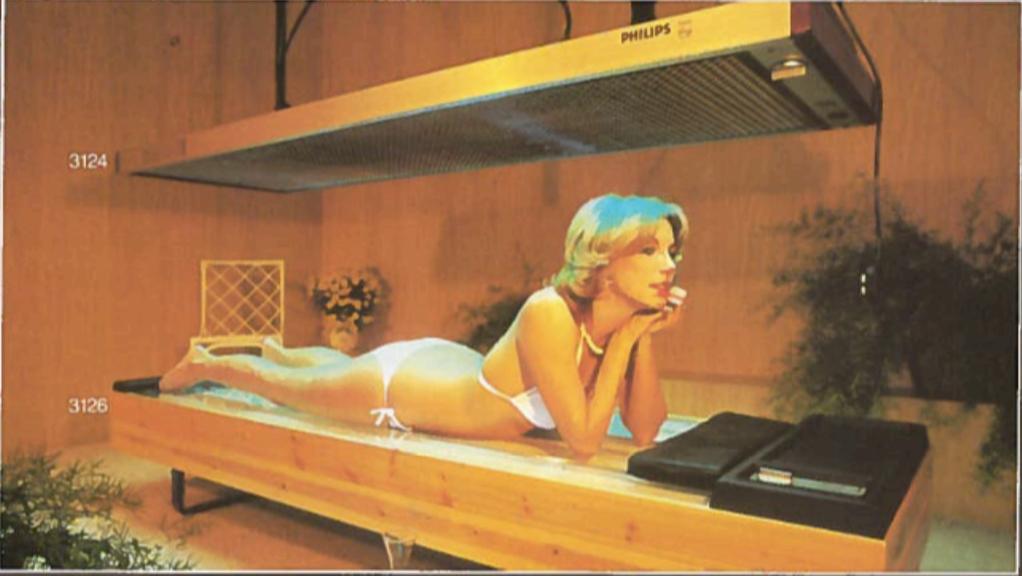
Source: Cat. 110979 (East Anglia Film Archive).

⁴⁵ Anon., 'Display Ad 170' and 'Convert your loft into an extra room', p.30.

⁴⁶ Anon., 'UV-A SUNCOUCH 3143' and 'Combination HP 3142 and HP 3143', English product information leaflet, Philips, 1985.

Figure 2.6 Solaria from the Philips Collection Brochure (UK Exports, ca.1982-1983).

SOLARIA



UVA SUN COUCH HP3126 (NL)
A luxurious tan in about a week from the 10 Philips 6ft tubes. Solid wood frame. Automatic timer. Dimensions 207 x 64 x 40 cm.

UVA SUN CANOPY HP3124 (S)
Incorporates 10 Philips 6ft tubes with their specially designed reflectors. Remote control for raising and lowering. Automatic timer. Optional floor stand HP3907 available as an extra. Dimensions 193 x 61 x 13 cm.

Source: Anon., 'The Philips Collection – small appliances', English brochure, Philips, ca.1982-1983, p.15. (Philips International Company Archive, Eindhoven, The Netherlands).

ranging from light sandalwood and oak to dark solid pine and red-tinged mahogany (**Figures 2.6, 2.8 and 2.10**).⁴⁷ Expensive units were authentic wood, while the less expensive plastic units imitated 'natural' wooden colours (**Figure 2.5**). Sunbed overheads were usually a similar colour to the base unit, but normally darker.⁴⁸ In the sunbed exhibition, the wooden sunbeds were placed

⁴⁷ The front cover of this magazine stating the exact date and edition number could not be found, Anon., 'Dreaming of a Brown Christmas?', *Telegraph Sunday*, November or December 1981, p.74; Anon., 'The Philips Collection – small appliances', English brochure, Philips, ca.1982-1983, p.15.

⁴⁸ The colour schemes and size of 1980s sunbeds contrasts to the sunbed designs made after 2000. The post-millennium sunbeds, in bold and bright flashy colours, were

on dark carpeted or wooden floors. The sides of the room were dark wooden panels or wine-red curtains (**Figure 2.5**).⁴⁹ This natural 'wooden'-ness of the exhibition matched the typical late 1970s and early 1980s interior of health and fitness centres, as demonstrated in Sid's Sports centre and on *The Olympian Way* (**Figure 2.2**).⁵⁰ This reflects the popular and chic Scandinavian 'sauna' theme of the early 1980s.

Sunbeds were also visually introduced to reflect long-standing connotations of health, cleanliness and hygiene. The representation of white sunbeds in white rooms, and users wearing either white bikinis or gowns

significantly larger and restrictively curved around the bodies of their consumers. The units were much heavier and often fixed on the floor – virtually impossible for an individual to move. The mass controls within the machines were overwhelming. A sunbed consumer could operate: the music tracks and volume; a fan for either the head or body; a radio; UV intensities for either the face or body, and finally a volume control for voiceover instructions. These sunbed technologies were materially, visually, audibly and sensually more overwhelming and intimidating. Moreover, post-millennium sunbeds were primarily designed for commercial locations – they were rarely designed for domestic settings, Anon., 'HB 581: 30 lamps luxe Combi Sunstudio met HPA gezichtsbruiner' advert from *Philips Domestic Appliances and Personal Care Catalogue*, 2000-2001 p.1, p.31, pp.78-9.

⁴⁹ ITV Anglia News Item, 'Exhibition Of Sunbeds And Saunas'.

⁵⁰ When cross-referencing the household sunbeds from the sunbed exhibition with 'professional' units from Sid's Sports Centre, the shapes, curvatures, materials and colour schemes were similar. Yet professional sunbed units were heavier as they had a thicker and deeper base and top unit. Professional sunbeds usually had more UV tubes accumulated in tighter rows, meaning the tanning effect was potentially more powerful, Tameside Local Studies and Archives, Sid's Sports Centre, view of a sunbed. Later renamed Castle Hall, now demolished, [Photograph, late 1970's] GB131.t09844. Accessed 5 April 2017:

[http://www.gmlives.org.uk/results.html#imu\[rid=ecatalogue.398041](http://www.gmlives.org.uk/results.html#imu[rid=ecatalogue.398041)

imitated modern medical spaces.⁵¹ The white backgrounds also flaunted the ‘product’ – the glowing sunbed tan.

Soft Curved Sunbed Frames

Most sunbed frames were designed to be comfortable and ‘feminine,’ as displayed in both the sunbed exhibition and Philips catalogues. Sunbed units were rectangular and elongated but displayed subtle curvatures wherever possible.⁵² Most sunbeds were elevated by curved rectangular steel frames instead of individual metal legs penetrating the floor, adding a softness to the machinery. Often, the curved frames were collapsible. Likewise, the corners and edges of sunbeds were typically curved. These curved exteriors lessened the risk of damaging surrounding walls and protected everyday users who may accidentally bump their bare legs. Most of the sunbeds also curved internally from the edges into the middle. A slightly curved dip in the middle of the bottom base allowed a body to sink more comfortably (like in a bathtub), while reducing the visual rigidity of an electrical machine. The overall curving of sunbed designs added a compliant ‘softness’ to the technology (**Figure 2.5**).

Sunbeds Advertised Beneath their Owners

Although the material and visual culture of 1930s sun-lamps symbolised a “tamed” aesthetic, I argue that the designs of 1980s sunbeds developed this

⁵¹ Victoria Bates, ‘Sensing space and making place: the hospital and therapeutic landscapes in two cancer narratives’, *Medical Humanities*, 45, (2019), pp.14-15.

⁵² Cheaper designs often had less curved and sharper edges, yet still depicted the soft natural-ness of the ‘wooden’ colour scheme, BBC North West Regional News Collection, ‘Film of sunbeds which are being manufactured by a local firm in Kirkby for tourists in Southport.’, Film Item 4; Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive, BBC North West Regional News Collection, ‘Martin Henfield, snf, reporting on the success of a sun bed manufacturing company started by a redundant Leyland worker in Preston. He spoke to Phil Wood, Production Director, Mike Wakelin, Chairman, Sue Wakelin, Marketing Director, Margaret Hughes, Company Secretary, and Janet Wood, Personnel Director.’, Film Item 5, 4 May 1982.

“domesticating” culture further. This was influenced by a change of consumer attitudes towards electrical technologies from the 1930s when compared to the 1970s onwards. In the 1930s, high-tech machines, reflecting modernity and science fiction, were in trend. As a result of twentieth century technological disasters, including the use of weapons of mass destruction, futuristic-looking technologies were no longer in trend by the 1970s. Instead, the framing of new household technologies as harmless and ‘natural’ was much preferred.⁵³ In *Soaking up the Rays: light therapy and visual culture in Britain, c.1890-1940*, Tania Woloshyn evaluated the material and visual culture of the first commercial ultraviolet tanning technologies. The sun-lamp industries of the 1930s presented their devices as more “domesticated” than their ‘imposing’ predecessors - the early twentieth century ‘frightening’ large carbon arc lamps, which were placed in the centre of medical environments.⁵⁴ Woloshyn described the new commercial Thermal Syndicate ‘Vi-tan’ mercury vapour lamp of the mid-1930s:

‘With its attractive polished oak casing, chromium reflector, and state-of-the-art fused mercury vapour bulb, the ‘Vi-tan’ lamp was an object at once homely and technologically sophisticated. Supplied with the lamp were brown-tinted leather goggles.’

Woloshyn then explained that these devices were capable of ‘severely burn[ing] or blind[ing] its users’, yet she demonstrated how the visual and material culture of the unit discouraged viewers from seeing the device as

⁵³ Spencer R. Weart, *Nuclear fear: A history of images* (Harvard University Press, 2009); ‘A Cyborg Manifesto Science, Technology, And Socialist-Feminism In The Late Twentieth Century’ in *Simians*, Donna Haraway, *Cyborgs And Women: The Reinvention Of Nature* (New York; Routledge, 1991), pp.149-181.

⁵⁴ The material and visual culture of these more intimidating medical technologies of the early-to-mid 1900s are similar to the ultraviolet devices depicted in dermatology departments. The small and large cold brass and metal machines, with overwhelmingly complicated dials and buttons, and mass visible wiring, are centrally placed in the large rooms, Woloshyn, *Soaking up the Rays*, p.16; *Reports Politics*.

'dangerous'. The 'safe' containment of the ultraviolet light and electricity in the sun-lamps' 'rich, polished wooden casing' reduced the visual threat of 'potential dangers'.⁵⁵ In sun-lamp adverts, the sun-lamp was the centrepiece and the women were placed beneath the 'rays' in worship.⁵⁶

In contrast, 1980s sunbed adverts depicted the units as docile machines, which were controlled and positioned underneath their users. Advertisers' centrepiece was the empowered consumer, who leisurely absorbed the light as they lay on top of their sunbed. On television, sunbed consumers were often captured standing above the sunbed, then slowly undressing and elegantly sliding onto the base units. The relaxed models or actors effortlessly operated the machines. This contrasts with the visual representation of subjugated bodies on the promotional material of 1930s and 1940s sun-lamps.⁵⁷

Sunbeds also reflected a similar visual and material culture of 'other' electrical household appliances. Unsurprisingly, adverts for both household sunbeds and electrical appliances were often placed next to each other in catalogues. In the 'Handy Housewares' Philips catalogue, the first page featured an electrical iron, whisk, shaver and hair dryer, followed by sunbeds and sun-lamps on the next page (**Figure 2.4**).⁵⁸ Sunbeds were sold as

⁵⁵ Woloshyn, *Soaking up the Rays*, pp.138-9, p.172.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.138.

⁵⁷ The term 'sunbed' and also 'sunbench' (the other preferred phrase during the early 1980s), in itself reflects docility, domesticity and comfort. This contrasts with the more clinical and medical sounding term 'sunlamp'.

⁵⁸ Sunbeds were being both situated within and introduced as a luxury and labour-saving household device, Anon., 'Handy housewares PHILIPS', pp.1-2; In a 1982-3 Philips Brochure, sunbeds were included in the 'The Philips Collection' of small appliances, instead of other large electrical units, such as fridges. In order, these included 'Philishave, ladyshave, haircare, solaria, health lamps, hostess food servicers, kitchen machines, mixers and blenders, coffee makers, toasters, kitchen aids, steam irons, dry irons, air cleaners, fan heaters, and finally clocks, Anon., 'The Philips Collection – small appliances', English brochure, Philips, ca.1982-1983; This is also the case of sun-lamps in the *Argos* catalogue between 1980 to 1982. In the Autumn/Winter

glamorous technologies to practically fulfil 'everyday' domestic demands of beauty and health.⁵⁹

The hiding of internal mechanisms and wiring also visually reassured customers that sunbeds were stress-free and safe. On average, most 1980s sunbed models held ten UV-A fluorescent lamps, which were spaced apart and reached up to 180 centimetres.⁶⁰ The manufactures half-wrapped the back of the sunbed tubes in a silver reflector before inserting them side-by-side, which concentrated the light onto the users' body. A protective panel of glass secured these tubes within the sunbed frame, which prevented the unsafe ultraviolet light from directly touching the users' body. The panels protected consumers from the scalding tubes and any loose parts that could detach from regular use. An internal fan could often be operated if the heat became too intense.⁶¹

1980 edition, ultraviolet technologies for home use were placed on the same creamy yellow, orange and gold pages of the electrical hair curlers. These two pages were enclosed by pages selling hairdryers, electric toothbrushes, deep heat massagers, and men's shavers in the 'personal electrics' section, *Argos Catalogue*, No.15, Spring/Summer 1981, pp.62-69; Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More work for mother: The ironies of household technology from the open hearth to the microwave* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

⁵⁹ Woloshyn, *Soaking up the Rays*, p.140.

⁶⁰ UV-A sunbeds had high pressure mercury vapour lamps or fluorescent tubes with filters to reduce or eliminate shorter wavelength, with a possibility of unfiltered UV-B "boosters". UV-C was not emitted, and the remainder of the energy was visible and infrared. The vertical UV rods were set within clear fused tubes, M. W. Greaves, D. Vella Briffa, 'UV-A and the skin', *British Journal of Dermatology*, 105, (1981), p.479; Devgun, Johnson, Paterson, 'Tanning, protection against sunburn and vitamin D formation with a UV-A 'sunbed'', p.275.

⁶¹ Anon., 'Handy housewares PHILIPS', pp.1-2; Lucia van der Post, Joan Price, 'Browned off without sun', *Financial Times*, 28 June 1980, p.13; Anon., 'Classified Ad 192 - SUNBED BREAKTHROUGH', p.30.

'Vitality' and Warmth 'Safely' Harnessed from Sunbeds

The cultural association of absorbing energy, light or heat from the 'invisible' rays of electrical machines has a long-standing history of revitalisation and empowerment; however, the risk of losing control over the machine also evoked fear from the operator.⁶² In 1980s advertising and on television, the user was depicted as 'safely' harnessing the sunbeds' light. Sunbed rays were said to warm, caress and sooth their users, distracting from the fear that a consumer could lose control of the machine. The rays were instead cathartic – a welcomed and uplifting transfer of energy to warm the skin and muscles.⁶³ Although ultra-violet radiation was invisible, the light emitted was 'powerful' and 'ecstatic[ally] radiant'.⁶⁴ Yet the colour symbolism of these lights was culturally calming – aggressive reds were avoided. By the 1980s, the traditional sunbed lights were white or blue, but also occasionally violet or 'baby pink'. In advertising catalogues, the sunbed exhibition and on *The Olympian Way*, the sunbeds spread a soft sea of blue onto their users' bodies (**Figures 2.5** and **2.6**). Appealing to both genders, light blue had a long-standing cultural association of calmness and wellbeing. White, the second most common colour used in sunbed light imagery, was associated with orderly and sanitised environments, typically medical settings.⁶⁵ The combination of a powerful bright light in a colour of calmness painted sunbeds as compelling yet soothing.

⁶² For historical associations and cultural representations of absorbing "visible" ultraviolet rays, see Woloshyn, *Soaking up the Rays*, p.145, p.22, pp.148-9; For historical associations of absorbing energy from machines to empower bodies, see Caroline Thomas De La Pena, *The Body Electric: How Strange Machines Built the Modern American* (NYU Press, 2005).

⁶³ Robert Mighall was a British researcher evaluating the British public's fixation with sunshine. When using a sunbed, Mighall described the 'heat [as] part of the feel-good bundle that is sunshine', Robert Mighall, *Sunshine: Why We Love the Sun* (London: John Murray, 2008), pp.135-6.

⁶⁴ He wrote *Sunshine* to explain his personal experiences of all forms of tanning, including sunbed use, *ibid.*, pp.136-139.

⁶⁵ Bates, 'Sensing space and making place', pp.14-15.

Unsurprisingly, the bikinis of the models from sunbed adverts were also typically light blue, baby-pink or white. These pastel tones, again, intensified the display of tanned skin.⁶⁶

Sunbeds as a Labour-Saving, Common-Sense and Stress-Free Household Device

Sunbeds were introduced both materially and visually as another household luxury and labour-saving device to help their users improve, transform, maintain and self-govern their bodies.⁶⁷ In catalogues, sunbeds were both situated within and reflected the visual and material culture of many other 'everyday' household technologies, particularly the interior, exterior and mechanisms of heat emitting self-care appliances (deep heat massage, heat lamps, hair straighteners), cameras and bodily bathroom scales or weighing machines.⁶⁸ In turn, this encouraged sunbed purchasers to perceive sunbeds as simply another useful health-promoting device. Sunbed designs were simple and user friendly, enabling a manageable and effortless routine of regular self-tanning.

⁶⁶ ITV Anglia News Item, 'Exhibition Of Sunbeds And Saunas'.

⁶⁷ For a history of how household appliances were contradictorily introduced as reducing women's domestic labour, see Cowan, *More work for mother*.

⁶⁸ In early 1980s catalogues, the domestic technologies to improve, transform and self-govern their users' bodies were both designed and presented as an unthreatening, 'everyday' and almost 'natural' technology. Heat lamps, sun-lamps and sunbeds reflected similar user-friendly mechanisms to operate. Cameras and sunbeds had similar wooden and glass casings, timers and switches, with 'safe' mechanisms to focus and 'fix' light on the subject's body. The exterior of scales, weighing machines and sunbeds for the body were increasingly curved, and the easy to read dials, arrows and marked points allowed the observer to more easily calculate and monitor the numerals, *Argos Catalogue*, No.14, Autumn/Winter 1980, p.41; *Argos Catalogue*, No.15, Spring/Summer 1981; *Argos Catalogue*, No.17, Spring/Summer 1982; *Argos Catalogue*, No.18, Autumn/Winter 1982; Roberta Bivins, Hilary Marland, 'Weighting for Health: Management, Measurement and Self-surveillance in the Modern Household', *Social History of Medicine*, 29, 4, (2016), p.772, p.780.

This 'common sense' approach to sunbeds was illustrated in print press adverts and performed by the models from the exhibition.

The sunbeds in all media representations exhibited very basic control mechanisms – they were easy and stress-free to use and control. Apart from an 'on/off' switch, only one or two other controls operated the sunbed. One dial, to set the desired time for the tanning session, was usually positioned on the side of the base unit, next to where the operators head would rest. Once accustomed to a particular sunbed unit, the consumer could effortlessly raise their hand and twist to increase the tanning duration without needing to raise their body or turn their head. On overhead canopies, a small control box dangled from the overhead, which could be pressed to either raise or lower the canopy. If the top unit did not have a switch, a curved metal handlebar allowed the sunbed user to effortlessly glide the top unit away from their body.

The Advertised and Genuine 'Props' Associated with Sunbed Use

In sunbed-related visual and material culture, the 'theatrical-props' reflected associations of comfort, convenience, hygiene and 'safety', tied in with luxury. These props featured in both adverts and genuine everyday sunbed use. An example of the external material culture associated with sunbeds was a 1981 'Keeping Fit' Sindy doll set. Although this plastic toy portrayed an 'artificial' representation, it provides a useful 'caricature' of how sunbeds entered mainstream popular culture.⁶⁹ The Sindy doll's sunbed-related props consisted of a pillow-like towel, positioned where the head of the sunbed user would rest, and sunglasses, which rested on a towel (**Figure 2.7**).

The sunbed 'pillow' usually consisted of two different forms. For household machines, the head-rest resembled a genuine thick, plush and soft

⁶⁹ The set consisted of a battery powered light-up sunbed, a toning band, exercise bike, waist trimmers and dumbbells. This Sindy set, aimed at children aged between five and eleven, was sold in large department stores, such as the Co-op. The Sindy package cost £9.99. Gilly, Sophie, Clair Etheridge, Personal communication, 30 June 2016.

Figure 2.7 Keeping Fit' Cindy Doll, England, 1981.



Source: Ebay.

pillow for luxurious comfort (Figure 2.8);⁷⁰ however, the most typical 'pillow' for public and household use, particularly in health clubs, had the leathery texture and thickness of a gymnasium mat (Figures 2.2 and

Figure 2.8 Colour advert for Alpha's sunbeds in the *Telegraph Sunday Magazine* (1981).

Dreaming of a Brown Christmas?
£339 + £23 delivery
is the real price of
a year round tan

The Alpha Bahama is a gift that will be remembered all the year round, and provides in the privacy of the home a quick and convenient method of tanning.*

Alpha Bahama Specification
 Overall Length 6'5" Overall Width 2'8 1/2" - 9x6" Wotan Tubes - 0-60 minute automatic timer - Fan cooled Triangular reflectors to create an even tan - Full length perspex sheet covering Soft cushioned head rest - Solid Pine Cabinet that is made in the finest traditions of English Craftsmen - Supplied Complete with 13 amp plug for immediate use.

When not in use as a Sunbed, the simple addition of a mattress converts the Bahama to an ideal guest bed.

SEND NO MONEY Fully paid orders received by 10th December 1981 will be delivered before Christmas. **If the skin tans in normal sunlight.*

ALPHA HEALTH & BEAUTY LTD
 87 FORE STREET
 ST MARYCHURCH
 TORQUAY - DEVON
 TEL: (0803) 33800/37782

Alpha

74 TELEGRAPH SUNDAY MAGAZINE

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____

For full colour brochure of the Bahama and other Alpha sunbeds, Overhead and Face Units complete the coupon and post today.

Source: Anon., 'Dreaming of a Brown Christmas?', *Telegraph Sunday*, November or December 1981, p.74.

⁷⁰ The front cover of this magazine stating the exact date and edition number could not be found. Anon., 'Dreaming of a Brown Christmas?', p.74; Anon., 'The Philips Collection – small appliances', English brochure, Philips, ca.1982-1983, p.15.

2.6). Designed for regular usage, the unabsorbed sweat on this practical headrest could be easily cleaned with a towel. This towel was either brought by the sunbed user or provided by the health club.⁷¹ The headrest and towel, placed within reach, would also have absorbed the warmth of the sunbed rays. After tanning exposure, the soft comforts of towels (or gowns) wrapped around the body would have stimulated sensations of hygiene and luxury.

The 'theatrical-props' in sunbed adverts were often different to the items that genuinely surrounded sunbeds. In advertised representations, notions of safety and luxury were accentuated by the absence of goggles and cleaning products. These depictions further domesticated the machines and hid both the upkeep and housework labour from viewers and consumers. For instance, goggles were often included for free when purchasing household units or using public sunbeds.⁷² Yet, in all print press advertising, goggles were replaced by summer-associated sunglasses or were non-existent.⁷³ During the pre and inter-war period of the twentieth century, the goggles worn by scientists, healthcare professionals and patients were depicted as positively modern and high-tech. In *Soaking up the Rays*, Woloshyn described how the goggles in ultraviolet promotional material were used to depict a 'realm of fantasy or science fiction'. In contrast, the representation of goggles by the late twentieth century depicted anxiety-causing 'risk' and 'danger'. Goggles depicted a material warning that 'invisible', yet penetrating rays could damage unprotected eyes.⁷⁴ The removal of goggles from adverts, or the reassurance that goggles were not needed, allowed the suppliers, advertisers and consumers to trivialise

⁷¹ *The Olympian Way*, 'Episode 4: FAMILY BUSINESS'.

⁷² Anon., 'Handy housewares PHILIPS', pp.1-2.

⁷³ Christopher Matthew, 'CRISP AT LARGE: Simon Crisp pumps a spot of iron for his health's sake', *Observer*, 15 November 1981, p.13; Doyle, 'The hidden dangers beyond the pale', p.38; Anon., 'ALPHA. Unlimited tanning time for just £2 a week', *Cosmopolitan*, October 1980, p.290.

⁷⁴ For more information on how goggles in medical contexts reflected fearful association, see Woloshyn, *Soaking up the Rays*, p.141, pp.138-19.

the dangers of sunbeds.⁷⁵ This encouraged more care-free attitudes towards sunbed tanning. Cleaning sprays and bins were also hidden in sunbed adverts. Again, the visual depiction of cleaning products and waste disposal would hint at sweat and regular maintenance, which was not glamorous or desirable; however, these objects were normally placed next to sunbeds in health clubs (**Figure 2.2**). In adverts, these missing cleaning products also supported the idea of 'naturalness'. Nonetheless, in the health club, these cleaning items signalled to visitors that hygiene standards were maintained and allowed the sunbed user to sanitise the sunbed themselves.

The 'Keep Fit' Sindy doll suitably demonstrates how sunbeds entered popular culture. Parents purchased the blue, battery charged sunbed set for their children, to be played with at home. The light-up sunbed set was designed to be fashionable and educational, inspiring children to perform 'positive' health consumerism.⁷⁶ On the cardboard box, an illustrated wooden health club interior presented a backdrop of 'fitness', 'health' and comfort. These themes reflect questionable representations of early 1980s domesticity, docility and flexibility attributed to the visual and material culture of sunbed use. The representation of a white blonde woman in sports gear as a plastic and malleable doll reflects an explicit embodiment of how sunbed tanning was associated with the aspirational healthy and 'fit' role-models of the early 1980s.

The Bodies, Clothes and Environments Associated with Sunbeds

During the early 1980s, sunbed tanned bodies supported a longstanding

⁷⁵ Sandles, 'SWIMMING POOLS BUYER'S GUIDE', p.14.

⁷⁶ The 'Keeping Fit' Sindy doll was similar to Mattel's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Barbie dolls. Since the 1960s, astronaut, doctor and engineer Barbie doll sets have been advertised and sold to inspire young girls into untraditional career paths, Juniper Patel, 'Painting the Leaky Pipeline Pink: Girl Branded Media and the Promotion of STEM', Unpublished Thesis, University of Arkansas, (2019), pp.48-50.

fashion for bronzed skin and its enduring association of health, fitness and leisure.⁷⁷ These revived associations were achieved in two ways; firstly, because of the public environments in which these sunbed tans developed, and secondly, because of the individuals who first radiated such tans. Both elements advertised sunbed use as a 'recommended' investment, contributing to a bodily display and experiences of vitality.⁷⁸

Since the early 1980s, health club employees usually had free sunbed access. When athletic and tanned personal trainers greeted their clients, they sold an aspirational bodily role-model to aspire to. The stereotyped aesthetic of health club workers was regularly mentioned in the media. Newspapers, like the *Daily Mail*, commented on the appearances of health club workers, such as 'Carol' from the Corinthian Club, who was described as 'trim and tanned' – her role was to greet new clients.⁷⁹ The *Financial Times* published similar comments of praise to describe Debbie Moore - a fitness entrepreneur who joined the health club industry by launching Pineapple Dance Studios in the early 1980s. The *Financial Times* lauded the '34-year-old former model' as 'the living embodiment of ... health and vitality.' The reporter, David Churchill, asserted: 'it would hardly be fitting for a paunchy executive to be running so

⁷⁷ During the late 1920s and 1930s, a physical culture movement for both men and women, better known as the 'natural health movement' emerged in Britain and Germany. By the late 1930s, 'Keep Fit' classes were attended by thousands of people from all ranges of socio-economic ranks. During the health movement 'beauty was democratised, and modernity was mapped onto the bodies of the masses.' A tanned complexion was a vital part of the bodily transformation, as it emphasised fitness, strength and an outdoors 'naturalness,' Jill Julius Matthews, 'Building the body beautiful', *Australian Feminist Studies*, 2, 5, (1987), p.21, p.31; For a history of the 1930s natural health movement in Britain and Germany, see Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the body*; Woloshyn, 'Le Pays du Soleil', pp.74–93; Michael Hau, *The Cult of health and beauty in Germany: a social history, 1890-1930* (University of Chicago Press, 2003).

⁷⁸ Post, Price, 'Browned off without sun', p.13.

⁷⁹ Shure, 'Choosing a Health Club', p.12.

healthy an enterprize as Pineapple'. The *Financial Times* idolised Moore as a healthy role model, who became one of Britain's first exercise millionaires. Moore provided a nation-wide spread of fitness and sunbed facilities, leading Churchill to remark that 'being tanned, healthy, and beautiful [was] no longer something that only the rich and famous aspir[ed] to'.⁸⁰ These newspapers reflected a consistent discourse that selling a tanned, healthy and beautiful body could also lead to wealth,⁸¹ once again reflecting a tanned complexion as a bodily 'asset'.⁸²

In the fictional television serial *The Olympian Way*, amongst the everyday health club members, a tanned complexion distinguished between who was 'fit' and admired, and who was ridiculed as 'fat'. Predictably, the bodybuilders (both men and women), dressed in tiny shorts and low vests, heavily exposed their extremely tanned skin - their cheekbones were also contoured with dark bronzer.⁸³ When new members visited the *Olympian Way* they shared their admiration of the health club's 'tanned, muscular' regulars.⁸⁴ Although this representation was fictional, the script writer, Tara Prem, was inspired by her own health club experiences, in Birmingham and London. She had regularly observed 'all sorts of people' when she attended – 'the vain and self-disciplined, the ambitious and the self-deluding'. When Prem attended health clubs, she was particularly aware of the contagious 'gym spirit', which

⁸⁰ Churchill, 'PRIVATE HEALTH CARE', p.17; Amanda Cochrane, 'Shaping up well', *Guardian*, 22 January 1983, p.23.

⁸¹ For a history of the 1980s 'action hero, body builder and the new man/metrosexual ... in the visual culture of consumerism', see Jamie Hakim, "'Fit is the new rich': male embodiment in the age of austerity", *Soundings*, 61, (2015), pp.84-94.

⁸² Lee Wilson, "How do they look after their assets?" *Daily Mail*, 1 June 1982, p.12.

⁸³ *The Olympian Way*, 'Episode 6: Public Appearance'; Stratton, Jon, 'Building a better body: Male bodybuilding, spectacle, and consumption', *CULTURAL POLITICS*, 16 (1999), pp.151-172.

⁸⁴ Matthew, 'CRISP AT LARGE', p.13.

emanated 'discipline, purposefulness and ... drive'.⁸⁵

From 1980 to 1982, print press advertisers chose tanned models to sell fitness equipment in catalogues, such as the *Argos* catalogue. The photographed white models, using the exercise equipment, were extremely tanned and toned. The men were topless or wore revealing sports gear, and the women wore bikinis. The exposed and oiled bodies of the models glistened, which contoured further muscle definition. This athletic look was eye-catching, as it contrasted to the fully clothed, more brunette and pale-skinned models used to advertise other products on neighbouring pages (**Figure 2.9**).⁸⁶ Unsurprisingly, both women or men models of colour were excluded from mainstream print press advertising in the England until at least the 1990s.⁸⁷

The tanned bodies of the health clubs' owners and employees demonstrated more than just an 'aesthetic' of health and fitness. These individuals often had medical, health or fitness expertise. Many employees were sincere about their ambition to help clients undergo health-enhancing and safe bodily routines, including sunbed use.⁸⁸ In sociologist Roberta Sassatelli's research on 1990s gyms, she investigated why individuals regularly attended these fitness spaces and observed the 'energy' of the environment. The key reasons for attendance were to 'heal'; undergo a 'development project', and to

⁸⁵ British Film Institute, Reubin Library, Naseem Khan, 'The Fitness Business: *The Olympian Way* Wednesday 7.50pm BBC1', *Radio Times*, 11-18 July 1981. pp.14-15.

⁸⁶ *Argos* Catalogue, No.15, Spring/Summer 1981, pp.14-17. *Argos* Catalogue, No.17, Spring/Summer 1982, pp.224-231; In *Cosmopolitan*, the 'sporty' image of the 'Charlie' cosmetics range produced by Revlon was re-emphasised because of the 1980 Olympic Games. The advertising featured a tanned 'Charlie' model engaging in various sports, *Cosmopolitan*, November 1979, Earnshaw, 'Advertising and the media: The case of women's magazines,' pp.418-9.

⁸⁷ Lynn Sudbury, Fiona Wilberforce, 'The portrayal of black people in UK television advertising: perception and reality', *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 5, (2006), pp.465-476.

⁸⁸ Shure, 'Choosing a Health Club', p.12.

experience 'serious' or 'therapeutic leisure'. Attending health clubs was described as a 'rational recreation' - a 'morally uplifting' activity which created 'positive benefits for wide society'.⁸⁹ After working out and using sunbeds, clients left the health club feeling 'full of sunshine'.⁹⁰



Figure 2.9 Sports equipment section in the Argos catalogue (Spring/Summer 1981).

⁸⁹ Sassatelli, *Fitness culture*, pp.4-5.
⁹⁰ Matthew, 'CRISP AT LARGE', p.13.

Sunbeds, Bikinis and Beach Holiday Culture

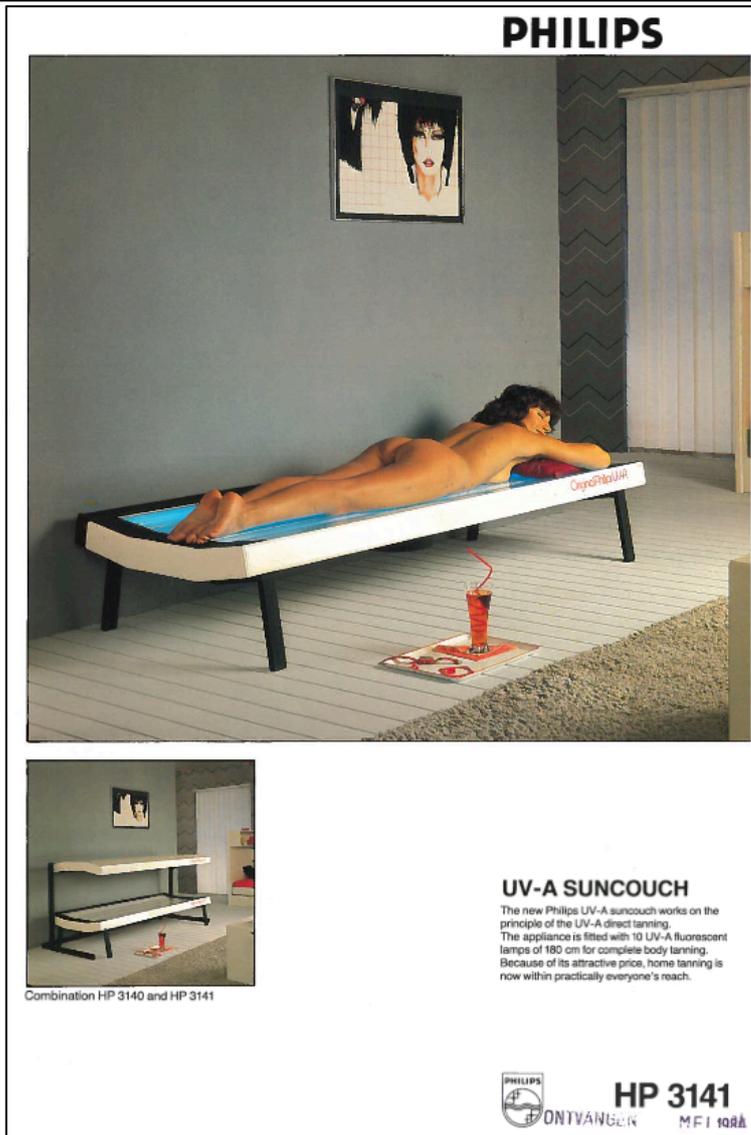
In all media representations of early 1980s sunbeds, swimming costumes and beach culture depictions were ubiquitous. The 'healthy' models were culturally attractive, toned and tanned. They wore sparkling jewellery, sunglasses, painted nails, bronzed make-up, and wore skimpy bikinis and open swimsuits (**Figures 2.6, 2.8 and 2.11**). In adverts, the 'beach holiday' overtones were often emphasised by sandy coloured sunbeds, soft towelling and real or fictional images of palm trees – sometimes women walked up to a sunbed

Figure 2.10 Sunbed advert filmed on Kirkby beach in Southport (January 1982).

Source: BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Film of sunbeds which are being manufactured by a local firm in Kirkby for tourists in Southport', Film Item 4, 14 January 1982. (Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive).

⁹¹ Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive, BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Film of sunbeds', Film Item 2, 1 December 1980; BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Film of sunbeds which are being manufactured by a local firm in Kirkby for tourists in Southport.', Film Item 4.

Figure 2.11 Philips UV-A Suncouch Combination (1980 or 1984).



Source: Anon., 'HP 3140: UV-A SUNCOUCH' and 'COMBINATION HP 3141', English product information leaflet, Philips, 1980 or 1984. (Philips International Company Archive, Eindhoven, The Netherlands).

(Figure 2.11).⁹² During beach holidays, these items were leisurely 'consumed' on a lounge or on a beach towel in the sun. The warm suntanning experience framed within these beach imageries seduced customers to regularly attend this escapism.

Sunbeds to Prevent 'fatness' and 'burning' on Holiday

The constant advertising of sunbeds within a setting of bikinis and holidays also incited two body insecurities - fears of 'fatness' and 'burning.' This would then make

the 'quick-fix' of 'safe', 'healthy' and private sunbed sessions extremely attractive. A distress of 'fatness', which was pervasive within the early 1980s

⁹² Anon., 'HP 3140: UV-A SUNCOUCH' and 'COMBINATION HP 3140 and HP 3141', English product information leaflet, Philips, 1980 or 1984; Anon., 'UV-A SUNCOUCH 3143' and 'Combination HP 3142 and HP 3143', English product information leaflet, Philips, 1985; BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Film of sunbeds which are being manufactured by a local firm in Kirkby for tourists in Southport.', Film Item 4.

cultural desire for athleticism, would have made sunbeds appealing for two contrasting audiences.⁹³ First, athletic individuals, wanting to follow the fashion, would have used sunbeds to enhance the definition of their 'lily-white' muscles.⁹⁴ Second, unathletic individuals who lacked time or motivation could use sunbeds as a 'cheat' option to appear slimmer. In many newspaper articles, reporters advised 'practical solutions' to improve the quality of holidays and boost body confidence. If readers did not have the 'resources' - such as time, self-discipline or motivation - to undergo rigorous exercise, both reporters and sunbed providers advised regular sunbed use.⁹⁵

The public's second fear was either burning on or returning from holiday without an 'all-even tan'. In a *Financial Times* article, Lucia van der Post remarked that a 'ritual tan' was a 'mandatory part of most people's summer.' Large surveys from the late 1960s and one from 2000 confirm that the British public have long thought 'getting a good tan [was] the most important aspect about a holiday'.⁹⁶ Post also described how attending summer events without a

⁹³ See Sabrina Strings, *Fearing the Black Body: The Racial Origins of Fat Phobia* (New York: New York University Press, 2019); Hannele Harjunen, *Neoliberal bodies and the gendered fat body* (Routledge, 2016); Sander Gilman, *Fat: A Cultural History of Obesity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008); Kathleen LeBesco, *Revolting Bodies? The Struggle to Redefine Fat Identity* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004); Peter Stearns, *Fat history: Bodies and beauty in the modern west* (NYU Press, 2002).

⁹⁴ Shyama Perera, 'When a bedroom mirror is a man's best friend', *Guardian*, 4 January 1982, p.4.

⁹⁵ Post, 'In perfect trim', p.7; Ann Hill, Diana Pollock, Brenda Polan, Alison Field, 'Indoor tan', *Guardian*, 20 May 1980, p.10; Lucia van der Post, 'HOW TO SPEND IT. Browning versions', *Financial Times*, 12 June 1982, p.13; In the 1980s, the sunbed business director of the Tanning Shop, Ciaran Mooney, said the business emerged to 'provide an efficient, controlled alternative to sunshine for busy people without the time or resources to access the real thing,' Mighall, *Sunshine*, pp.134-5.

⁹⁶ Mary Openshaw, 'The Angels of Devil's Kitchen', *The Times*, 26 May 1967; By 2000, a survey showed that 50% of Britons said that returning with a tan was the single most important reason for going on holiday, Sophie Wilkinson, 'A short history of tanning',

tan (in her words 'white, plump and oven-ready') would make even the 'most socially confident ill at ease.'⁹⁷ Joan Price and Post, from the *Financial Times*, again, advised sunbeds for both fair and darker skinned individuals for strategic holiday preparation. Price remarked that sunbeds were a 'boon for people with fair sensitive skin,' advising sunbeds for tanning pre-holiday preparation and post-holiday preservation. Price acknowledged that any form of suntanning might have long-term ageing effects. Yet as avoiding the sun was 'impossible', sunbeds allowed a 'sensible' approach to tanning.⁹⁸ Post stated that sunbed sessions allowed users to safely use a lower SPF (Sun Protection Factor) cream. This way sunbathers could look 'halfway healthy on a beach.' Finally, in the *Daily Mail* 'Femail' section, Kathy Philips observed how both men and women felt under pressure to avoid suntan lines, especially with new fashions of quirky swimming costume designs.⁹⁹ From 1980 onwards, sunbeds were a normalised, 'sensible', 'quick', 'painless' and 'protective' method to overcome all beach body issues.¹⁰⁰

The 'Healthy' and 'Safe UVA (not UVB)' Sunbed Craze

Between 1980 to 1982, dermatologists voiced their concerns about tanning through one in-depth current affairs programme, two national television news reports, and only two official *BMJD* articles. The *BMJ* did not publish any relevant articles. Sunbeds were a growing media and consumer concern, but beyond specialised dermatology departments' sunbeds were not yet a

Guardian, 19 February 2019. Accessed 7 November 2017:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/feb/19/history-of-tanning>

⁹⁷ Post, 'HOW TO SPEND IT', p.13.

⁹⁸ Post, Price, 'Browned off without sun', p.13.

⁹⁹ Kathy Philips, 'A swimming suit you spend the whole day in ...', *Daily Mail*, 16 January 1981, pp.12-3.

¹⁰⁰ Hill, Pollock, Polan, Field, 'Indoor tan', p.10; Post, 'HOW TO SPEND IT', p.13.

mainstream healthcare concern.¹⁰¹ During the most pivotal first two years of the modern sunbed industry, dermatologists were hesitant to confirm the harms of sunbeds. This allowed the industry to publicise bold claims that sunbeds were 'healthy', 'safe' and would not cause 'burning'.¹⁰² Aside for the fashionable demand for tanned skin, I argue that the popularity of sunbeds can be attributed to these persistent claims in the media.

An evaluation of a current affairs programme, national news broadcasts and medical journals demonstrates that the media was the first stakeholder to voice their concerns about sunbed use. On the 23 June 1980, the programme *Reports Politics* aired on the North-West Granada channel. Shortly after, the first sunbed-related *BMJD* article, 'UV-A and the skin,' was published in January 1981. The article was a response to 'the widespread concern about the proliferation of private health centres offering UV-A sunbeds', and the health benefit claims that the providers were advertising to sunbed users.¹⁰³ Two subsequent BBC news reports warning about sunbed overuse aired in 1981, one in March and the other in May.¹⁰⁴ Finally, the last *BMJD* article, 'Tanning,

¹⁰¹ The first mention of sunbeds before these two articles appeared in a brief and informal paragraph published in the 'Reading for Pleasure section', Anon., 'What are the hazards of ultraviolet "sun tan" lights?', *British Medical Journal*, (1980).

¹⁰² After Jean Graham spoke on *Reports Politics* from 'TV's Granada' channel, she used this publicity to begin a 'sun club' membership option for regulars at her 'professional' health and beauty salon. In her sunbed adverts, she asserted that her UV-A sunbeds were 'healthy', 'safe' and did not burn, Anon., 'Jean Graham. BECOME A MEMBER OF THE JEAN GRAHAM SUN CLUB.', *Liverpool Echo*, 1 July 1980, p.5.

¹⁰³ Greaves and Briffa, 'UV-A and the skin', pp.477-82.

¹⁰⁴ I was unable to access the audio-visual footage of these sunbed-related news reports, BBC Motion Gallery / BBC Broadcast Archive, 'NEWSNIGHT: Kevin Cosgrove reports on potential health hazards presented by artificially tanning sunbeds', (Clip BBC_947527), BBC, Aired 17 March 1981; 'NATIONWIDE: Sue COOK intros items on the dangers of overusing sunbeds & solariums. Although thought safe o use in moderation, there were over 1000 incidents last yr of individuals taken to hospital with burns & minor injuries. Live studio', (Clip BBC_10232992), BBC, Aired 19 May 1981.

protection against sunburn and vitamin D formation with a UV-A ‘sunbed’, was published in 1982.¹⁰⁵ Throughout this publicity, dermatologists were most interested in the claim that ‘new UVA sunbeds’ emitted ‘safer’ radiation on the skin and did not emit UV-B. UV-B was the confirmed cancer-causing radiation emitted from previous ultraviolet technologies and the sun.¹⁰⁶

Dr Tom Stewart from Reports Politics (June 1980)

Dr Stewart, a middle-aged white man, was a consultant dermatologist from Liverpool University.¹⁰⁷ In the summer of 1980, dressed in a long white coat and set against a laboratory background, Stewart offered his sunbed expertise to the television-watching public, (**Figure 2.12**).¹⁰⁸ Stewart remarked that the widespread use of sunbeds was ‘reprehensible’ as they remained unmonitored. He asserted that sunbeds should be operated by ‘at least a physiotherapist’ – someone who knew what to expect of the possible adverse health effects. He argued that sunbed ‘patients’ were unaware of the dangers as sunbed adverts presented the ‘very reverse’ of the health consequences.

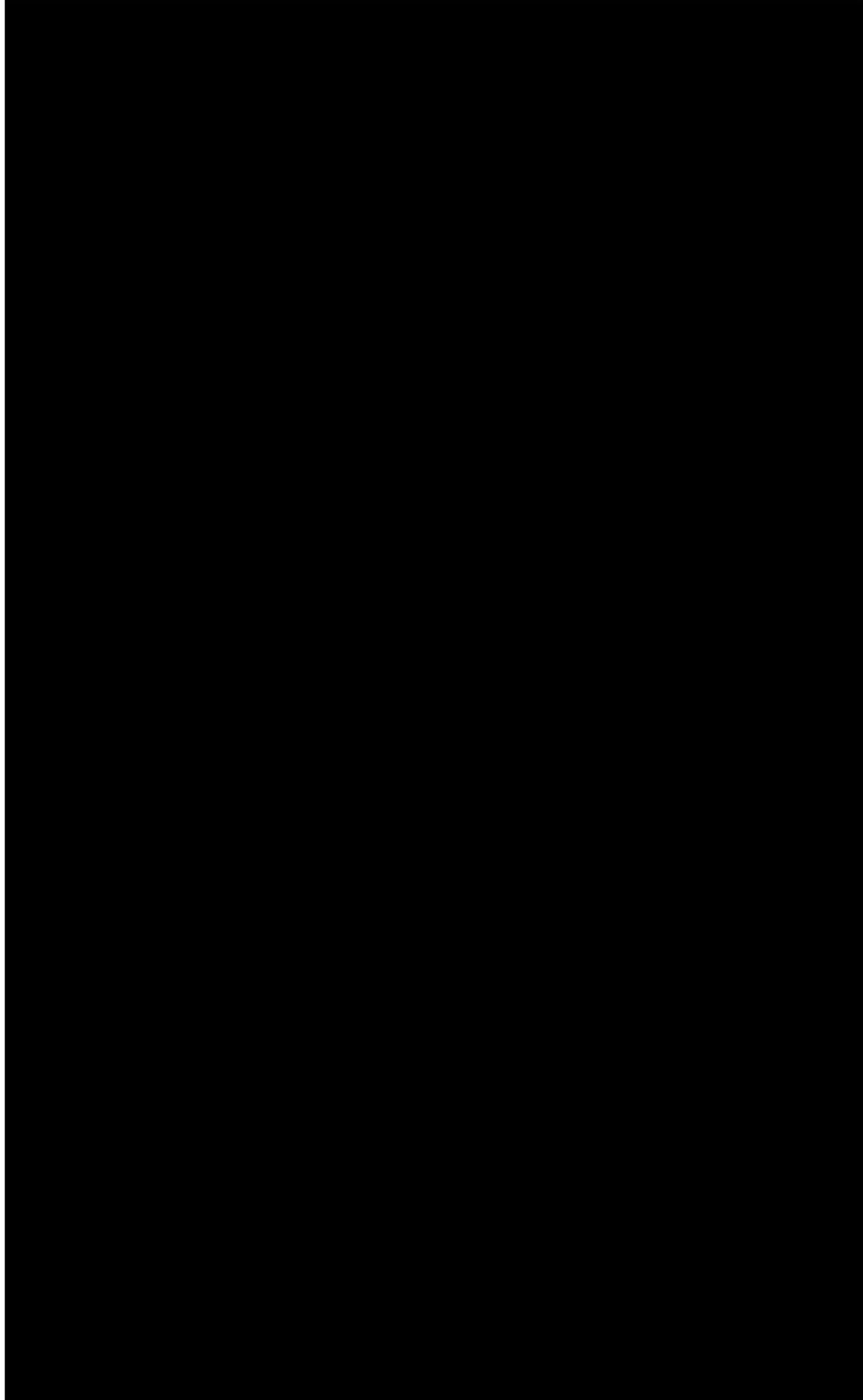
¹⁰⁵ Devgun, Johnson, Paterson, ‘Tanning, protection against sunburn and vitamin D formation with a UV-A ‘sunbed’, pp.275-284.

¹⁰⁶ Freeman, Knox, ‘Skin Cancer and the Sun’, pp.231-238.

¹⁰⁷ See Chapter 1 for a history of the sunbed industry in Liverpool and more about *Reports Politics*.

¹⁰⁸ There is a longstanding history of male doctors in white coats advising the public on television and in films. As Alison Lee described there was a ‘persistent image of the professional researcher as a white-coated, impersonal, detached and non-disclosing’ figure who, ‘while he remains distant, is also somehow all-knowing.’ This representation framed the doctor as an authoritative figure to be listened to, Lesley Scanlon, ‘Chapter 6: White Coats, Handmaidens and Warrior Chiefs: The Role of Filmic Representations in Becoming a Professional’ and Alison Lee ‘Chapter 8: Professional Practice and Doctoral Education: Becoming a Researcher’ from L. Scanlon (eds) *“Becoming” a Professional*, (Springer, Dordrecht, 2011), p.165; See also, Susan Hardy, Anthony Coronos, ‘Dressed to heal: the changing semiotics of surgical dress’, *Fashion Theory*, 20, 1, (2016), pp.27-49.

Figure 2.12 Dr Tom Stewart and the differences in UV light from 'Natural Sunlight' and 'Sunbeds' on *Reports Politics* (June 1980).



Source: *Reports Politics*, Granada, 23 June 1980. (British Film Institute, Stephen Street Archive).

In another televisual segment, a woman's voiceover stated that trained medical experts, like Dr Stewart, had used ultra-violet rays for many years to treat skin complaints. Stewart was then depicted through film as an expert, organising medical notes and operating microscopes and ultraviolet equipment. The voiceover concluded that sunbeds potentially caused eye damage and skin cancer, but research on long-term effects was still in its early stages. In the final footage, Stewart voiced his extreme concern that UV-A sunbeds were being used at home. He acknowledged that 'UVA ... MAY ... be less harmful' yet explained that the damage would not appear for another 'twenty, thirty or forty years' because of the 'longer latent period'. Images then appeared on the screen illustrating that 'UVB' both tanned and burned, yet 'UVA' exclusively tanned 'the woman' absorbing the rays. In the two visuals, both sunbeds and the sun emitted UVA and UVB (**Figure 2.12**). These images contradicted Stewart's verbal warning that UVA was potentially damaging.¹⁰⁹

Stewart had validated his authority, knowledge and experience of ultra-violet technologies, in order to gain credibility from the viewers.¹¹⁰ Despite his disapproval of commercial sunbed use, he did not reject their use. Stewart admitted the lack of research on and his own limited understanding of the effects of UVA. This allowed tanning businesses to relentlessly claim that their sunbeds only emitted 'the safer and healthier UVA' to 'tan and not burn'. In part, this illustrates a clash in the rhetorical culture between science and commerce.

Following this broadcast, in most print press advertising, sunbed providers explained that their 'UVA' sunbeds were different to their 'UVB' predecessors, asserting that they did not burn, and were both 'safe' and 'not cancer causing'. The quick response of national newspapers and magazines following the *Reports Politics* broadcast could also be representative of wider trends, illustrating how health information and medical advice was translated

¹⁰⁹ *Reports Politics*.

¹¹⁰ I cannot find viewership information for *Reports Politics* (1980).

further in mass print press.¹¹¹ Many sunbed providers began to use the term 'UVA' in both their business names and service descriptions, such as 'UVAbronze' or the 'Uvasun salon' in London.¹¹² In 1981 and 1982 *Mersey Yellow Pages*' sunbed adverts, almost all providers explained that they now offered 'New U.V.A sunbeds for a tan without burning'.¹¹³ In the print press, health club providers had limited space for textual information, particularly in the *Yellow Pages*. This adds weight to their decision to include that they only provided 'UVA' sunbeds, especially as this clarification was not mentioned before the broadcast. Moreover, *Report Politics*' claim that UV-B from 'natural sunlight' caused skin cancer also allowed the media to uphold that sunbed use was the safest way to tan.¹¹⁴

'UV-A and the skin'

The first sunbed-related *BMJD* article was submitted at the end of 1980 - the year that sunbeds had the strongest positive reception in the media. The comprehensive article was five pages long.¹¹⁵ The authors, M. W. Greaves and D. Vella Briffa, were motivated by their concerns over the health claims about sunbeds. Aiming to 'protect' the public, the article's five sections demonstrated that dermatologists wanted to limit the public's access to sunbed-related scientific knowledge until more studies had been published, and that

¹¹¹ Post, Price, 'Browned off without sun', p.13; Anon., 'THE UVABRONZE TAN VERSUS A SPANISH TAN. COULD A LEADING TRAVEL AGENT TELL THE DIFFERENCE?', *Cosmopolitan*, September 1981, p.189; Virginia Berridge, Kelly Loughlin (eds), *Medicine, the market and mass media: producing health in the twentieth century* (London: Routledge, 2012).

¹¹² Post, Price, 'Browned off without sun', p.13; Anon., 'THE UVABRONZE TAN VERSUS A SPANISH TAN. COULD A LEADING TRAVEL AGENT TELL THE DIFFERENCE?', *Cosmopolitan*, September 1981, p.189.

¹¹³ *Mersey Yellow Pages*, March 1981; *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1982.

¹¹⁴ Post, Price, 'Browned off without sun', p.13.

¹¹⁵ The publication was accepted in the *BMJD* in January 1981, Greaves, Briffa, 'UV-A and the skin', p.477.

dermatologists were beginning to use a discourse of 'irrational' sunbed use to discourage consumption.

Greaves and Briffa first defined the differences between UVA and UVB radiation, demonstrating their expertise. Dermatologists had intensely studied UV-A to cure 'chronic plaque psoriasis' and other cutaneous disorders. The second section summarised the medical literature evaluating how the body reacted under UV-A radiation. They observed that UV-A was 'less effective in producing erythema in human skin than UV-B'. Yet the authors were 'uncertain' if 'long-continued irradiation of skin by UV-A' could induce skin cancer as it was difficult to exclude UV-B from machines.¹¹⁶ Greaves and Briffa admitted that the 'available evidence' suggested UV-A was 'not carcinogenic'. Nonetheless, Greaves and Briffa wanted to exclude this information from public discussion until more evidence was available. Instead, the authors wanted the public to be informed of the strong possibility that continuous use of UV-A sunbeds could increase the incidence of skin cancer. From mostly animal and some human studies, Greaves and Briffa also suggested that 'prolonged UV-A exposure of the same irradiance as natural sunlight' could cause corneal and lens damage; yet, again, the evidence was 'incomplete'.

The third section asked if UV-A had 'any beneficial effects', such as the improved 'psychological' well-being said to be experienced by sunbed users. The authors remarked that Vitamin D was the only benefit.¹¹⁷ They also observed that UV-A exposure had improved a small group of patients' psoriasis, yet none of the patients were entirely cured, and many relapsed. Greaves and Briffa admitted that they could not dismiss the health claims of UV-A exposure as investigations were extremely incomplete. They encouraged studies on the

¹¹⁶ Researchers needed the appropriate machinery of the correct wavelength and it was difficult to find a device for the experiment that emitted UV-A in isolation, without UV-B or UV-C, Greaves, Briffa, 'UV-A and the skin', p.478.

¹¹⁷ For a history of Vitamin D, see Rima Apple, *Vitamina: vitamins in American culture* (Rutgers University Press, 1996).

effects of UV-A on the 'immune system, blood chemistry, cutaneous neurophysiology and endocrinological processes of the skin', which had received little or no attention from researchers.¹¹⁸

The final section of the article explored 'UV-A lamps and sunbeds', sold in private 'clinics', beauty salons and for home use. Greaves and Briffa discussed the risks of unsupervised sunbeds and framed the use of sunbeds as irrational. First, they estimated that 30 minutes on a UV-A sunbed was double the dose of thirty minutes of mid-day sun exposure in the tropics. Second, those drawn to sunbed use were, they claimed more likely to combine sunbeds and sunbathing, which enhanced the risk of UV-B-induced cancer. Third, as UV-A only caused redness and erythema in very high dosage, this did not discourage 'over-enthusiastic user[s]'. Fourth, there were concerns that UV-A sunbeds would cause skin damage by reacting with photosensitising medications. Finally, tanning from UV-A offered little protection from UVB. Nonetheless, sunbed users felt 'lulled into a false sense of security by a cosmetically impressive tan' which then lead to severe sunburn and skin cancer. Greaves and Briffa were alarmed that adverts claimed UV-A was "harmless to the eye", as this discouraged eye protection.

In conclusion, the article advised: a 'cautious approach to the use of UV-A especially for cosmetic purposes'; supervision by 'qualified individuals, possibly physiotherapists'; the constant wearing of eye protection, and finally more warnings about the dangers of applying photosensitising medication before ultraviolet light exposure. Dermatologists were also disturbed that sunbed centres and sunbeds for household use had no restrictions.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Greaves, Briffa, 'UV-A and the skin', p.479.

¹¹⁹ Greaves and Briffa concluded that the U.K. Health and Safety Executive and the U.K. National Radiological Protection Board (in 1977) had adopted threshold limits for occupational exposure to UV-A radiation, Greaves, Briffa, 'UV-A and the skin', pp.479-480.

'Tanning, protection against sunburn and vitamin D formation with a UV-A 'sunbed''

In March and May 1981, two sunbed-related BBC news reports aired on television. Shortly after in November 1981, the second medical article, 'Tanning, protection against sunburn and vitamin D formation with a UV-A 'sunbed'', was accepted for publication by the *BMJD*.¹²⁰ This ten-page article was even longer than Greaves and Briffa's, and was also prompted by sunbed providers' claims that their UV-A emitting sunbeds allowed a tan without sunburn and increased 'resistance to colds and influenza, reduce[d] plasma uric acid levels and enhance[d] vitamin D formation; all without side effects such as erythema and the more severe manifestations of sunburn'. Consequently, the aim of the researchers' experiment was to test if sunbed use protected against sunburn, created vitamin D formation or caused any general side-effects.

In the experiment, the dermatologists used the Nordic Sunbench UVA 'Contour', which was supplied by Nordics UVA Sun-systems, based in Reigate, Surrey. After the experiment, the authors concluded that there was 'no apparent correlation between the intensity of tan and the protection obtained'. Additionally, there were side effects. Out of thirty-three subjects, twenty-seven developed erythema and itching. Sixteen of those developed other skin reactions; however, they were not typical UV-B sunburn reactions. The authors suggested that these skin reactions were typical of UV-A. This was allowing sunbed providers to advertise that their sunbeds achieved a tan without burning, because 'burning' was being defined as the erythema reaction caused by UV-B. The dermatologists noticed a 'statistically significant' increase of Vitamin D with UV-A exposure. These results were compared to a study with similar results (Rogers *et al.*, 1979), in which the initial Vitamin D increase was

¹²⁰ 'NEWSNIGHT: Kevin Cosgrove reports on potential health hazards presented by artificially tanning sunbeds'; 'NATIONWIDE: Sue COOK intros items on the dangers of overusing sunbeds & solariums'.

followed by a rapid fall towards the original level as treatment continued.¹²¹

Some sunbed providers attempted to either gain government support or at least develop a relationship with government officials by demonstrating that they cared about their consumers. They also wanted the government to endorse the potential medical effects of their sunbeds. In March 1982, a major manufacturer of sunbeds in the UK had successfully pioneered low-cost high-quality household sunbeds. Yet they were concerned about the need to 'provide reliable information on all aspects of sunbed usage'. This anonymous sunbed company asked Broadoak Public Relations to contact the Medical Research Council's (MRC) Co-ordinating Committee on Cancer Research (CRCC) for information on 'the medical effects of sunbed usage'. The sunbed manufacturing company had also founded their own sunbed Advisory Bureau and were asking the CRCC for contact information to find a prospective advisor. The CRCC responded that they did not provide manufactures with advice on the effects of potential cancer-inducing equipment. The CCRC then re-directed Broadoak to the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) or the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS), explaining that their CRCC members were also not experts in that particular area.¹²² The CRCC were reluctant to directly assist sunbed manufactures yet they encouraged Broadoak to contact other medical and government 'expert' groups. This demonstrated the government's ambivalent reception towards sunbed technologies during the early 1980s, which also allowed them to delay either a clear supportive or anti-sunbed standpoint to the public.

¹²¹ Devgun, Johnson, Paterson, 'Tanning, protection against sunburn and vitamin D formation with a UV-A 'sunbed', pp.275-284.

¹²² The individuals writing these letters, and the sunbed manufacturer, are unknown as the information was redacted by the The National Archives, Reference No. FD 23/4570, Medical Research Council Headquarters File, File No. 1702/17, 'Enquiry concerning sunbed usage and MRC reply', General Correspondence, Non-Ionizing Radiation Committee, Record date: 01/01/1982 – 31/12/1982.

Dermatologists clearly disapproved of sunbeds and sought to discourage their use, yet, they felt uncomfortable condemning sunbed use based on their inconclusive scientific findings on UV-A exposure.¹²³ As a result of their cautious response, these medical articles, fleetingly mentioned out of context in advertising, newspapers reports, and on television, may have inadvertently endorsed, and both strengthened and spread the newly medically endorsed 'safe UV-A' claim.¹²⁴ In the absence of medical certainty, sunbed providers could emphasise that sunbeds prevented sunbathing burns and 'cured' skin conditions. Sunbed providers also began to use medical terminology to flaunt their knowledge of 'UV-A' vs. 'UV-B' radiation, which established a more authoritative and 'expert' tone. The media and public would then struggle to question the incessant health claims from sunbed adverts. Taken a step further, manufacturers continued to publicise that their new sunbeds only emitted UV-A instead of UV-B radiation.¹²⁵ In turn, this again characterised and sold an industry that cared about their consumers' health.

This exploration of how medical research was publicised illustrates that the watershed of positive representation from the print press, the sunbed industry and its advertisers drowned out the concerns of a select few medical experts. As previously demonstrated, the visual and material culture of the sunbeds strongly evoked and was embedded within health, fitness and safe domestic environments, technologies, bodies and discourse. Consumers were

¹²³ In the early 1980s, the Department of Health wanted to avoid a nanny state approach to public health. Their aim was to avoid being over-interventionist' while continuing to 'emphasise personal responsibility for health'. This could explain why the U.K. Health and Safety Executive were reluctant to intervene with the sunbed industry and their consumers, M. Daube, J. Stafford, L. Bond, 'No need for nanny', *Tobacco Control*, 17, (2008), pp.426-427; Matthew Hilton, *Smoking in British Popular Culture 1800-2000: Perfect Pleasures*, (Manchester University Press, 2000), p.189.

¹²⁴ Doyle, 'The hidden dangers beyond the pale', p.38.

¹²⁵ Liz Hodgkinson, 'Before you say 'Yes' to an Instant Suntan', *Daily Mail*, 19 May 1980, p.13; Post, Price, 'Browned off without sun', p.13.

offered a choice in their pursuit of tanned health, and sunbeds were now apparently scientifically approved as a safer form of tanning.

Historical Actors Contributing to the Positive Representation of Sunbeds

Many influential stakeholders, some of whom have been previously overlooked, contributed to the mass popularity of the early 1980s sunbed industry. The most important 'historical actors' were the consumers. On *Reports Politics*, Roger Blythe, the reporter, estimated that in one week alone, an estimated '3 million people in Britain w[ould] pay a staggering 12 million pounds to get a suntan' as a part of the 'new cult [sunbed] industry'.¹²⁶

A host of less obvious companies also contributed to the positive representation of sunbeds. Fitness facility providers (from health clubs to leisure centres and health farms to swimming pool providers) provided credible 'health', 'fitness' and relaxation technologies, and sunbeds were immersed within this frame of bodily 'investing'. Moreover, the tanned, trim and toned employees, who both advised sunbeds when offering 'medical' and 'fitness' expertise and notably used the sunbeds themselves, were walking embodiments that sunbeds were energising, 'health-enhancing', athletically transformative and unharmed.¹²⁷

Advertising companies (and print press editors) also endorsed sunbeds by placing the adverts in the same ephemeral spaces as other 'health' and 'fitness' services and products. In early 1980s adverts, tanned women and men became the norm for selling beauty, fitness, health and leisure. The use of tanned skin in these types of adverts had existed before, yet after the birth of the sunbed industry it was easier to use a sunbed, or perhaps edit and add

¹²⁶ *Reports Politics*.

¹²⁷ Shure, 'Choosing a Health Club', p.12; Matthew, 'CRISP AT LARGE', p.13.

warmer colours, in catalogues and the print press to accentuate a tan.¹²⁸

The media in general, from newspaper articles to television broadcasts, also unintentionally sold the positive representation of sunbeds. On the television broadcasts, the sunbed warnings from reporters and dermatologists were undermined by the accompanying audio-visual glorification of suntanned bodies on beaches or beautiful women in health clubs sensually undressing to lay on a sunbed.¹²⁹ On the filmed beaches, groups of young, toned and tanned women and men smiled as they played volleyball. Their collective laughter was just audible over the soothing crash of the sea in the background. A desirable carefree lifestyle of relaxation and beach paradise was audio-visually embodied by these tanned individuals, seducing the viewers towards a culture of tanning. These radiant, yet light-hearted representations made it easy to reject the serious tones of middle-aged dermatologists and their skin cancer warnings, set against a backdrop of cold, unsavoury and medical machinery and paperwork.

Finally, even critical yet ambivalent sunbed-related medical research inadvertently endorsed sunbed use. Understandably, dermatologists refused to condemn sunbed use as their research was limited in its early stages. This gave sunbed providers the space in the print press to present their own positive interpretations of these inconclusive findings. Without government, advertising standards or legislative intervention, the industry's bold health claims remained undisputed, and the ultraviolet strength of their sunbeds were not checked. Some MPs, such as Dr Brian Mawhinney (a Tory MP for Peterborough) called for tighter control over the sale and use of sunbeds to reduce the risk of skin damage, yet these concerns amounted to an almost undetectable small

¹²⁸ Since the late-twentieth century, both tanned and athletic models have dominated the covers of fitness magazines and were used in adverts for fitness-related clothes, leisure and health and beauty products, Maguire, *Fit for consumption*, p.4, p.1.

¹²⁹ *Reports Politics*.

paragraph at the bottom of the *Daily Mail*.¹³⁰ In the summer of 1980, government concern began; however, it was predictably reluctant and slow.¹³¹

Conclusion

In this chapter, the print press demonstrated that the emerging popularity of health, fitness and the sunbed industry both interlinked and rose at the same time. The resiliently strong ephemeral relationship between the health club and sunbed industry demonstrates why the public interpreted sunbed use as a 'health' and 'fitness' investment – or at least an investment to reflect both a lifestyle of luxury and bodily representation of health and fitness. In the second section, 'health club' settings were presented as a part of a revitalising yet convenient lifestyle, illustrated by the systematised rooms, energising interiors, body 'boosting' facilities and machines, and disciplined routines. Historians of health and fitness clubs have overlooked how sunbeds played a significant role in these surroundings. The energising sunbeds were a part of club members' strategised and repetitive routines to undergo 'healthy', 'beautifying' and pleasurable body transformation. The third section provided an even deeper evaluation of the 'domesticated' visual and material culture of sunbeds. This led to the association of fashionably fit and seductive 'bodies' with sunbed use, which radiated aspirational ideals of beach holiday culture and self-governing. The fourth section explores how dermatologists presented their sunbed

¹³⁰ Martin Jackson, 'Sunbed warning', *Daily Mail*, 26 July 1980, p.9.

¹³¹ A concern over the safety of sunbeds prompted the government to launch an investigation. Mr Patrick Mayhew, the Unemployment Under-Secretary, remarked that this investigation was to first assess and then advise on sunbed ultraviolet radiation exposure, Anon., 'Sunbeds inquiry', *Guardian*, 10 July 1980, p.21; The slow response to the emerging health threat of sunbeds was typical of the late twentieth-century British government. The Department of Health and Social Security (previously known as the Department of Health) has a long history of not acting on health matters because of the lack of medical consensus. Typically, several consultations and advisory panels had to take place before any action and legislation changes, Bivins, *Contagious communities*, pp.266-268.

concerns on television and in medical journals; however, sunbed providers used their hesitant and vague cautions to further endorse sunbeds. This led to the final section demonstrating how unobvious historical actors contributed to the dominantly positive portrayal of sunbeds during the early 1980s. The rise of the health, fitness and sunbed industry, strongly supported by the media, and inadvertently endorsed by healthcare professionals, demonstrated the blurring of private commercial and medical consumerism. Yet all stakeholders were encouraging, and even inspiring public members to be more responsible for their individual health and fitness.

The mass growth of the health, fitness and sunbed industry led to increasingly accessible and cheaper sunbeds by the mid-1980s. The desire to capitalise on the sunbed industry led to a greater range of sunbed providers, target audiences and environments of consumption. This, in turn, led to a saturated sunbed market. The next chapter will explore how sunbeds changed from an admirable emblem of self-discipline, routine and maintenance to a 'persistent' and 'excessive' consumption.

Chapter 3: ‘Economy’ Sunbeds for ‘home tanning ... now practically within everyone’s reach’: The Bust of the Industry and Cheap Domestic Sunbeds for Working-Class Consumers (1983-1987)

Introduction

*‘James Moore ... a tremendous [sunbed] salesman, obviously great flair for selling, [but] we’re in fact unable to decide whether he will make a million or nothing’, **The judges’ assessment of Moore’s sunbed business plan, Enterprize, Yorkshire Television, 10 February 1986.***¹

¹ Both the viewing figures and target audience of this programme are unknown. Nonetheless, the programme must have been relatively popular as Yorkshire Television Production continued to broadcast *Enterprize* from 1984 until 1987, and once again in 1994. In 1986, Yorkshire Television apparently served ‘6 million viewers,’ including coverage in Scarborough, Hull, Grimsby, Lincoln, Kings Lynn, Ripon, York, Sheffield and Leeds. The programme was likely aiming for a working-to-lower-middle class audience because of the programme’s themes and viewing hours. The inspiring programme wanted to educate that ‘grit’ rather than ‘credentials’ elevated the working-class masses to secure ‘successful’ enterprises and reap financial rewards. The programme aired on Monday early evenings, when nine-till-five workers and family members would have returned from work and were likely relaxing or having dinner, potentially watching the communal television, ITV Film Archive, *Enterprize 1986*, Episode 6, Yorkshire Television Production, Aired 6.30pm, 10 February 1986; Brett Mills, ‘Invisible Television: The Programmes No-One Talks about Even Though Lots of People Watch Them’, *Critical Studies in Television*, 5, 1, (2010), pp.1–16; The TV Room, ‘ITV1 Yorkshire’, 5 August 2011. Accessed 11 November 2019: <https://web.archive.org/web/20120219183948/http://www2.tv-ark.org.uk/itvyorkshire/idents.html>

As Chapter Two demonstrated, concerns for the safety of the sunbed industry were already present at its inception. These sunbed-related concerns were voiced by a few media reporters, dermatologists and MPs.² Nevertheless, the early 1980s 'boom' of the industry (1980 and 1981) led to a remarkable growth of professional and public sunbed businesses; a greater range of new designs and growing stock; new jobs, and high returns for those first investing in the market. This boom of the professional sunbed industry was short-lived, and the unregulated and overcrowded sector was saturated by the end of 1982. This chapter explores the companies that predominantly sold *domestic* sunbeds for private household use. These companies proliferated after 1983. However, by 1988, almost all became bankrupt and had disappeared. The sharp rise and decline demonstrated that both 1980s providers were not equipped to cope with the instability of the sunbed industry and that the nation-wide desirability of sunbed use, or at least admitted sunbed use, was declining.

This chapter focuses on the time period mainly between 1983 to 1987. During this period, domestic sunbeds became a more mundane and less prestigious 'everyday' technology because of the changing economic and socio-cultural influences. Both medical and political groups were also beginning to more confidently voice their concerns in both formal publications and through the media.³ This chapter illustrates how these collective influences shifted the representation of sunbeds from a positively 'balanced' to a more negative frame by the mid-to-late 1980s. This turning point in the representation of the industry, its consumers, and the act of using sunbeds, will be evaluated through 1980s newspapers, *Marketing* and *Campaign* magazines, fashion magazines (*Cosmopolitan*), company records, sunbed industry interviews from film archives, adverts from commercial archives and both television news reports

² Hodgkinson, 'Before you say 'Yes' to an Instant Suntan', p.13; Post, Price, 'Browned off without sun', p.13; Greaves, Briffa, 'UV-A and the skin', pp.479-480; Anon., 'Sunbeds inquiry', *Guardian*, 10 July 1980, p.21.

³ Pearce Wright, 'Concern over increase in melanoma skin cancers', *The Times*, 21 October 1985.

and entertainment programmes (see the Methodology section for an explanation of why these particular sources were evaluated).

In 1980, roughly £15 million pounds was spent on professional sunbeds and £4 million on domestic sunbeds in Britain. By 1981, the UK was the largest sunbed market in Europe with estimated sales of approximately £50 million. According to the *Financial Times* and leading sunbed manufacturers, domestic sunbeds, which had previously represented twenty per cent, were predicted to represent eighty percent of these total sales.⁴ This chapter continues to build on both Chapter One and Two by illustrating how ‘domestic’ sunbeds grew beyond a local to regional level, and continued to expand from a national to international scale. Upmarket British sunbed providers often proudly engraved their sunbeds ‘Hand made in Britain’ as they wanted to distinguish their products from their overseas competition, mainly from West Germany and the Netherlands.⁵ After 1982, in an attempt to overcome the market saturation of both high-end public and domestic sunbeds, most sunbed providers began to design and advertise cheaper sunbeds for ‘everyone’.⁶

This chapter first explains that the original late 1970s and very early 1980s domestic sunbed providers were from middle-to-upper-class

⁴ Before the invention of sunbeds at the end of the 1970s, for many years the sunlamp industry was apparently worth a static £3 million a year, Williams, ‘Holiday threatens sunset for tanning lamp manufacturers’, p.9.

⁵ Dutch and German sunbed providers, such as Phillips and Ergoline, outlasted the British competitors and still sell sunbeds to this day. Philips commercial archives are located in Drachten in the Netherlands. Personal correspondence with Marianka Louwers, Philips Company Archivists, Philips International, September 2017.

⁶ Market saturation occurs when the volume of a product or service in a marketplace maximizes, and there is no longer demand for the firm’s product due to competition, consumer disinterest, obsolescence, or other factors. When a market saturates, a company can sometimes achieve further growth through new product improvements, increasing consumer demand or by purchasing the existing market share from other competitors, *Cambridge Dictionary*, 2020.

backgrounds. In the ambitious spirit of the 1981 sunbed ‘boom’, which preceded the ‘bust’ of these upmarket sunbed companies, a more varied working-class demographic became attracted to the sunbed enterprise. The second section provides a historical narrative of new working-to-lower-middle-class sunbed ‘entrepreneurs’ - mainly Wakewood (1981 to 1983) and occasionally Instantropic (1984 to 1988). I will then evaluate a fictional portrayal of the stereotyped sunbed seller from the television comedy *Only Fools and Horses* (1986). These narratives will explain who these working-class providers were; why did they join the industry after the boom-to-bust period of both the professional and domestic sunbed market; how did their businesses quickly grow; how did this lead to bankruptcy, and finally, how did this reflect and reinforce the new representation that a ‘typical’ sunbed provider was both financially under-privileged and unwanted. These domestic sunbed businesses typically lasted on average three years. This timeframe encompasses their first launch until they either stopped advertising; were declared bankrupt; owed creditors money and underwent liquidation or were sold to another company (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 The inclusion of image-based advertisements from sunbed companies in the *Observer*, *Guardian* and the *Daily Mail* (1978-1988).

| Newspapers | Years | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|------------|----------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|------|---------|------|
| | 1978 | 1979 | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | 1985 | 1986 | 1987 | 1988 |
| Observer | Interscan | Interscan | Interscan | Interscan | Nordic | | | Amber Leisure (AL) | | Philips | |
| | | Dale Sauna | Dale Sauna | Dale Sauna | | | | | | AL | |
| | Paine | Sun Temple | Nordic | | | | | | | | |
| | | Supersun | Paine/Uvabronze | Suntanners | | | | | | | |
| Guardian | | Paine | Alpha | | | | Kings Leisure | AL | AL | | |
| | | | Solarbronze | | | | Gardine | | | | |
| Daily Mail | | | Alpha | Alpha | Wakewood | Wakewood | Sunbird | | | | |
| | | | | | | Tanfast | | | AL | AL | AL |
| | | | Supersunbeds | Tanfast | Nordic | Uvabronze | | | | | |

By the mid-1980s, when less affluent sunbed providers began to sell cheap domestic sunbeds, a new undesirable representation of working-class sunbed consumers emerged. The third section of the sunbed industry boom-to-bust narrative builds on the long-standing history that everyday use of new recreational technologies and substances for middle-to-upper-classes are

typically accepted and unchallenged; however, when working-class groups “indulge”, these consumptions are then framed as ‘excessive’ and their consumers are stigmatised. This stigmatisation increases with the growing public fears of the health risks related to the technology or substance.⁷

Finally, the fourth section reveals some of the less obvious stakeholders who contributed to the mass production and distribution of cheaper sunbeds, which, in turn, led to the unfavourable representation of working-class sunbed providers and consumers. I expose these historical actors by tying together an interwoven collection of extremely influential (and sometimes inadvertent or intentional) economic, social-cultural, governmental and medical influences - most of which were mediated through the media.

Changing Representations of Sunbed Providers

A history of the pioneering sunbed businesses will contextualise the differences between the domestic sunbed providers before and after the ‘boom’ of the industry. Before the boom, businesses selling household sunbeds were established in wealthier regions. These originally successful businesses included sunbeds as an innovative extension of their repertoire. The wealthy owners of these businesses placed their first adverts in spaces that attracted affluent customers, in terms of the print press (**Table 3.1**) and the environment.

⁷ Alex Mold, ‘Framing drug and alcohol use as a public health problem in Britain: Past and present’, *Nordic Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 35, 2, (2018), pp.93-99; Virginia Berridge, J. Edman, A. Mold, S. Taylor, ‘Addiction through the Ages: a review of the development of concepts and ideas about addiction in European countries since the nineteenth century and the role of international organisations in the process’, Technical Report (Addiction and Lifestyles in Contemporary Europe, Reframing Addictions, 2015), pp.17-19; Berridge, *Demons*; Hilary Graham, ‘Smoking, Stigma and Social Class’, *Journal of Social Policy*, 41, 1, (2012), pp.83-99; Alex Mold, ‘Illicit drugs and the rise of epidemiology during the 1960s’, *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 61, 4, (2007), pp.278-281; Mariana Valverde, ‘Slavery from within’: The Invention of Alcoholism and the Question of Free Will’, *Social History*, 22, 3, (1997), p.253.

Two sunbed providers, Paine Beauty Products and Alpha Health and Beauty Limited, demonstrate these original high-end trends.

Paine Beauty Products Ltd. (Based in East Sussex, 1977 to 1982)

Paine Beauty Products first catered for the professional sunbed market in 1977. 'Paine Beauty Products' was an enterprise extension of their core business 'Paine Electrics Marine Limited', based in East Sussex. The director of Paine was a professional racing driver who manufactured and sold sunbeds, and his/her main business also sold electrical appliances. The director advertised Paine's sunbeds on his or her racing cars, and their potential customers were invited to the pits for entertainment, demonstrating that the company's clientele were likely to be wealthy. Owners of established beauty, health and fitness businesses often purchased these professional sunbed units, which cost thousands of pounds (see Chapter One and Two).⁸

In December 1978, Paine was one of the first companies to place an image-based domestic sunbed advert in a national newspaper. This small advert consisted of a poorly drawn outline of a body, laying across a long wooden bench – barely resembling a sunbed. This very basic advert most commonly featured in the *Observer*, which was the only newspaper to include sunbed adverts in time for Christmas.⁹ These cheaper looking adverts featured

⁸ The director's name is unknown as the information was found in legal history archives. The director raced cars which bore the name of the company's product. The company invited potential customers to the pits and entertained them there, Government HMRC internal manual VAT Input Tax, 'Legal history: cases about entertainment', Paine Leisure Products Ltd VTW 1836. Accessed 29 March 2017: www.gov.uk/hmrc-internal-manuals/vat-input-tax/vit64300#IDAP5D0G; Croner-I library, Tax and VAT cases, 1984-1986, '1836 Paine Leisure Products Ltd (1985) 2 BVC 208062'. Accessed 10 November 2019: https://library.croneri.co.uk/cch_uk/bvc/tribunal-1836.

⁹ Initially, by 1979, increasing numbers of sunbed manufacturers placed tiny domestic sunbed adverts in the back pages of the *Observer*. The *Observer*, sister paper to the

in the 'For everyone Display Ad' section at the back of the newspaper. They were often surrounded by other basic adverts for furniture, household appliances and plain clothing.¹⁰ The 'boom' of the industry had not begun, demonstrated by the limited and low-budget quality adverts placed in the back-pages of broadsheet newspapers.

From 1979 onwards, Paine's adverts demonstrated a growing demand from wealthier clientele. Paine's adverts gradually improved in quality, grew in quantity and were increasingly placed in the front-to-mid pages of more reputable and widely-read newspapers. A pencil outline of a bench was representative of the most sophisticated design, but this improved towards the end of the year with the addition of a poorly sketched body.¹¹ The adverts remained fairly unremarkable. Yet by February 1979, Paine was the first and only sunbed manufacturer to place their adverts in the more expensive and highly regarded *Guardian*.¹² On page eight, the much larger advert featured the first use of a black and white photograph. The photograph showed a shadowy trace of a woman, with fashionably large hair, laying on a sunbed.¹³ Two

Guardian, was a British newspaper published on Sundays. The mid-1980s *Observer* reflected a social liberal or social democratic stance on most affairs and usually attracted white middle-class readers, Anon., 'SUNTAN: SUN TEMPLE LIMITED' and 'Classified Ad 448 -- No Title', *Observer*, 14 January 1979, p.56; Anon., 'DALESAUNA', 'Classified Ad 559 -- No Title', *Observer*, 2 December 1979, p.63; United Newspapers PLC and Fleet Holdings PLC, Monopolies and Mergers Commission (1985), p.6.

Accessed 10 November 2019:

https://web.archive.org/web/20070928073311/http://www.mmc.gov.uk/rep_pub/reports/1985/fulltext/190c02.pdf#; Sparks, 'The readership of the British quality press', p.432.

¹⁰ Anon., 'For Everyone ... Paine Beauty Products', 'Display Ad 196 -- No Title', *Observer*, 17 December 1978, p.51.

¹¹ Anon., 'SUNTAN', p.56; Anon., 'DALESAUNA', 'Classified Ad 559 -- No Title', *Observer*, 2 December 1979, p.63.

¹² Sparks, 'The readership of the British quality press', p.432.

¹³ The photo was blurry, however, this could be because the newspaper was viewed from an online newspaper archive instead of the physical advert, Anon., 'A real suntan

months later, in April 1979, a similar advert appeared in the *Financial Times*.¹⁴ However, the improved photographed quality portrayed a more sophisticated and titillating image.

From February 1980 onwards, Paine separated their sunbed strand from their main business of other electrical products. This was first noticeable in the *Observer*. In small font, the 'Paine Electrics Ltd.' address was printed at the bottom of a visually different advert under the heading 'Uvabronze sunbeds'.¹⁵ By 1981, the *Financial Times* declared Uvabronze as 'one of the leading UK manufacturers' with a 'turnover of £4 million a year and an output of 200 sunbeds a week'.¹⁶ Uvabronze advertised visually large and textually detailed adverts in well-established women's magazines, such as *Cosmopolitan*. These content rich adverts were designed to appeal to young, middle-class and more financially 'independent' *Cosmopolitan* female readers.¹⁷ Uvabronze sunbed

in a few days*: Paine Beauty Products', Anon., 'Display Ad 27 -- No Title', *Guardian*, 24 February 1979, p.8.

¹⁴ During the mid-1980s, the readership of the internationally circulated *Financial Times* were typically wealthy middle-aged men. The *Financial Times* had twice as many male readers than females. In 1985, 176,692 *Financial Times* newspapers were circulated in the UK (and 231,514 worldwide). Approximately four readers read one copy. Therefore, out of the 733,000 adults who read the *Financial Times* in 1985, 542,000 were men and 190,000 were women. Apparently 86.3% of these women were "housewives (Female)". In the *Financial Times*, sunbeds were being advertised to wealthy men's 'traditionally respectable' housewives, Sparks, 'The readership of the British quality press', p.430, pp.432-3.

¹⁵ Anon., 'Display Ad 333 – No title', *Observer*, 17 February 1980, p.34.

¹⁶ Williams, 'Holiday threatens sunset for tanning lamp manufacturers', p.9.

¹⁷ A full colour page advert in *Cosmopolitan* cost £3180 (IPC Rate Card 1980 / 81, NMC Rate Card 1980). Advertisers were attracted to placing adverts in *Cosmopolitan* as it typically reached a middle-class audience who were very much interested in purchasing beauty technologies and products, Currie, *Girl talk*, p.31; Earnshaw, 'Advertising and the media', pp.415-6; History of the Advertising Trust, *Cosmopolitan* Collection, Anon., 'THE UVABRONZE TAN VERSUS A SPANISH TAN. COULD A

advertises in *Cosmopolitan* instructed readers to 'Buy [their] British' sunbeds.¹⁸

The bellwether businesses tended to sell off their sunbed strand after experiencing at least one summer of plummeting sunbed sales.¹⁹ By September 1982, despite being 'one of the [original] top three sunbed businesses', Paine was no longer selling sunbeds as they had gone out of business.²⁰ Nonetheless, Paine's sunbed strand, 'Uvabronze,' had been bought by another company and appeared to be thriving.

At the end of 1982, Uvabronze became a new client of Langham Advertising. Langham launched a £250,000 marketing campaign at the beginning of 1983, featuring Uvabronze's new and sophisticated adverts in the daily press.²¹ Uvabronze had changed. The former adverts in the *Observer*, *Guardian* and *Financial Times* had been small (less than quarter of a page). The new large adverts, now in the *Daily Mail*, covered a third of the 'Femail' page or more. In 1983, the women most likely to read the *Daily Mail* were typically working-to-lower-middle-class women, contrasting to the original target audience. The *Daily Mail* was also more widely circulated than the *Guardian*.²²

LEADING TRAVEL AGENT TELL THE DIFFERENCE?', *Cosmopolitan*, September 1981, p.189.

¹⁸ History of the Advertising Trust, *Cosmopolitan* Collection, Anon., 'UVABRONZE. A 365 DAY TAN FOR ONLY £365', *Cosmopolitan*, April 1981, p.117.

¹⁹ Williams, 'Holiday threatens sunset for tanning lamp manufacturers', p.9.

²⁰ History of Advertising Trust, *Marketing Magazine* Collection, Nicholas Newman, 'Wakewood turns head on sunbeds: Company in TV debut', *Marketing*, Vol.10, No.13, 23 September 1982, p.6.

²¹ Anon., 'Langham Advertising is to launch a £250,000 popular daily and Sunday press campaign for new client Uvabronze. It will be supported by ads in the hairdressing and hotel trade press promoting the professional UVA sunbeds', *CMPN Campaign Haymarket Business Publications Ltd.*, 8 April 1983.

²² Anon., 'UVABRONZE', *Daily Mail*, 12 March 1983, p.12; Michael Bromley, Hugh Stephenson, *Sex, Lies, and Democracy: The Press and the Public* (Longman, 1998).

Alpha Health and Beauty Limited (Based in Devon, 1980 to 1982)

Like Paine, Alpha Health and Beauty Limited provides another example of an upmarket business from a wealthy region. Alpha originally sold domestic sunbeds to affluent and then gradually middle-class customers. Alpha appeared after Paine, in the summer of 1980 during the boom of the sunbed industry. Based in Devon, Alpha was a 'rapidly expanding' business, selling 'top quality' sunbeds.²³ Their sunbeds were manufactured by the 'finest traditions of English craftsmen,' - this prestigious selling factor was referenced in Alpha's adverts and engraved on their sunbeds.

Alpha was the first to present large and detailed sunbed adverts in the most widely read newspapers in 1980. In the print press, Alpha advertised the most expensive and luxurious sunbeds of the time, and could afford to place their adverts closer to the front pages of the *Guardian*. The adverts' heading read 'A 52-week exotic sun-tan for the cost of 2 week's holiday sunshine'. The text complained about the sunless British summers and the cost of 'two weeks in the Caribbean in December', which would be a 'minimum of £400' for two people. Alpha's £399 sunbed, the advert boasted, was much better value for money. Sunbed owners could use their sunbeds 'at leisure all year round'.²⁴ In 1980, Alpha was the first to advertise sunbeds in the widely circulated and read *Daily Mail*.²⁵ More significantly, in 1981, Alpha's sunbeds increased in price when they featured in the *Daily Mail's* 'Femail' section, illustrating a clear demand. These adverts, either taking up a quarter or the bottom half of the entire page, were positioned closer to the front of the newspapers. In these ads, Alpha compared their 'Alpha Caribbean' model to 'Ford's famous Model T'

²³ Anon., 'UVA SUNBEDS - Classified Ad 53 -- No Title', *Observer*, 2 August 1981, p.23.

²⁴ Anon., 'Alpha - Display Ad 3 -- No Title', *Guardian*, 23 August 1980, p.6.

²⁵ Bromley, Stephenson, *Sex, Lies, and Democracy*.

automobile.²⁶ Alpha's £399 sunbed was apparently '40%' cheaper than other domestic sunbeds of a similar size, suggesting that the average price was £665 at the time.²⁷

Throughout 1981, Alpha's remarkably clear and photographic adverts frequently featured in the *Guardian*, *Daily Mail* and *Cosmopolitan*.²⁸ Before the Christmas period of 1981, a large colour advert appeared in the *Telegraph Sunday* magazine. Alpha were marketing their sunbed as the most memorable Christmas 'gift', accompanied by a complimentary 'Free Case of Wine'. From the outset, domestic sunbeds were sold as 'quick', 'convenient' and for the desirable 'privacy of the home'. The visuals in Alpha's adverts reflected wealth and luxury. The slim, blonde, tanned and naked women held props, such as a book or a tropical cocktail. For instance, in the advert for the luxury associated 'Alpha Bahama' sunbed, a woman with red painted fingernails clasped a glass of red wine. The lighting emphasised her comfortably outstretched arm and buttocks. In all Alpha's adverts, the women were either smiling or appeared excited, with their mouths open and their teeth bare, often poised in laughter. The adverts presented the models as glamorous, comfortable and confident (**Figure 2.8**).²⁹ Nonetheless, even when the original upmarket sunbed providers developed their sunbed range to reach slightly less affluent demographics Alpha did not survive - by September 1982, Alpha Health and Beauty were also out of business and no longer sold sunbeds.³⁰

²⁶ The Model T automobile, which was designed and sold as a car for everyone, marked a milestone in the history of transport technology, Lindsay Brooke, *Ford model T: The car that put the world on wheels* (Motorbooks International, 2008).

²⁷ Anon., 'NEW from Alpha: an Overhead Unit', *Daily Mail*, 19 March 1981, p.13.

²⁸ Anon., 'ALPHA. Unlimited tanning time for just £2 a week', *Cosmopolitan*, October 1980, p.290.

²⁹ This Alpha sunbed advert was found on a page in the *Telegraph Sunday* published in November or December 1981 edition. The exact date and edition number of this magazine could not be found. Anon., 'Dreaming of a Brown Christmas?', *Telegraph Sunday*, November or December 1981, p.74.

³⁰ Newman, 'Wakewood turns head on sunbeds', p.6.

In July 1981, the *Financial Times* published an article explaining why both well-established and smaller domestic sunbed companies struggled to survive. First, the popularity of the sunbed industry was dependent on seasonal changes and the weather. The reporter observed that most individuals bought domestic tanning technologies in the cold season to develop a tan in time for their summer holiday. This led to plummeting sales in the summer. In 1980, Paine Beauty Products observed that 'nearly 70 per cent of the small British makers did not survive July and August'. Moreover, these small domestic sunbed businesses were competing with professional sunbed providers from 'health clubs, beauty salons, hairdressers, department stores and ... local authority sports centres,' which, in 1980, consisted of 80 per cent of the UK market. After the summer of 1980, the public sunbed market had already saturated. To survive, most sunbed businesses expanded their services to also sell domestic sunbeds. Consequently, the domestic market became '80 per cent' of sunbed sales by the end of 1981. Nonetheless, most 'small manufacturers sprung up and just as quickly disappeared'.³¹ These less experienced entrepreneurs were simply looking at the momentous upsurge of sunbed sales in the autumn, winter and early spring season. Accordingly, they increased their stock and sales force to match this demand. This often led to excess stock, followed by a crash in demand during the summer. The season dependent consumer demand was as difficult to predict as the British weather.

Paine/UVAbronze and Alpha demonstrated that the original domestic sunbed providers targeted an affluent market. Yet after the summer of 1982, these two businesses, alongside many other top-leading British suppliers, exited the industry.³² These two case studies illustrate the instability of the sunbed industry from the outset. To survive, sunbed businesses either had to prioritise other products, sell their sunbed market before the summer, or risk

³¹ Williams, 'Holiday threatens sunset for tanning lamp manufacturers', p.9.

³² Newman, 'Wakewood turns head on sunbeds', p.6.

bankruptcy as a result of unpredictable consumer interest.³³ The financial perils of investing in the sunbed industry had been heavily discussed in national newspapers (i.e., *Financial Times*) and marketing magazines (i.e., *Marketing and Campaigns*). Therefore, most affluent and long-established businesses had witnessed and understood the risks associated with the sunbed industry. This could explain why, after the 'boom-to-bust' period of the public and domestic sunbed industry, a very different demographic joined the industry.

Who Joined the Sunbed Industry after the 'Boom-to-Bust' Period of the Public and Professional market?

From 1982 onwards, the groups and individuals who both actively and visibly joined the sunbed industry tended to originate from working-to-lower-middle-class backgrounds. These groups usually had impressive sales and manufacturing experience but limited mid-to-long-term financial planning expertise.³⁴ The owners of Wakewood are an example of the types of individuals attracted to joining the domestic industry after the 'boom-to-bust'

³³ The sunbed selling companies that survived also had either well-established reputations, years of business experiences and sold other successful products to fall back on. For example, Interscan (based in Kent) and DaleSauna (based in Harrogate) were the longest-lasting British sunbed providers. In the *Observer*, Interscan advertised sunbeds from 1978 to 1981, and Dalesauna from 1979 to 1981. By 1979, Dalesauna apparently had a 'decade of experience'. Both companies sold other luxury products marketed to wealthy clients. For instance, Interscan had originally sold and continued to sell saunas, steam and spa baths, relaxation chairs, Jacuzzi's, and massage and exercise equipment (i.e. weightlifting machines), Anon., 'For Sale and Wanted: New from Interscan - Classified Ad 49 -- No Title', *Observer*, 10 December 1978, p.47; Anon., 'INTERSCAN - Classified Ad 354 -- No Title', *Observer*, 29 November 1981, p.24; Anon., 'DaleSauna: Britain's finest saunas and accessories', 'Classified Ad 3 – No Title', *Observer*, 21 January 1979, p.6.

³⁴ *Enterprize 1986*, Episode 6; Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive, BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Richard Duckenfield, snf, talking to Cyril Nield, Receiver, about the extraordinary collapse of Wakewood'.

period. Compared to the first sunbed providers of the late 1970s, these entrepreneurs, and consequently their companies, emerged from more humble backgrounds and deprived regions.

Wakewood (1981 to 1983)

The British manufacturing company Wakewood was originally a local business supported by a small firm government loan of £75,000 in April 1981.³⁵ The company began and remained a family-friendly business, organised by Mike Wakelin (chairman), his wife Sue Wakelin (marketing director), and their friends: Phil Wood (production director), his wife Janet Wood (personnel director), and Margaret Hughes (Company Secretary). Mike Wakelin possessed office equipment sales experience, as he worked for Rank Xerox and 'others'. In January 1982, Wakewood began to manufacture sunbeds. They purchased three standard factories totalling 60,000 square foot, which produced an average of 220 sunbed units a day but could produce up to 500.³⁶ They employed and re-housed local Leyland car employees who were jobless because of the local area's factory closures. When Wakewood opened, they had 240 employees, which consisted of roughly 180 fabricators and 60 administrative staff.³⁷ In February 1982, one month after opening, Wakewood were hiring a greater number of 'experienced sales persons/agents' to launch a

³⁵ Anon., 'Turnover brisk in sunbeds', *The Times*, 25 September 1982, p.3; Anon., 'COMPANY PROFILE: How Wakewood got its healthy tan', *Marketing*, Vol.12, No.3, 20 January 1983, p.1.

³⁶ Lancashire County Council Archives, Central Lancashire Development Corporation, Confidential, Wakewood Services Ltd., Units 19, 32 & 33, Moss Side Employment Centre, Paper 18/83, Item 4, 18/2/83, 10 February 1983; Claudette Hall, 'COMPANY PROFILE: A sparkling sunbed star', *Marketing*, Vol.12, No.3, 20 January 1983, pp.23-24, p.28.

³⁷ Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive, BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Richard Duckenfield, snf, talking to Cyril Nield, Receiver, about the extraordinary collapse of Wakewood Sunbeds firm after a rapid rise to become Europe's fastest growing firm', Film Item 3, 26 January 1983.

large advertising campaign.³⁸ Two months later in April 1982, Wakewood officialised their business as a 'private limited with share capital' company, addressed at Unit 19, Comet Road, Moss Side Industrial Estate, Leyland (Preston in Lancashire).³⁹

In 1982 and early 1983, BBC North-West News reporters interviewed Wakewood's owners. The Wakewood owners were also interviewed by national newspapers, and established commercial industry magazines, *Marketing* and *Campaign*.⁴⁰ In these interviews, all five relatively young (mid-twenties to early thirties) business partners, in their North-West accents and smart-casual attire, responded to the BBC interviewers personably, determinedly and enthusiastically. When interviewed, the Wakewood owners embodied a hard-working, co-operative and 'can do' business ethos. In one interview, the

³⁸ Anon., 'JOIN WAKEWOOD SERVICES AND SELL OUR HIGH QUALITY LOW PRICED SUNBEDS', *Guardian*, 25 January 1982, p.16.

³⁹ Duedil Company Information, 'Wakewood Sunbeds Limited'. Accessed 15 March 2019; <https://www.duedil.com/company/gb/01631863/wakewood-sunbeds-limited>; History of Advertising Trust, *Campaign Magazine Collection*, Anon., 'Wakewood Sun beds – moves £400,000 to Broadoak in Preston from All Media Services North', 16 April 1982, p.9.

⁴⁰ *Marketing* magazine launched in 1931. In the 1980s, Haymarket media group owned *Marketing*. Haymarket Media Group were a private mass media industry based in London. They published print press news and information for professionals in marketing (consumer, business and customer sectors). *Marketing* magazine was generally subscription-only, which was usually bought by marketing professionals or industry and marketing-related organisations. By the 1990s, Haymarket Media Group was the UK's largest privately-owned publisher. Therefore, the circulation of *Marketing* magazine was likely significant among marketing and industry professionals in the 1980s. In 2016, Haymarket Media Group folded their monthly specialist *Marketing* magazine into their sister advertising magazine *Campaign* because silos were increasingly untenable in trade journalism, John Reynolds, 'Marketing Magazine closes and folds content into Campaign because 'silos are untenable'', *Press Gazette*, 30 March 2016. Accessed 19 November 2019: <https://www.pressgazette.co.uk/marketing-magazine-closes-and-folds-content-campaign-because-silos-are-untenable/>

reporter asked: 'Margaret (Thatcher) has always said that two women in the kitchen can't get on. Here is three in business! Do you find it works?' Either Janet Wood or Margaret Hughes calmly asserted: 'Yes! We ... blend together ... help each other along ... because we are all new. New about this ... type of thing. We all help each other'.⁴¹ Wakewood acknowledged that they were new to this type of industry and were learning together, illustrating their lack of large-scale industry experience.

The Wakelin, Wood and Hughes family were not the only example of inexperienced yet hard-working, determined and aspiring groups wanting to capitalise on the domestic sunbed industry after 1982. On both documentary and fictional television, working-to-lower-middle-class groups, raised in urban environments, who were equally charming, strong-minded and often young also wanted to transfer their prior 'sales-orientated' skillset to 'exploit' the sunbed industry. These people lacked both industrial manufacturing experience and an understanding of the long-term, cyclic sunbed industry.

Instantropic (1984 to 1988)

One evening, 10 February 1986, on Yorkshire Television (later ITV), one such sunbed entrepreneur appeared on the television programme *Enterprize*.⁴² This mid-1980s Dragon's Den equivalent for both self-employed businessmen and women explicitly sought young contestants from working-class backgrounds and sectors. At the beginning, the contestants told a story of their struggles and

⁴¹ Fragments of these audio-video recordings were stored at the Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive, Manchester Metropolitan Film Archive, BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Martin Henfield, snf, reporting on the success of a sun bed manufacturing company started by a redundant Leyland worker in Preston. He spoke to Phil Wood, Production Director, Mike Wakelin, Chairman, Sue Wakelin, Marketing Director, Margaret Hughes, Company Secretary, and Janet Wood, Personnel Director', Film Item 5, 4 May 1982.

⁴² See footnote 1 of this chapter.

hardships because of their disadvantaged backgrounds. Typically, the narratives described their impoverished environment, education and financial situation, which had limited their opportunities or credentials. These journeys of hardship formulaically concluded with an account of how each contestant - through sheer passion, grit, determination and sacrifice - had managed to elevate themselves by establishing an innovative business. These resourceful traders now needed the advice of the judges and the '£9,000' award for greater success. Four contestants participated per show. One of the contestants, James Moore from Sheffield and Nottingham proposed his business plan for his 'Instantropic Sunbeds' sales company.

Similar to Wakelin, Moore was originally a salesman before becoming the director of his two domestic sunbed outlets in Nottingham and Sheffield. Moore originally sold office equipment, but then saw 'potential' in the domestic sunbed market. In June 1984, determined yet financially deprived, Moore set up his company by selling his car and purchasing two domestic sunbeds for people to rent. Wearing a grey suit, Moore beamed as he entered, jumped onto the platform and sat down on a chair in front of the judges. He had coiffed blonde highlighted hair and lightly tanned skin. Moore was 25 years old and had a strong Sheffield accent. He was confident, proud and even boastful about his background story and during his sales pitch. Moore did not win on *Enterprize*.⁴³

Half a year later, in September 1986, the famous sitcom *Only Fools and Horses* satirised the working-class 'entrepreneur' by having the perennially mocked Del attempt a sunbed sales pitch to their disinterested pub owner. This reflected the stereotypical representation of distastefully eager sunbed providers of the time.⁴⁴ In both genuine and fictional accounts, most individuals partaking in the sunbed industry after 1982 were typically young, charismatic and aspirational working-to-lower-middle-class individuals. After experiencing

⁴³ *Enterprize 1986*, Episode 6.

⁴⁴ *Only Fools and Horses*, Season 5, Episode 4: 'Tea for Three', (Director: Mandie Fletcher, Writer: John Sullivan, Producer: Ray Butt), BBC1, Aired 21 September 1986.

dissatisfaction in their former sales jobs, they were eager to become self-employed and financially successful. Sunbed entrepreneurs, like the Wakelins, Woods, Hughes and Moore saw an 'under-exploited hole' in the domestic sunbed market that they believed they could capitalise on.⁴⁵

Why Did People Join the Industry After the 'Boom-to-Bust' Period of the Public and Professional Market?

Although profit-making was one key incentive to join the sunbed industry, there were many other reasons why individuals from sales and manufacturing backgrounds were enthusiastic to either begin or enter sunbed enterprises during this period. A key factor was the economic instability of early 1980s England. In urban environments, the recession caused soaring unemployment levels, particularly in the manufacturing industries, which also affected sales.⁴⁶ During the Thatcher years unemployment figures rose dramatically, peaking at over three million in 1986.⁴⁷ Many working-to-middle-class people were desperate for work and job security. Generally, profit-making opportunities were scarce and the aspirational discourse of starting or joining a sunbed business in the very early 1980s was prevalent within the print press.⁴⁸ First impressions

⁴⁵ *Enterprize 1986*, Episode 6.

⁴⁶ Child, Paddon, 'Sheffield: Steelyard Blues', p.18; Paul Edwards (ed), *Industrial relations: theory and practice* (John Wiley & Sons, 2009), pp.61-4; Bernard Porter, 'Though Not an Historian Myself ...': Margaret Thatcher and the Historians', *Twentieth Century British History*, 5, 2, (1994), p.249; Geoffrey K. Fry, 'Commentary: 'A bottomless pit of political surprise'?: The Political 'Mystery' of the Thatcher Era', *Twentieth Century British History*, 21, 4, (2010), pp.551-2; Sarah Kenny, 'A 'Radical Project': Youth Culture, Leisure, and Politics in 1980s Sheffield', *Twentieth Century British History*, 30, 4, (2019), pp.557-584.

⁴⁷ Joe Moran, 'Queuing up in Post-War Britain', *Twentieth Century British History*, 16, 3, 2005, p.295.

⁴⁸ In 1983, a *Daily Mail* article included stories that demonstrated how simple it was to begin a sunbed business, either through a franchise or independently. Mrs Maureen Richardson remarked that she wanted to run a cheap part-time sunbed business that

suggested that starting a sunbed business or joining the manufacturing sector was a quick, effortless and suitable transfer of previous skilled labour. Moreover, start-up companies found ways to lower the costs of sunbed units and manufacturing labour was both abundant and cheap.⁴⁹

The story of Wakewood provides an example of these contributing factors, which supported their idea to upscale their sunbed business. In April 1981, when Wakewood secured their loan, Preston in Lancashire was described as a 'scene of gloom and doom,' attributed to the masses of 'empty factories' and 'heavy unemployment' levels. Several companies had recently closed, and their workers made redundant.⁵⁰ Desperate for manufacturing work, the Wakelins employed the remaining cheap labour and re-housed their families on the nearby 'moss side' housing estates.⁵¹

Sue Wakelin was inspired to manufacture sunbeds - she understood what the less financially privileged customers wanted, as she had been this type of sunbed user herself. Towards the end of 1980, Wakelin wanted to commit to purchasing a sunbed 'in the comfort and privacy of her own home',

required minimal effort. The franchise package for *Tan at Home Rentals* (UK) included eight top quality sunbeds, a course on business training, and exclusive rights of the company to rent out their sunbeds within her area for £5,000. Mrs Richardson was only required to minimally advertise and deliver the sunbeds to clients on weekend mornings. If she chose to expand her business, she had to extend the service to neighbouring areas. Every subsequent franchise package and exclusive area rights were at a reduced cost of £2,000. This strategy of sunbed franchises secured a slow, stable and pervasive spread of their services from densely populated cities to towns, and eventually villages, David Lewis, 'Scorched by the sunbed shambles', *Daily Mail*, 16 November 1983, p.5.

⁴⁹ Williams, 'Holiday threatens sunset for tanning lamp manufacturers', p.9.

⁵⁰ Hall, 'COMPANY PROFILE', pp.23-24, p.28.

⁵¹ BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Richard Duckenfield, snf, talking to Cyril Nield, Receiver, about the extraordinary collapse of Wakewood Sunbeds firm after a rapid rise to become Europe's fastest growing firm'., Film Item 3, 26 January 1983.

yet she couldn't comfortably afford the £500 to £3,000 price range. Instead, the Wakelins rented a sunbed, took it apart and inspected its individual components. Like other start-up companies at the time, the Wakelins discovered that they could make a sunbed for half the cost of the conventional sunbed.⁵² They called Philips and began an agreement to bulk buy Philips' UV-A tubes at a discounted rate. Sue left out the 'frills' of previous sunbeds, such as stereo headphone plug-ins and push-buttons to operate the units' height, which had made the original sunbeds expensive. With a team of ten people, and after three months and twenty-five experimental units combining the 'best features' from the most popular sunbed designs, Wakewood finally designed their 'basic, pine-framed overhead unit'. This sunbed cost £299 and constituted the majority of Wakewood's sales.⁵³ The originally informal, 'friendly', 'happy' and family-friendly business-partnership had created a sunbed model which could be mass produced to reach consumers like themselves - the masses of working-to-lower-middle-classes who had struggled to access the very early 1980s fashion as they could not afford sunbeds.

Growing Working-Class Sunbed Businesses

Similar to the original affluent providers, most of these financially undercapitalised sunbed suppliers lasted less than two-to-three years (**Table 3.1**). Nonetheless, resourceful providers often grew extremely fast with, at first, vast profit-margins. This short-term success was attributed to their innovative ideas, business ethos and, in Wakewood's case, the use of new mass media advertising strategies. These factors contributed to the cheap sunbed 'price

⁵² Another entrepreneur, John Marks, encountered the *Tan at Home Rentals* franchise offer. Yet a disagreement with the company, and his awareness of cheaper competitors in his neighbourhood, influenced him to reject the franchise offer. Instead, Marks used the training and advice learnt from *Tan at Home Rentals* and began his own business with less elaborate sunbeds and even cheaper prices, Lewis, 'Scorched by the sunbed shambles', p.5.

⁵³ Hall, 'COMPANY PROFILE', pp.23-24.

revolution'.⁵⁴

Wakewood's industry grew extremely quickly, achieving a world-wide distribution scale by September 1982, due to their innovative business approach.⁵⁵ They designed their own cheaply manufactured 'no frills' sunbeds; took huge risks from the outset with mass bulk-buying agreements, and employed masses of cheap and 'highly skilled' local manufacturing labour. Mike Wakelin also apparently developed a different business approach to their competitors, by prioritising an aggressive and unique marketing strategy and careful business management. He asserted that most rival sunbed manufacturing start-up companies, originating from manufacturing backgrounds, failed because of their business approach. Wakelin stated: 'A lot of people in furniture-making see sunbeds as an easy thing to manufacture ... but they come unstuck on the marketing side and in business management'. Sue Wakelin continued that these new entrepreneurs only had 'furniture-making' experience. Therefore, they prioritised creating personalised and innovatively advanced designs which were expensive for consumers. This decreased the consumer demand as the high-end market had been tapped for years. High-end sunbeds for wealthy clientele amounted to high production costs, which restricted their production level to '25 a week'. Moreover, Wakewood's start-up competitors apparently had 'no [large scale] selling experience'. Appraising their own original business model, the Wakelins proudly claimed 'we were the other way round – a selling organisation which just happened to make sunbeds'.⁵⁶ When Wakewood brought the price down, their rivals could not follow, which secured their monopoly over the cheap domestic sunbed market.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p.23.

⁵⁵ Newman, 'Wakewood turns head on sunbeds', p.6.

⁵⁶ BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Martin Henfield, snf, reporting on the success of a sun bed manufacturing company started by a redundant Leyland worker in Preston', Film Item 5, 4 May 1982; Hall, 'COMPANY PROFILE', pp.23-24.

Even a few years later in 1986, Instantropic demonstrated a familiar 'listening to the consumer' yet 'sales orientated' business approach. According to Moore's interview with the three judges on *Enterprize*, he noticed that most solariums had 'problems such as double booking, dirty beds, poor facilities'. This 'hole in the market' allowed him to offer household sunbed rentals. From the beginning, Moore was struggling to generate profit from hires alone, so, like Wakewood, he began to sell sunbeds. Similar to Wakelin, Moore was 'very sales dominated' and meticulous with the accounts. Yet, Moore also demonstrated a caring and personable business ethos. Despite employing delivery staff, he enjoyed visiting his clients to ensure 'customers [were] happy ... and everything [was] okay'. His pitch to the judges was supported by footage of him driving his bright yellow 'Instantropic' delivery car; greeting the clients in their homes; setting up their new sunbeds and making calls and smiling. His aim was to 'bring professionalism and good service to an industry' which was apparently lacking by 1986.⁵⁷

Advertising Strategies

A new advertising approach was required to reach the working-class masses. Wakewood ferociously developed a new and substantial range of mass media advertising methods to ensure that their sunbeds would both reach and appeal to 'all'. From September 1981 to September 1982, Wakewood reportedly spent £1 million on the 'first-year of advertising'.⁵⁸ These involved the traditional use of print press advertising; new use of consistent colour advertising; first use of sunbed adverts on television, and finally a varied and unrivalled range of sports

⁵⁷ *Enterprize 1986*, Episode 6.

⁵⁸ The expenditure of £1 million in advertising was unlikely, yet the media coverage of this reported amount was likely to attract positive publicity for Wakewood, Newman, 'Wakewood turns head on sunbeds', p.6.; Lancashire County Council Archives, Central Lancashire Development Corporation, Confidential, Wakewood Services Ltd., Units 19, 32 & 33, Moss Side Employment Centre, Paper 65/83, Item 11, Agenda 15/4/83, April 1983.

sponsorships. These advertising strategies were not aiming to capture the attention of upper-class minorities. Instead, the types of newspapers, the television channel, and the types of sports were selected to directly target the masses - the aspiring working-to-middle-class demographics.

Newspapers

From March 1982 until 1983, the first, last and the most repeated Wakewood advert was often found in the 'Femail' section of the *Daily Mail*.⁵⁹ When compared to former sunbed adverts from other companies, Wakewood's large adverts were superior in quality. Photographs clearly marked out the women's face, body and the sunbed(s). The large visuals were unmissable - commonly positioned at the bottom of the Femail's page headline story or towards the front of the newspaper, taking up a third or half the page.⁶⁰

The first Wakewood advert provides one example of Wakewood's many 'pragmatic' and attention-grabbing captions: 'How can spending £299 make you look healthier and more attractive?' (**Figure 3.2**). This advert was placed on a Femail page dedicated to second-wave feminism, surrounded by articles advising how women could regain control of their bodies. This first print press advert brought in four times the orders that Wakewood had budgeted for.⁶¹ Wakewood consistently had 'very basic' and 'direct' captions: 'Be brown all year round for only £299', which immediately attracted readers.⁶² Wakewood also included even more affordable options, including a '£3.99 per week [sunbed] rental', and smaller sunbeds for £249. Wakewood additionally offered a more

⁵⁹ Anon., 'Wakewood: How can spending £299 make you look healthier and more attractive?', *Daily Mail*, 13 March 1982, p.12.

⁶⁰ Anon., 'Wakewood: Be brown all year round for only £299', *Daily Mail*, 29 July 1983, p.4; Anon., 'Wakewood: How can spending £299 make you look healthier and more attractive?', p.12; Anon., 'Wakewood: Permanent sunshine overhead for only £299', *Daily Mail*, 7 August 1982, p.v18.

⁶¹ Newman, 'Wakewood turns head on sunbeds', p.6.

⁶² Hall, 'COMPANY PROFILE', p.24.

expensive, advanced, elegant and 'high quality solid mahogany' sunbed, with a mattress included.⁶³ Nonetheless, the cheapest and mid-range units were the most purchased.⁶⁴

Figure 3.2 Wakewood household sunbed advert (March 1982).

How can spending £299 make you look healthier and more attractive?

Facial/part body unit £99
£299 6ft curved base unit

6ft overhead unit £299
£75 Pine bed with mattress

5ft top & base unit £249 each

*or only £3.99 per week rental

Units also available in solid mahogany.

Buy or rent your UVA sunbed at factory prices direct from Wakewood, the UK manufacturers. The 6ft curved overhead or base unit costs only £299 (incl VAT) or just £3.99 per week rental (incl. VAT). Specifications include Philips UVA tubes, fan cooling and high quality materials. Then you can enjoy a safe, healthy looking mediterranean tan all year round, relaxing in the comfort of your own home. Choose your ideal combination from the six units, which are all interchangeable - the facial/part body unit, 5ft or 6ft overhead units, 5ft base unit, 6ft curved base unit, matching pine bed plus mattress.

Send for your free brochure and price list now or telephone us today on 07744 53021. You'll be amazed at just how inexpensive that mediterranean tan can be!

Please rush me my Wakewood brochure today.

Name _____
Address _____
Tel no. _____

Wakewood Services Limited, Unit 19, Comet Road, Leyland. F.M.W.V.

Wakewood

Source: Anon., 'Wakewood: How can spending £299 make you look healthier and more attractive?', *Daily Mail*, 13 March 1982, p.12.

Television Advertising

In the autumn of 1982, according to the *Campaign and Marketing* magazine, Wakewood spent £300-350,000 on a three-month advertising campaign. Typical of other sunbed providers, the campaign covered regional and national press. Yet more exceptionally they also used local radio broadcasts through Lancashire's new commercial station, Red Rose, and a 'test television burst on

⁶³ Anon., 'Wakewood: How can spending £299 make you look healthier and more attractive?', p.12; Anon., 'Wakewood: Be brown all year round for only £299', p.4; Anon., 'Wakewood: Permanent sunshine overhead for only £299', p.v18.

⁶⁴ Hall, 'COMPANY PROFILE', pp.23-24.

TVS' (Television South owned by ITV).⁶⁵ On Wednesday 15 September, the television advert broke new ground in two ways. Occupying twenty-four advertising spots spread across 'a few weeks', Wakewood was the first to advertise sunbeds on television. Second, 'the "naked lady" used in the advert apparently 'revealed more flesh than any commercial had done before', which resulted in free press publicity. Wakewood commissioned a survey in TVS homes to evaluate how effective television was as an advertising medium. Before the TV campaign, only 0.8 per cent of the interviewees connected the product to the company name. After Wakewood's campaign, the figure rose to six per cent. Wakelin responded that the company would re-advertise through television again, but in a different region.⁶⁶

Colour Press Advertising

Alongside television advertising, Wakewood's Autumn 1982 advertising campaign made use of colour print press. Colour was still relatively new but improving technologies allowed advertising agencies to use colour more cheaply, therefore more frequently, from the early 1980s onwards.⁶⁷ The use of colour as a medium was advantageous for the selling of sunbeds as advertisers could emphasise the tan. Sue Wakelin used colour to increase an awareness of Wakewood. Compared to black-and-white, the colour adverts placed in the

⁶⁵ In January 1982, Television South (TVS) replaced Southern Television to serve South and South-East England, Catherine Johnson, Rob Turnock, *ITV cultures: Independent television over fifty years: Independent television over fifty years* (McGraw-Hill Education, 2005), p.204.

⁶⁶ Anon., 'Wakewood Sun beds – running £350,000 TV campaign showing naked lady through PPA', *Campaign*, 17 September 1982, p.5; Newman, 'Wakewood turns head on sunbeds', p.6; Hall, 'COMPANY PROFILE', p.24.

⁶⁷ The increasing use of colour was also the case for television marketing approaches, Alan Garth, 'Bright future for full colour: New technology has triggered an explosion in colour print promotion opportunities', *Marketing*, Vol.12, No.3, 20 January 1983, p.32; Suzi Hart, 'Audio-visual: The medium the media people choose', *Campaign*, 4 September 1981, pp.50-51.

Sunday supplements led to a doubling of responses, and cost Wakewood only '30%' more. Wakewood also had their coupons loosely inserted in magazines and newspapers to increase circulation. These coupons would fall out in public places where people would wait and read, such as hairdressers and beauty salons.⁶⁸

Sports Sponsorships

Wakewood sponsored both basketball and football games and teams. In the summer of 1982, Wakewood saved Liverpool's basketball team from financial collapse and donated a five-figure sponsorship to ensure that the matches continued for the following game season. This allowed Wakewood to advertise to larger male-orientated crowds in public sport-orientated courts and arenas.⁶⁹ Wakewood was also one of the sponsors for the 1982 Football World Cup team, and they used the team picture in their national press advertising.⁷⁰ In local Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham and Southampton newspapers, Wakewood set up football recruiting and coaching clinics to find and support young players.⁷¹ In basketball courts and football stadiums, working-to-middle-class boys and men would have seen Wakewood's logos and adverts. In public sports-orientated environments, sunbed adverts were encouraging male consumers.

Cheap 'price revolution'

The 'price revolution' of Wakewood's sunbeds was one of the most significant

⁶⁸ Hall, 'COMPANY PROFILE', p.24.

⁶⁹ Anon., 'SPORT IN BRIEF', *Guardian*, 12 August 1982, p.20.

⁷⁰ In 1982, a third of England's Football World Cup team originated from North-West teams (mainly Liverpool and Manchester), World Football, England, Squad World Cup 1982 Spain. Accessed 13 November 2019:

<https://www.worldfootball.net/teams/england-team/wm-1982-in-spanien/2/>

⁷¹ Hall, 'COMPANY PROFILE', p.24.

reasons for Wakewood's extraordinary success within a short time period. After the bankruptcy of other 'top' domestic sunbed companies by April 1982, Wakewood's main competitor was Nordic. Yet, Sue Wakelin did not see Nordic as a close rival. She agreed that both Wakewood and Nordic sold 'a similar product'; however, Nordic's sunbeds were 'much more expensive... with their extra frills that people [were] prepared to pay a little more for'. Both Wakewood and Nordic appreciated that they catered for different demographic groups. Nonetheless, Nordic were 'reticent' to disclose their sale figures, asserting that their upmarket units reached a wealthier minority of the British public.⁷² Nordic and Wakewood, however, were planning to secretly compete against each other by launching new sunbed ranges to attract the oppositions' main target audience. In January 1983, Wakewood launched a 'Connoisseur ...luxury wood model and metal combination unit', which was 'the company's answer to Nordic Saunas' metal-framed sunbeds. Kelvin Hopkins, the marketing director of Nordic, was so 'impressed' by Wakewood's awareness and approach to exploit an untapped consumer that he admitted Nordic had begun to launch their own cheap units.⁷³

'Largest in the world' to 'bust': Another Bankrupt Sunbed Company

The monumental success of Wakewood was a surprise.⁷⁴ Wakewood did not appear to have a 'summer slump' like previous sunbed providers. In September 1982, Wakewood began to establish manufacturing establishments in Belfast

⁷² Hall, 'COMPANY PROFILE', p.24.

⁷³ Nordic was a nationally successful sunbed provider, originally based in Reigate, Surrey. During the early 1980s, they had regularly advertised their sunbeds in the *Financial Times* (see Chapter 2), Hall, 'COMPANY PROFILE', p.24; Devgun, Johnson, Paterson, 'Tanning, protection against sunburn and vitamin D formation with a UV-A 'sunbed'', pp.275-284; Harris, 'SWIMMING POOLS Financial Times Report', p.19.

⁷⁴ BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Martin Henfield, snf, reporting on the success of a sun bed manufacturing company started by a redundant Leyland worker in Preston', Film Item 5, 4 May 1982

and Atlanta, Georgia.⁷⁵ They were anticipating a turnover of ‘£100 m[illion] within two years’. Reflecting on their previous sales from the year before, Wakewood were shortly expecting 1.25 million homes to have their sunbeds. Nonetheless, Mike Wakelin was anxious about exclusively selling sunbeds as he was ‘not keen on single product companies’. To avoid company stagnation, Wakelin was determined to take over the domestic sauna market, or even ‘white goods’, by applying the same marketing strategies and ‘price revolution’ as he did for sunbeds. He planned to start selling saunas at ‘£499, as opposed to the £800-1,200 charged for rival units’.⁷⁶

In the media, Mike Wakelin both openly and regularly praised his sunbed company. This positive coverage would have reached more of the public for free. In January 1983, Mike Wakelin boldly claimed that people called Wakewood ‘Klondike services’, because Wakewood ‘came in and took [the sunbed industry] by storm’.⁷⁷ He confidently stated that Wakewood owned ‘95% of the UK domestic sunbed market’, which was apparently ‘untapped until Wakewood opened it up’. According to his sales, Mike Wakelin estimated that ‘10% of UK homes (1.8 million)’ would own his sunbeds. Wakewood declared that they were the world’s largest sunbed manufacturer, asserting that they generated an output greater than all other sunbed manufacturers put together.⁷⁸ Orders had been requested from America (sunspot areas such as California and Florida), New Zealand, Japan, Australia and ‘even Bahrain’, because of people’s consciousness about the risks of prolonged sun exposure. The company were aiming to ‘export 60%’ of their production in 1983.⁷⁹ At the end of Wakewood’s first official financial year, they were expected to announce a

⁷⁵ Newman, ‘Wakewood turns head on sunbeds’, p.6

⁷⁶ Newman, ‘Wakewood turns head on sunbeds’, p.6; Hall, ‘COMPANY PROFILE’, p.24, p.28.

⁷⁷ This ‘Klondike’ comment was a reference to the famous Klondike Gold Rush of North-West Canada during the late nineteenth-century.

⁷⁸ Hall, ‘COMPANY PROFILE’, pp.23-4.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p.23.

profit of '£1m on a turnover of £10m'.⁸⁰

From 1983 to 1984, the advertising budget was set to '£500,000'. Wakewood decided to dedicate this advertising to launch their new 'Connoisseur range' in colour supplements from February onwards.⁸¹ Boldly, Wakewood predicted an even greater profit projection from 1983 to 1984 of '£3 m[illion], on sales of £20 [million]'.⁸² Mike Wakelin asserted that the 'hard grind of building up a company [was] now virtually over'. He concluded the interview by confidently asserting that 'Klondike Services could be a feature of the Lancashire landscape for a long time to come' if their new ideas were as successful as the first.⁸³ Only six days after the publication of this exceptionally positive article, however, a Wakewood representative was interviewed by the BBC North-West News team in front of an empty and quiet factory. The man, who had not been interviewed before on behalf of Wakewood, was utterly perplexed by the company's failure and upcoming liquidation.⁸⁴

Less than a week after *Marketing* magazines published their article, a 'Sparkling Sunbed Star', an interview took place that explained the 'extraordinary collapse of Wakewood Sunbeds firm after a rapid rise to become Europe's fastest growing firm'. The interviewed representative for Wakewood was unknown – he was not Mike Wakelin or Phil Wood, and it is unknown if this interview reached a public audience on television. Before the interview, the cameramen took a slow full-pan inside Leyland factory's dark, empty and quiet rooms. During this slow audio-visual opening, a man's voice-over stressed that Wakewood's bust was out of their control. Apparently the 'demand for

⁸⁰ Anon., 'COMPANY PROFILE', p.1.

⁸¹ Hall, 'COMPANY PROFILE', p.24.

⁸² Ibid., pp.23-4.

⁸³ Ibid., pp.23-24, p.28.

⁸⁴ BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Richard Duckenfield, snf, talking to Cyril Nield, Receiver, about the extraordinary collapse of Wakewood Sunbeds firm after a rapid rise to become Europe's fastest growing firm'., Film Item 3, 26 January 1983.

[Wakewood's] sunbeds ... never faltered' and 'the company had the right product at the right price'. Nonetheless, 'outstanding debts had remained unpaid for too long' and Wakewood no longer had money left to buy raw materials. In previous articles, Mike Wakelin proudly boasted about his risky purchasing of expensive raw material bulk-buys. At one point the company had 'debts of £100,000', which Wakelin claimed were 'necessary for success'.⁸⁵ However, when correlating media reports from newspapers, interviews and *Marketing* and *Campaign* magazines, Wakewood appeared to publicise very different statistics, which were often over-ambitious and unrealistic. Albeit a newspaper report, Wakewood first claimed that the company would achieve a turnover of £25 million at the end of 1982.⁸⁶ In contrast, and as cited before, Wakewood claimed that they would profit '£1m on a turnover of £10m' by the end of 1983. In the same interview, unsurprisingly, Wakewood said they could achieve more than double those figures for the upcoming financial year.⁸⁷

On the 26 January 1983, the night before the disconcerting BBC North-West News interview, two hundred workers were made redundant. Forty employees continued to work to deliver the remaining orders, aiming to revive Wakewood into full production mode. The interviewed representative was confident that Wakewood could be saved. He promoted the business as flexible; selling a 'first-class product'; with high consumer demand; a stable workforce and finally, no commercial problems. Wakewood simply needed a company to take over and resolve the company's debts.⁸⁸ The voice-over remarked that the creditors had described the claims as 'complex and substantial'. The creditors intended to 'wind up' the company, which would lead to the appointment of a liquidator to investigate why the company failed. The

⁸⁵ Hall, 'COMPANY PROFILE', p.23.

⁸⁶ Anon., 'Turnover brisk in sunbeds', p.3.

⁸⁷ Anon., 'COMPANY PROFILE', p.1.

⁸⁸ In April 1983, the central Lancashire development corporation concluded that Wakewood owed a debt of £60,000 from rent and insurances, Central Lancashire Development Corporation, Wakewood Services Ltd., April 1983.

interview concluded with a final plea from Wakewood begging interested parties to come forward and take over the business to prevent the collapse.⁸⁹ By mid-February 1983, only 15 employees remained, and sunbed production had ceased. The central Lancashire development corporation concluded that the failure was 'entirely due to inexperienced management which tried to run before it could walk' as Wakewood 'lacked ... proper financial control'.⁹⁰ By March 1983, the high court had 'wound up' Wakewood, which was salvaged and bought by Saleway.⁹¹

Bust Sunbed Companies, the Plummeting 'Cheap Price Revolution', and an Abundance of 'Economy' Sunbeds: The Shameful Sunbed Industry.

In the media, Wakewood was one of many memorable instances of a sunbed provider's 'success that turned sour'.⁹² From 1983 onwards, an emerging

⁸⁹ BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Richard Duckenfield, snf, talking to Cyril Nield, Receiver, about the extraordinary collapse of Wakewood Sunbeds firm after a rapid rise to become Europe's fastest growing firm', Film Item 3, 26 January 1983.

⁹⁰ Wakewood was passed into the hands of Coopers & Lybrand Associated, appointed by the Royal Bank of Scotland, Central Lancashire Development Corporation, Wakewood Services Ltd., 10 February 1983; Central Lancashire Development Corporation, Wakewood Services Ltd., April 1983.

⁹¹ Saleway was then bought by the Jessel Trust (an investment company) for £250,000. From October 1985 onwards, 'Saleway Limited (t/a Wakewood Sunbeds)' was constantly being liquidated by creditors. The company was constantly financially salvaged last minute by competing companies until it finally closed in April 1990, Anon., "82 Companies Wound up." *Financial Times*, 2 March 1983, p. 25; Anon., 'Jessel Trust Buys Saleway', *Financial Times*, 23 March 1983, p.25; Anon., 'Notice of Dividend', *London Gazette*, 3 May 1990, p.8724.

⁹² BBC North West Regional News Collection, 'Richard Duckenfield, snf, talking to Cyril Nield, Receiver, about the extraordinary collapse of Wakewood Sunbeds firm after a rapid rise to become Europe's fastest growing firm', Film Item 3, 26 January 1983; Two more examples of short-lived success were Tan-at-home rentals and Coventry Leisure.

stigma around sunbed companies and those interested in starting or joining the industry both intensified and continued in the media. The traits originally upholding Wakewood as an inspiring, determined and honourable entrepreneur within the private commercial industry and media became perceived as ignoble. Influential groups, such as other commercial industries, the media, government, medical communities and the public, now saw working in the sunbed industry as an objectionable occupation. Perseverance, confidence and an unyielding attitude to sunbed sales and marketing became first tinged and then framed as foolish, risky and distasteful. A sunbed company owner or salesman was presented as unwelcome and dishonest. In 1986, two examples of people selling sunbeds appeared on television to the public. One account was genuine and the other fictional, yet both were representationally distressing.

James Moore and his sunbed business 'Instantropic' on Enterprize 86

As previously mentioned, James Moore, the owner of 'Instantropic' from *Enterprize 86*, was similar to other young and self-employed working-class contestants - he presented himself as determined, articulate, confident and intelligent. Yet, the judge's reception was exceptionally disapproving, contrasting to all other contestants. First, the three judges questioned the other contestants for roughly one minute. Whereas Moore, as the host noticed, endured a 'good grilling' for a minute longer than the other three contestants.

In terms of the rhetoric, the judges warmly introduced themselves, questioned and reviewed the three other contestants, whereas Moore was

Tan-at-home rentals existed during a similar timeframe to Wakewood, from mid-1981 to Autumn 1983. Coventry Leisure only lasted from January 1983 to July 1983. They had been funded by the Manpower Services Commission (the government creation agency) yet within the first six months had ran into debts of £350,000, Anon., 'Tan-at-Home rentals - Classified Ad 8 -- No Title', *Guardian*, 4 July 1981, p.14; Anon., 'The outlook look's sunny', *Daily Mail*, 23 November 1983, p.23; Clifford Colin, 'MSC bed of nails', *Observer*, 31 July 1983, p.13.

immediately antagonised. The first judge (Don Robinson, Kunick Leisure Group) sternly opened with: 'sunbeds ... seem to be a bit of a fading business'. The first judge then asked Moore how he was going to expand his business. Moore explained his franchise deal, but the judge was not impressed. The second judge (Melvyn Levi, Pecan Property Group) immediately challenged Moore's prediction of a '600% increase in profits' for the upcoming year. Moore responded that there had been a '1000% increase in the sales force' from the previous year. Melvyn responded incredulously, asking specific numerical questions about Moore's previous, current and future employees. The conversation finished with Melvyn grimacing with uncertainty. The third and final judge, Michael Walker (Lloyds Bank) sharply opened with 'James, it seems to be that you're very sales DOMINATED! How much time do you think you ought to spend on financial control and planning?'. Walker's disapproving tone implied that there was more to business than persistent hot-headed selling, and financial planning was paramount. Moore admitted that Instantropic should be spending more on the financial side and explained that he was learning and making these changes, agreeing that financial planning was important. Before Moore could finish, Robinson, the first judge, abrasively fired questions demanding specific 'monthly budget figures' and 'stock finances'. This interrogative probing was an attempt to catch Moore out.

Predictably, Moore did not win. In fact, during the judges' assessment of the candidates, Moore was the only contestant who received an off-the-cuff disapproving and sarcastic comment. Walker began to hesitantly praise Moore for his 'great flair for selling', but then mocked Moore by concluding: 'we're unable to decide whether he will make a million or nothing'. To further ridicule Moore, Walker continued that the winner of the *Enterprize* show was not assessed by 'a large turnover and substantial profits' but instead 'determination and grit'.⁹³ The contrast between the judges' reception of Moore and the other contestants made Moore's sunbed enterprise appear thoughtless, offensive and almost fraudulent. The judges were aggressive with their specific questions,

⁹³ *Enterprize* 1986, Episode 6.

criticising tone, hostile body language and harsh facial expressions.⁹⁴ In the print press, this depiction of unwelcome sunbed providers had emerged since the 'boom-to-bust' period - the judges were now brazenly embodying this typical response on television.⁹⁵ Moreover, the public opinion of tele-viewers watching *Enterprize* were being encouraged to share this negative attitude towards sunbeds.

By the mid-1980s, long-term business experts recognised the eventual downfall of the domestic sunbed market. These judges understood the unpredictability of consumer demand; the risks of market saturation; the necessity to sell other products to survive, and how sunbed businesses often demonstrated impressive profit-margins during the early stages, which caused misplaced optimism and confidence. Moreover, business experts had witnessed how a 'sales dominated' approach often led to overlooking other influential and unpredictable factors, typically resulting in bankruptcy.⁹⁶

Sunbed Selling on Only Fools and Horses (1986)

Half a year after the *Enterprize* show on the 21 September 1986, an entire *Only Fools and Horses* episode satirised sunbeds. The sitcom comedy *Only Fools and Horses* (1981 to 1991) was centred in Peckham in London. The series narrated the highs and lows (mainly lows) of 'the Trotters', a working-class family whose 'get rich quick' endeavours constantly failed. Derek "Del Boy"

⁹⁴ Due to the absence of *Enterprize* literature, it is unknown if the targeting of one candidate was part of the production company's formula or if this harsher treatment was specific to Moore's sunbed business proposal. Nonetheless, from the mid-1980s onwards on television, all reactions to unwanted sunbed providers were increasingly dismissive and aggressive (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6).

⁹⁵ Anon., 'Turnover brisk in sunbeds', p.3.

⁹⁶ Similar to Wakewood, Instantropic was repeatedly bought by other companies to survive, however, was finally liquidated on the 22 October 1990, Anon., 'Company Number: 1848993. Name of Company: INSTANTROPIC SUNBEDS LIMITED', *London Gazette*, 14 November 1990, p.17677.

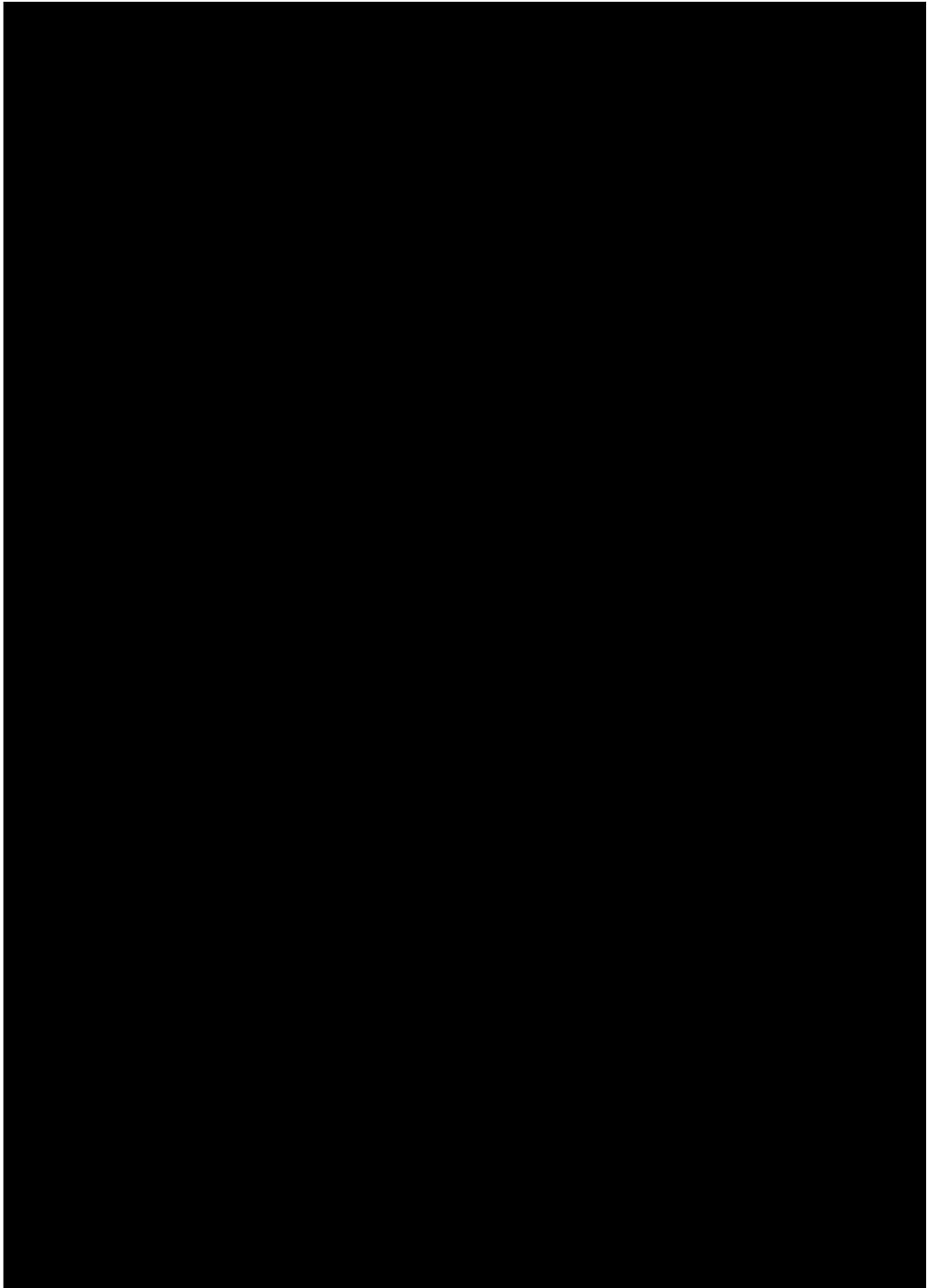
Trotter was stereotyped as a quick-witted South London trader, who was a surrogate father for his much younger, dependent and child-like brother, Rodney. In the episode, titled 'Tea for Three', the satire began with a sunbed sales pitch. Another two segments satirised the advertised 'health' and beauty reasons for sunbed use, and the consequences of misuse and excess. The existing negative representations of sunbeds were exaggerated for dramatic and comedic effects. The featuring of a sunbed in an *Only Fools and Horses* episode speaks volumes. The fact Del, 'Uncle Albert' and Rodney both own and can engagingly interact with a sunbed illustrates the unfavourable representation of sunbed providers and consumers by 1986.

The Trotters' business ethos and selling approach can be understood from this episode's closing credits alone. As working-class 'floggers', both Del and Rodney cut corners and broke laws for maximum profit ('no income tax, no VAT'); attempted to exploit people who bought from them ('No money back, no guarantee'); made false claims in their sales pitches to increase pressure on their targets ('Black or white, rich or poor we'll cut prices at a stroke'); often obtained their products in illegal ways ('Hooky'), and finally, Del used French words, often inaccurately, to add an air of sophistication to their marketing ploys ('C'est magnifique, Hooky Street').

In the sunbed sales pitch Del, and his accomplice Rodney, target their local pub owner 'Mike' (Mike Fisher) in his pub (**Figure 3.3**). Del is comically persistent, eager and confident, yet oblivious and foolish. He embodies the positive characteristics of the early 1980s sunbed providers but performs a negative spin of their traits. Del, dressed in a cheap grey suit, began his sales pitch by energetically leaning over the bar towards Mike. He commanded 'listen Mike ... I've got a beautiful! ultraviolet! Sunbed! back at the flat'. Rodney pulled out an A4 advert from his suitcase, featuring a blonde woman in a bikini. Del continued, 'the retails normally at £375 but its yours for £120'. Straight-faced, Mike declines. Del increased the sales pressure by adding a 'super deluxe, modern ... telephone'. Again, Mike refused. Relentless and determined, Del then offered a free 'extension'. Mike aggressively declined. Del begs for more time and a favour as Mike strides away. Nonetheless, Del proudly exclaimed

that he 'nearly had him'. Rodney agreed.⁹⁷

Figure 3.3. Sunbed selling and using on *Only Fools and Horses* (September 1986)



Source: *Only Fools and Horses*, Season 5, Episode 4: 'Tea for Three', BBC1, Aired 21 September 1986.

⁹⁷ *Only Fools and Horses*, Season 5, Episode 4.

The laughable double act shows the arrogance, idiocy and irrationality of this sunbed sales pitch. Nonetheless, the Trotters' informal marketing strategy was emblematic of the more formal marketing ploys in sunbed adverts. They persistently offered discounts, threw in 'extras', and presented the sunbed purchase as 'rational'. Most of these strategies disappeared from 1983 onwards (**Table 3.1**).⁹⁸ Nordic, an originally affluent and well-established sunbed provider, no longer advertised sunbeds after Wakewood's bust in January 1983, despite publicising that they wanted to capitalise on a new working-class demographic with their own 'price revolution'. Catering to a working-class market, Amber Leisure was one of the only sunbed providers to both emerge and survive the boom-to-bust period. Like Del and Rodney, Amber Leisure's adverts followed a persistent approach to advertising their sunbeds in 1986. Their sunbeds were advertised at £129, the same price as Del's pitch in *Only Fools and Horses*.⁹⁹ Del and Rodney's resilience and optimism, despite Mike's disinterest and their failure, comically encapsulated the unwarranted confidence of the mid-1980s working-class sunbed providers.

The idea of exploitative cowboy sunbed salons had existed since the very early 1980s; however, the media had not initially shown many in-depth negative representations of these sunbed providers.¹⁰⁰ By 1986, the dominant representation in both non-fiction and fictional media framed sunbed providers as profit-orientated, fraudulent and foolish, and was widely received. The sunbed-related *Only Fools and Horses* episode had over sixteen million viewers on the first eve of its transmission. Even if a working-class portrayal of desperate and exploitative sunbed provider (and their users) was not yet a

⁹⁸ After 1983, the frequency of image-based adverts in the media sharply declined until their disappearance in 1988. Most reputable salons, such as Jean Graham (see Chapter 1), who originally advertised sunbeds as one of their best services, no longer mentioned their provision of sunbeds in their adverts after 1984. This change in their adverts, however, could have been because sunbeds were no longer a novel technology worth advertising that attracted customers.

⁹⁹ Anon., 'POSTAL SHOPPING GUIDE. Amber Leisure. Factory Direct!', p.25.

¹⁰⁰ Anon., 'Turnover brisk in sunbeds', p.3.

popular opinion, television viewers would absorb this perspective by the end of the show. Nonetheless, this popular opinion had to be relatively widespread to allow the satirical humour.¹⁰¹ This unenviable reputation of the providers also influenced the emerging representation of the consumers.

'Well he looks like a Swan Vesta!': The Emergence of the Working-Class Sunbed Consumer

Before 1983, sunbeds were previously *associated* with middle-to-upper-class white women (see Chapter One).¹⁰² In *Only Fools and Horses*, Uncle Albert's and Rodney's sunbed use satirised how the technology was 'now practically within everyone's reach' by 1986.¹⁰³ The undesirable working-class representation of the sunbed suppliers; the 'cheap price revolution', and the abundant accessibility, had changed the representation of the typical sunbed users. Sunbeds were now a financially and physically hazardous indulgence for the working-class masses. Although hyperbolic to evoke comedy, *Only Fools and Horses* demonstrates how these 'new' sunbed users were unfavorably framed. Moreover, the episode demonstrated one of the first televisual representations of 'persistent' and 'excessive' sunbed use, and its repercussions, because of the Trotters' irresponsibility.

A 'Geriatric' and Working-Class Man's Sunbed Use

On *Only Fools and Horses*, the first mise-en-scene of sunbed use was within the Trotters' living room, which was overcrowded with furniture and decoratively mismatched (**Figure 3.3**). This small room was also their dining room, typical of the working-class council flats within the high-rise tower blocks of South London. The top-canopy sunbed, propped by wooden blocks, was positioned

¹⁰¹ *Only Fools and Horses*, Season 5, Episode 4.

¹⁰² *To the Manor Born*, 'The Grape Vine'.

¹⁰³ Anon., 'HP 3140: UV-A SUNCOUCH' and 'COMBINATION HP 3140 and HP 3141', English product information leaflet, Philips, 1984.

on top of a cheap-looking tartan beige sofa. The mahogany coloured and body-length sunbed unit had sharp-edged corners and bright crass silver bars. The small white circles where the separate components had been fastened were noticeable on the design. This sunbed was one of the cheapest factory-produced sunbeds of the mid-1980s, often advertised by *Amber Leisure* – the only sunbed provider to regularly advertise in the *Daily Mail* after 1986. This sunbed imitated one of the types of sunbeds which had been mass produced ‘for all’. Moreover, after the mid-1980s, Amber Leisure constantly updated their adverts with cut-price sunbed prices, hinting a desperation to clear excess stock.¹⁰⁴ In *Only Fools and Horses*, Rodney sat in front of the sunbed, dressed in a t-shirt and jeans, munching on crisps. The cheap-rate sunbed in this overfilled environment framed the sunbed as a working class and tacky consumption.

Uncle Albert, representing an elderly working-class man, was presented as enthusiastically using the sunbed, yet inexperienced and clueless as to how to use it. Facing down, Albert’s hands, propped on his elbows, rested on the armrest. When he spoke, he arched his head over the armrest – his mouth often hanging open. Dressed in a tight, white and frayed vest top, blue shorts, and dark socks pulled high over his ankles, his belly bulged, and his white fleshy arms and skinny legs were exposed. When both Rodney and Del saw what Albert was wearing whilst tanning, their eyes widened with horror. In disgust, Albert was described as a ‘geriatric ball boy’. The comedic absurdity of Albert using a sunbed was accentuated further by Albert’s loud and blind-goggled delivery of a question, ‘ERE.... Dese ultraviolet rays contain Vitamin E,

¹⁰⁴ The sunbeds from Amber Leisure (established in Wolverhampton in 1985) quickly decreased in price from 1985 to 1994, with constant ‘sales’ and ‘clearances’. Moreover, the later adverts tended to focus on selling the cheaper ‘foldaway’ and ‘economy’ sunbeds, and they constantly highlighted the major cost reduction over time – resembling a major clearance of excess stock in a sale, Anon., ‘Amber Leisure - Classified Ad 80 -- No Title’, *Guardian*, 23 November 1985, p.17; Anon., ‘Amber Leisure’, *Daily Mail*, 14 May 1988, p.13; Anon., ‘Amber Leisure SUMMER SALE - Multiple Display Advertising Items’, *Daily Mail*, 2 July 1988, pp.16-17.

don't say? I read somewhere Vitamin E's good for an [h]angover'. Rodney rolled his eyes in disbelief. Albert's expressions, followed by his inaccurate assumption that sunbeds released 'Vitamin E' (instead of Vitamin D), ridiculed Albert's intellect, and satirised the popular 'Vitamin D' health claim as garbled.

The distasteful framing of Uncle Albert on a sunbed was created by his environment; the type of sunbed he was on; how the sunbed was positioned; the surrounding furniture; the position of Albert's body on the sunbed and his clothes. Albert's rhetoric, and the way he spoke, also performed a representation of being uneducated, incompetent and senseless.

A Young, Effeminate and Working-Class Man's Sunbed Use

Immediately after Albert, Rodney used the sunbed and reflected an entirely different representation. Rodney was effeminate, youthfully naïve, over-excitable, yet apparently more 'educated' and 'clever' than both Albert and Del. This made Rodney's accidental 'excess' sunbed use more foolish and humiliating.

Although still working-class, Rodney character was presented as less masculine than the other male characters in this episode. Rodney confidently used the sunbed in front of Albert and Del. In a song-like tone, Rodney declared that he was using the sunbed as he excitably strutted to the machine. He did an energetic hip wiggle as he turned the time-dial. When the lights turned on, he produced a high-pitched shriek and put on the goggles. Fully clothed in a tightly tucked t-shirt, blue jeans, socks and trainers, Rodney rolled his long yet light body onto the sofa. Rodney's feminised sunbed use was personified by his gleeful body movements, high-pitched tones, and tight clothes.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, his

¹⁰⁵ Rodney was young, tall and had a slender body. He had a delicate long face with a pointed chin and cheekbones. Rodney, as a character, moved more flamboyantly than the other male characters on *Only Fools and Horses*. Yet, Rodney was characterised as heterosexual as he is only interested in woman throughout the series. Heterosexual

youthful attitude added a layer of naivety to his misfortunate sunbed use.

Rodney fell asleep and Del returned. As both characters were competing for a young women's affection (Lisa), Del sabotaged Rodney's attempt to impress Lisa by turning up the sunbed dial to the maximum time-setting. Later, whilst Del and Lisa were dining, Rodney appeared. Dressed in a white suit, he could not move his burnt red face. For the rest of the episode, Del humiliated Rodney in front of Lisa and others.¹⁰⁶ Rodney stressed that he had dialled thirty minutes on the sunbed - not the two and a half hours that had burnt him.

men were almost never shown unclothed when undergoing a 'ritual process of beautifying' in mixed media (print press, television and films), such as using a sunbed. In early 1980s media, if a heterosexual man had used a sunbed, exposed through either rhetoric or an obvious tan, they were never shown actually using one (*The Olympian Way*). By the mid-1980s, if a 'traditional' man was visually presented using a sunbed he was either fully dressed or being 'active', as if he was working out (Lloyds Bank Advert). After the 1990s, the only men visually shown using sunbeds were characterised as either metrosexual, homosexual, or psychologically disturbed, *Full Monty*, (Director: Peter Cattaneo, Screenplay: Simon Beaufoy), 1997; *American Psycho*, 2000; Anon., "Nothing prepares you for a holiday like a Leisure stretcher loan from Lloyds Bank", *Daily Mail*, 3 June 1987, p.25; Lee McGinnis, Seungwoo Chun, Julia McQuillan, 'A Review of Gendered Consumption in Sport and Leisure', *Bureau of Sociological Research*, (2003); Richard Dyer, 'Don't look now', *Screen*, 23, 3-4, (1982), pp.61-73; Maurice Patterson, Richard Elliott, 'Negotiating Masculinities: Advertising and the Inversion of the Male Gaze', *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, 5, 3, (2002), pp.231-249.

¹⁰⁶ Dell insulted Rodney by calling him a 'Swan Vesta' matchstick. Rodney was described as a Swan Vesta matchstick because of his red face and white suit. Originally based near Liverpool in Bootle, Swan Vesta has been a famous brand for both matchsticks and smoking accessories since 1883. These 'strike-anywhere' matchsticks were popular with smokers as they were shorter than normal pocket matches and were advertised under the tagline 'the smoker's match'. By the mid-1980s, Swan Vesta matchsticks, and likely Del's comment about Rodney's burnt face, would have tied together an association of sunbed use and smoking among the

An emerging stereotyped working-class use of sunbeds was both reflected and reinforced by these men's irresponsible and reckless interaction with the sunbed. In this episode, Rodney appeared to be effeminate, naïve and dependent on Del, and Del was exploitative, impulsive and stubborn, which led to dangerous sunbed use. This plays on historical narratives that the mass consumption of technologies by the 'irresponsible' working classes would lead to both individual and communal harm, supported by the contrasting representation of working-class sunbed use on *Only Fools and Horses* (1986) and upper-class use on *To the Manor Born* (1981).¹⁰⁷

The Historical Actors Influencing the Changing Representation of Sunbeds

As previously demonstrated, many different stakeholders inadvertently amplified an emerging negative representation by making sunbeds accessible for all. The mass manufacturing, distribution and advertising of sunbeds allowed the financially deprived to access this technology, fuelling an association of tastelessness with sunbed use. Some of the different groups who unintentionally contributed to this representation were the sunbed providers themselves; the print press; television game shows and less obvious endorsers, such as the government and banks. Individuals from these different groups could have been sunbed users themselves, contributing to mass consumer demand.

In detail, this chapter has explained how a diversification of providers

working-class masses, Anon., 'Swan's History', House of Swan, 2019. Accessed 19 November 2019: <https://houseofswan.com/about/history/>

¹⁰⁷ In *To the Manor Born*, Audrey Forbes-Hamilton was depicted as luxuriously using her domestic sunbed in her spacious, high-ceilinged and plush sitting room, whilst being served by her butler. For the early 1980s upper-class depiction of sunbed use, see Chapter 1, *To the Manor Born*, 'The Grape Vine'.

(such as Wakewood, Instantropic and Amber Leisure) inadvertently created an unattractive representation of sunbeds. Nonetheless, from 1984 onwards, even longstanding and internationally established companies, such as Philips, adopted the 'cheap price revolution' approach from these short-lived providers. From 1984 onwards, Philips designed, advertised and sold basic sunbed units at extremely low prices, which contrasted to their previous expensive and upmarket range. They also sold bulk-buys of 'UVA safety tubes' to smaller providers to make cheap sunbeds.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, Philips advertising changed and became more inclusive of those who had less disposable income. They replaced their discourse of luxury and health with 'interest-free credit plan[s]' and new 'attractive price[s]'. These types of adverts emphasised an 'ease' in the payment transaction, delivery and installation, which allowed home tanning to become 'practically [within] everyone's reach'.¹⁰⁹ Manufacturing and design employees, who had prior experience in mechanics, carpentry or electrical goods, were also influential. They were keen to support sunbed businesses by designing and mass-producing cheaper sunbeds. Nonetheless, sunbed 'providers' were not the only contributors. The mixed media, particularly the print press and television, contributed to the success of sunbed promotions, distribution and public accessibility.¹¹⁰

Print Press

The print press originally distributed an abundance of positive sunbed adverts.

¹⁰⁸ Advertising Archives, Unknown Magazine, Best Buys, 'THE AMAZING HOME TAN. A FABULOUS ALL OVER TAN, ALL YEAR LONG. ONLY £199.95', 1984.

¹⁰⁹ Anon., 'HP 3140: UV-A SUNCOUCH' and 'COMBINATION HP 3140 and HP 3141', English product information leaflet, Philips, 1984; Anon., 'UV-A SUNCOUCH HP 3504', English product leaflet, Philips, 1987.

¹¹⁰ Wakewood also illustrated the extremities of endorsement from advertising agencies and the acceptance of a mass distribution of sunbed advertising on television by the advertising standards, even when using 'naked women' on television for advertising was taboo and resulted in a ban or fine, Jane Reed, 'Advertising. How it can still insult women', *Marketing*, Vol.9, No.5, 29 April 1982, p.24.

After the sunbed market saturated, however, news reports began to broadcast more negative viewpoints alongside the promotional material and new medical warnings. In September 1982, *The Times* published an article voicing the concerns and tensions of media, medical, government and sunbed industry groups. In an overpoweringly negative tone, the 'balanced' article explained the issues, potential solutions yet the inevitable failure of the sunbed industry in the future.

The author first praised Wakewood's domestic 'sunbed revolution', despite the industry's 'ups' and 'downs', and celebrated Wakewood's impressive output of sunbeds. But the author warned, 'in theory, tanning at home should be no more hazardous than tanning in a beauty salon or health club. In practice it tends to be'. The author then praised companies that supplied a 'useful booklet of dos and don'ts', like Wakewood. Yet apparently these booklets were insufficient as the British public were renowned for ignoring manufacturers' instructions. Next, the author highlighted that sunbed adverts contrasted to their providers' 'health and safety' guidebooks. For example, the blonde model from Nordic's 'Favorit' sunbed range 'never wore goggles or sunglasses'. The author remarked that it was impossible to estimate how many sunbed shops existed as they loosely required licenses under the 'Massage and Special Treatment act'. These licences were required for tanning salons, or even massage parlours or chiropodists. To overcome this issue, in 1982, some dermatologists founded an organisation called ASTO (the Association of Sun Tanning Operators) to recruit sunbed providers and monitor their supply.¹¹¹ Yet ASTO had only 100 members. Frances Allwright, ASTO's spokesman, also admitted that even counting the sunbed companies from the Companies House Records would not

¹¹¹ Dr John Hawk, a dermatologist, and Dr David Darby, an ophthalmologist, to set up the Association of Sun Tanning Operators (ASTO). Their aim was to persuade the government to set up guidelines for sunbed operators. Nevertheless, as the government claimed that sunbeds and tanning were a 'cosmetic' issue, this objective proved unsuccessful until the mid-2000s, Polan, 'Some like it a bit too hot', p.8; Will Sutton, 'A sign of my anger, Mr Blair', *Evening Gazette*, 20 February 2004.

show an accurate account as ‘cowboy’ salons did not show. In despair, *The Times* concluded that ‘thousands of thousands’ of sunbed providers existed.¹¹²

Sunbeds Prizes (mainly on Television)

By the mid-1980s, many British television game shows gave away masses of sunbeds as the runners-up prize. Sunbeds were embedded, yet increasingly disposable within popular culture. They were prizes on both *The Price is Right* (from March 1984 to April 1988) and *Play Your Cards Right* (November 1987).¹¹³ The participants and audiences of these shows were aspiring working-to-middle-class, reflected by the cheap ‘economy’ prize of a sunbed, and the other runners-up and the winning prize.¹¹⁴ ‘Economy’ sunbeds were still a relatively novel and pleasant household bonus for working-class participants and viewers. Moreover, for the game show producers, sunbeds were an affordable and disposable prize for their weekly shows.¹¹⁵

¹¹² Anon., ‘Turnover brisk in sunbeds’, *The Times*, 25 September 1982, p.3.

¹¹³ *Price is Right*, Series 1, Episode 1, (Host: Leslie Crowther), ITV, 24 March 1984; *Play Your Cards Right*, Series 9, (Producer: Chester Feldman, Presenter: Bruce Forsyth), ITV, November 1987.

¹¹⁴ On *Play Your Cards Right* in November 1987, the other runner-up prizes were affordable ‘everyday’ small electrical gadgets, such as mini-televisions, compact disc hi-fi systems, remote control colour televisions, four-star economical fridge-freezer unit and a video recorder. The winning prize was a 3-door hatchback Austin Metro city-car, *Play Your Cards Right*, Series 9.

¹¹⁵ Similarly, from 1988 to 1991, in a traditional newspaper promotion game called ‘Spotting the ball’ (based in Liverpool), an average of fifty-one sunbeds costing between £250 to £350 were offered as either the fourth or fifth prize (out of five prize groups). Again, the masses of *Daily Mail* readers were mainly working-class. Sunbeds, during this period, were given away in the lowest prize group. For more information on the history of ‘Spotting the ball’, see this article, Paula Coccozza, ‘Spot the ball: why has no jackpot been paid out for 10 years?’, *Guardian*, 14 January 2015. Accessed 20 April 2019: <https://www.theguardian.com/football/shortcuts/2015/jan/14/how-to-spot-the-ball-in-spot-the-ball>; Anon., ‘THIS WEEK’S BIG PAYOUT: SPOTTING THE BALL’, *Daily*

Financial support from the government and banks also contributed to the mass distribution of sunbeds. Government loans were often provided to start-up sunbed companies. The government loan that launched Wakewood demonstrated that sunbeds were originally perceived as an acceptable business enterprise.¹¹⁶ Banks also supported both sunbed start-ups and those wanting to borrow money to purchase domestic sunbeds. In 1987 in the *Daily Mail*, a Lloyd's 'leisure stretcher holiday loan' advert featured a man surrounded by summer holiday items. The man, sat on a rowing machine under a sunbed, was wearing protective goggles. Sunbeds were being suggested as a normal holiday purchase, obtainable with a loan.¹¹⁷ Since the early 1980s, the gradual increase of credit cards and loans, especially for women, assisted the attainability of new domestic technologies, such as sunbeds.¹¹⁸

Mail, 21 September 1988, p.46; Anon., 'THIS WEEK'S BIG PAYOUT: SPOTTING THE BALL', *Daily Mail*, 3 April 1991, p.7.

¹¹⁶ Anon., 'Turnover brisk in sunbeds', p.3.

¹¹⁷ The man underneath the sunbed in the advert was 'active', doing sports, dressed in shorts, Anon., "Nothing prepares you for a holiday like a Leisure stretcher loan from Lloyds Bank", p.25; Dyer, 'Don't look now', *Screen*, pp.61-73.

¹¹⁸ Since the late 1970s, *Cosmopolitan* more noticeably began to encourage women to become more independent, in terms of both their finances and their desired consumptions, by advertising the use of credit cards and loans. *Cosmopolitan* wanted women to stop being financially restricted and discriminated against through credit card access, especially if unmarried. These credit card advertising campaigns, in turn, encouraged women to stay ahead of 'beauty' and 'health' technologies, services and products (such as the sunbeds that were advertised in the same magazine editions), Anon., 'Will galloping inflation freeze out your winter wardrobe? Debenhams INSTANT £120!' and 'UWE Sunstream. A rich natural tan in only 3 half hour treatments', *Cosmopolitan*, October 1979, p.279, p.174; Equal Opportunities Commission, 'CREDIT FOR WOMEN – ARE YOU MISSING OUT?', *Cosmopolitan*, September 1979, p.199; Anna Gough-Yates, *Understanding Women's Magazines* (London: Routledge, 2003), p.1.

The Historical Actors Warning Against Sunbeds

The media was instrumental as a vehicle for medical experts to broadcast their anxieties about the sunbed industry to the masses.¹¹⁹ As discussed in chapters One and Two, sunbed-related medical research was relatively sparse before the early 1980s. After the boom-to-bust of the sunbed industry, sunbed-related medical research increased – this research was more confidently negative and received more television airtime.

In 1983, the *BMJ* published five sunbed-related articles and letters.¹²⁰ At the time, this was the most amount of sunbed-related medical content published within one year. Moreover, this was the first year an official article had been published in the more mainstream *BMJ*, rather than a ‘reading for pleasure’ letter in the more specialised and less read *BMJD*. Medical experts of all kinds were increasingly concerned about mass sunbed use as it had become an everyday issue through the work of companies like Wakewood. One of these articles, titled ‘sun beds and melanoma’, was published on 12 March 1983 and led to medical media coverage three days later.¹²¹ On the 15 March 1983, on the BBC ‘Breakfast time’, Frank Bough interviewed Dr Richard Smith on the recent reports linking sunbeds and sun-lamps with skin cancer.¹²²

¹¹⁹ In July 1981, an upsurge of sunbed accidents caused ‘The Health and Safety Executive’ to discuss publishing a guideline on how to operate sunbeds safely in professional establishments. Nonetheless, they did not mention domestic sunbeds, and these guidelines may not have been published as they cannot be found, Williams, ‘Holiday threatens sunset for tanning lamp manufacturers’, p.9.

¹²⁰ John Hawks, ‘Sunbeds’, *British Medical Journal*, 286, (1983); S. Retsas, ‘Sunbeds and melanoma’, *British Medical Journal*, 286, (1983).

¹²¹ Retsas, ‘Sunbeds and melanoma’.

¹²² BBC Motion Gallery, ‘Breakfast time, Dr Richard Smith, linking sunbeds and sun lamps with skin cancer’, BBC, Aired 15 March 1983.

Yet, during 1984 and 1985, both sunbed adverts and medical research was still scarce. During these years, only one sunbed-related article was published per year by the *BMJD*. In 1986, one article, authored by B.L. Diffey explored the 'Use of UV-A sunbeds for cosmetic tanning' used on commercial premises. Diffey concluded that although the increased risk of sunbed-induced long-term health problems (such as skin ageing and skin cancer) was unknown, he advised people who did not tan or tanned poorly to avoid sunbeds. For this research, questionnaires were sent to 146 ASTO tanning salons in January 1985, and Diffey thanked Frances Allwright, the General Secretary of ASTO for help organising the survey.¹²³

In 1987, dermatology departments in Glasgow and Edinburgh obtained funding to research the effects of sunbeds. Notably, this research was funded only after the sunbed industry had saturated, all exclusive sunbed providers had disappeared, and finally, when sunbeds were more noticeably associated with working-class people. Both the government and BBC had become concerned about cancer and the general public's awareness of 'myths', causes and prevention.¹²⁴ The research from Glasgow and Edinburgh led to a proliferation

¹²³ B.L. Diffey, 'Use of UV-A sunbeds for cosmetic tanning', *British Journal of Dermatology*, 115, (1986), pp.67-68, p.75.

¹²⁴ In 1983, two reports were written to assess what the public thought about cancer and what they wanted to know. These were designed to create new 'educational' television material about cancer for 1984 and 1985. In 1983, the general public saw sunbathing as a low risk cause of cancer (44 per cent believed sunbathing 'likely' caused skin cancer; 46 per cent believed sunbathing 'unlikely' caused skin cancer, and 12 per cent 'did not know'), yet sunbeds were not mentioned, BBC Written Archives Caversham, R9/153/1, Special Report, (SP 83.53 / 83.61), Researcher: Anne Laking, Attitudes to Cancer, December 1983, p.2. In the follow-up report in 1985, in an attempt to create more televisual material, references to sunbathing and cancer became more frequent, BBC Written Archives Caversham, R9/147/1, BBC Broadcasting Research, Special Report (SP 83/047/83.53), Researcher: Anne Laking, Understanding Cancer, October 1983; BBC Written Archives Caversham, R9/263/1, Special Report, SP 85/034, Researcher: Anne Laking, Audience Research, Cancer: Evaluating Can You

of anti-sunbed articles; nine were published in 1988, which was almost double the amount in 1983. One of these studies was ‘the first ... to suggest ... a link between artificial UV lamp use and melanoma’.¹²⁵

Conclusion

During the mid-1980s, despite the growing awareness that sunbeds could be ‘bad’ for you, sunbeds were still a normalised, accepted, and a relatively unthreatening and thoroughly embedded ‘everyday’ technology - easily accessible to all. Yet the influence of many different stakeholders was rapidly changing this representation. In turn, the public would voice, support and disseminate these negative beliefs about sunbeds and the growing dense web of unfavourable representations emerged. Towards the end of the 1980s, sunbeds were perceived as banal, ‘excessive’ and more seriously harmful. The negative representation of sunbeds was irremediable because consumer interest decreased (even from the working-classes); the media were unsupportive; the sunbed industry subsequently became more voiceless and passive; and finally, the concerns of medical researchers and their funding for sunbed-related scientific experimentations increased.

Avoid Cancer, June 1985. For histories of cancer, see Carsten Timmermann, *A History of Lung Cancer: The Recalcitrant Disease* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd., 2013); Carsten Timmermann, Elizabeth Toon (eds), *Cancer Patients, Cancer Pathways: Historical and Sociological Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd., 2012); Toon, ‘The Machinery of Authoritarian Care’, pp.557–576.

¹²⁵ A.J Swerdlow, J.S English, et al., ‘Flourescent lights, ultraviolet lamps, and risk of cutaneous melanoma’, *British Medical Journal*, 297, (1988), p.22.

Part Two

Chapter 4: Medical Research and Moral Panic: Sunbeds and their Consumers after the Boom Years

Introduction

'Researchers at Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities have found up to a nine fold increased risk of developing the cancer for users of sunbeds and sun-lamps', Judith Han, Tomorrow's World, BBC1 live transmission, 8pm, 27 October 1988.

After the unsalvageable collapse of the domestic sunbed market, fewer sunbed entrepreneurs (selling exclusively sunbeds) entered the industry, and domestic sunbed adverts rarely featured in the media. This chapter first evaluates an array of national print press outlets (magazines, newspapers and television) from the late 1980s to demonstrate that the sunbed industry had lost both its commercial power and media support on a national scale. A new powerful voice – the 'medical experts' – filled this empty space in the media to inform the public about sunbed use.

I will then document a further tilt in the media's representation of sunbeds, which a decline in sunbed-positive propaganda and an increase in anti-skin cancer publicity caused, including popular science books and a cartoon. Consumers and the media were demanding more 'scientific' health information to clarify the potential links between sunbeds and skin cancer, perhaps because of the growing anti-sunbed reports in the media. In response, medical experts, particularly dermatologists and skin cancer specialists, emerged as the main sources of authoritative information about sunbeds. During the late 1980s, they conducted more scientific experiments about UV exposure and sunbeds than ever before, publishing the results in the *BMJ* and *BMJD*. National newspapers and television broadcasts (such as *Tomorrow's World*) then presented these anti-sunbed findings to the public, aiming to discourage both household and public sunbed use.

In 1989, the HEA launched a campaign to increase young women's awareness of sun-caused skin cancer. A survey-based study, conducted before and after the campaign, revealed that skin cancer awareness was already extremely high. While this study and campaign occurred, an ongoing avalanche of medical research and media broadcasts were both reflecting and intensifying a moral panic about sunbed-linked skin cancer. Yet greater awareness of skin cancer caused by sunbathing and/or sunbed use, did not discourage tanning habits; "bronze [remained resiliently] beautiful".¹ Sunbeds were embedded within everyday private and public environments and were still endorsed by beauty, health, fitness and fashion marketing.

As a result of these anti-sunbed and pro-sunbed tensions, the media increasingly framed and reinforced an emerging sunbed stereotype; evident in radio shows and soaps. The media satirically stereotyped the everyday sunbed consumer as both morally distasteful and disruptive: normally blonde, impulsive, unappreciative, cruel, self-destructive, lazy, self-absorbed and inconsiderate. The act of using sunbeds was further stigmatised as frivolous, irrational and often ignorant by exploiting this stereotype. In mixed media representations, only the "immoral" and emotionally disconnected members of society underwent sunbed use. These included the "bimbos", "barbies", "gold diggers" and "evil stepmothers" demonstrated in the print press, cartoons and films. This rhetoric and visual culture of the sunbed stereotype was misogynistic and derogatory. Yet this media-induced moral panic was also a response to defiant sunbed consumers, who were both disinterested in the risks of skin cancer and refused to change their tanning habits. The creation of the immoral sunbed user may have functioned as an indirect attempt to decrease skin cancer rates, aiming to improve the long-term health of the British public.

¹ I. H. Cameron, Christine McGuire, "Are you dying to get a suntan?" – pre- and post-campaign survey results', *Health Education Journal*, 49, 4, (1990), p.170.

This chapter focuses on the time period between 1988 to 1990. This three-year span was one of the quietest in terms of all sunbed-related media broadcasts collectively. In the mid-1980s, BBC researchers conducted special reports to assess the public's interest in health education. The reports revealed that television viewers predominantly prioritised and were personally interested in 'cancer' (1985), 'keeping fit' (1987) and 'healthy eating' (1987).² During the AIDS epidemic, the public's interest in these topics significantly declined. The public, particularly young people, wanted to obtain more information about AIDS. This demand for AIDS-related news emerged in 1987 and heightened in 1988. Unsurprisingly, in comparison to AIDS, the public were less concerned about sunbed-induced skin cancer during the late 1980s.³ Nonetheless, the media did produce sunbed-related health advice, prompted by the growing numbers of anxious dermatologists. This anti-sunbed advice at least reached the public, even if it was not obeyed.

² Anne Laking, Audience Research, Cancer: Evaluating Can You Avoid Cancer, June 1985, pp.1-2; BBC Written Archives Caversham, R9/342/1, Special Projects Report, SP87/010, Researcher: Karen Day, Health: Attitudes Towards Health & Health Education 1, February 1987, p.2; From the late 1970s onwards in America, health educators were evaluating the use of television (regular shows, fictional shows and special programs) to deliver health messages. Similar approaches were slowly adopted by health educators in England by the 1980s and early 1990s, Mary Chemka Long, 'Television: Help or Hindrance to Health Education?', *Health Education*, 9, 3, (1978) pp.32-34; John E. Leary, Television: The Anti-Wellness Tool, *Health Education*, 10, 5, (1979), pp.16-18; Kenneth E. Warner, 'Television and health education: stay tuned', *American Journal of Public Health*, (1987), pp.140-142; Dominic McVey, John Stapleton, 'Can anti-smoking television advertising affect smoking behaviour? Controlled trial of the Health Education Authority for England's anti-smoking TV campaign', *Tobacco Control*, 9, (2000), pp.273-282.

³ BBC Written Archives Caversham, R9/417/1, Special Projects Report, SP88/005, Researcher: David Bunker, Health: Attitudes Towards Health & Health Education 2, March 1988, p.2, pp.9-12.

A 1983 BBC special report revealed that although television and the press were ‘very much secondary sources of information [‘in comparison with personal experience and talking to other people’], the media [was] a very powerful source which seem[ed] more authoritative and credible than information passed by word of mouth’. However, even if the public made demands for health education on matters important to them, the public believed that ‘no-one (even the experts) really [knew] anything about cancer’. The public, regardless of their social demographic, were sceptical and distrusting of both doctors and medical experts. Nonetheless, viewers were more likely to believe a cause was a cause if the information was transmitted on TV.⁴

The Decline of The Sunbed Industry’s Commercial Power in The Media

In most national newspapers, sunbed adverts disappeared, yet they sporadically remained in the *Daily Mail* – suggesting that sunbed providers could now only profitably target lower and middle working-class consumers.⁵ Once sunbeds became strongly associated with working-class providers and consumers, sunbed providers rarely advertised in the print press or on national television. After the bust of Wakewood in 1983 (see Chapter Three), sunbeds were not mentioned in either *Marketing* or *Campaigns* industry-focused

⁴ The October 1983 BBC Broadcasting Research Special Report observed that the public demonstrated a widespread ‘mistrust and, occasionally, dislike of doctors’. This was ‘common to all ages, classes and both sexes’, although middle class people were more likely to argue or change their doctors if they were not satisfied, BBC Written Archives Caversham, R9/147/1, BBC Broadcasting Research, Special Report (SP 83/047/83.53), Researcher: Anne Laking, Understanding Cancer, October 1983, p.8, p.18.

⁵ Colin Sparks, ‘The readership of the British quality press’, *Media, Culture & Society*, 9, 4, (1987), p.432.

magazine.⁶ After 1987, domestic sunbed adverts had almost disappeared from mainstream national newspapers, such as the *Observer*, *Guardian*, *Independent*, *The Times* and the *Financial Times*. Amber Leisure was one of the only sunbed-selling businesses to advertise somewhat frequently. Established in Wolverhampton in 1985, Amber Leisure had placed a few adverts in the *Observer* and *Guardian* during the mid-1980s.⁷ After 1987, however, Amber Leisure only occasionally advertised in the *Daily Mail* (**Table 3.1**).⁸ As sunbeds were no longer a novel product, Amber Leisure sold other recreational leisure, health and fitness products to survive as a business.⁹ After 1987, sunbeds were no longer prizes on television game shows. From 1988 onwards, sunbed adverts stopped appearing in *Cosmopolitan*. In *Good HouseKeeping*, only one 'Nordic' advert appeared in the November 1988 edition. This Nordic advert was selling a more ambiguous 'Sun Tan System' and the small textual reference was buried among other listed spa technologies.¹⁰

⁶ The last mention of a sunbed in *Campaign* magazine was the merge of two leisure and sunbed companies, Gaytons of Leicester and Scanda Sol, in June 1983, Anon., 'Leicester agency wins Scanda Sol sunbeds', *Campaign*, 10 June 1983, p.6.

⁷ Anon., 'Amber Leisure - Classified Ad 80 -- No Title', *Guardian*, 23 November 1985, p.17; Anon., 'Amber Leisure - Display Ad 246 -- No Title', *Observer*, 8 November 1987, p.61.

⁸ Anon., 'Amber Leisure', *Daily Mail*, 14 May 1988, p.13; Anon., 'Amber Leisure SUMMER SALE - Multiple Display Advertising Items', *Daily Mail*, 2 July 1988, pp.16-17.

⁹ Anon., 'Amber Leisure - Classified Ad 80 -- No Title', *Guardian*, 23 November 1985, p.17; Anon., 'Amber Leisure - Display Ad 246 -- No Title', *Observer*, 8 November 1987, p.61; In 1994, a tick box option for a sunbed appears for the first time in years, yet the reference was barely noticeable as the visual and textual content focused on selling new fitness machines and saunas, Anon., 'Display Ad 133 – No Title', *Observer*, 6 November 1994, p.65; Anon., 'Amber Leisure', *The Times*, 5 November 1994, p.66.

¹⁰ Anon., 'Nordic. Sauna – Steam – Sun', *Good HouseKeeping*, November 1988, p.348.

Several overlapping factors caused this decline of both household and public sunbed adverts across national broadcasting platforms. Sunbeds were no longer a novel technology worth listing but an expected or given attribute of certain settings. Consumer demand had somewhat declined, and sunbed providers could no longer afford nation-scale advertising campaigns. Also, regular sunbed users did not need to be informed where the nearest sunbed shops were: they knew. Finally, print press editors may no longer have accepted sunbed adverts because of the health concerns and working-class stigma associated with them.

Where Did the Sunbed Promoters Go?

Nonetheless, sunbed adverts began to more dominantly emerge in other advertising spaces. During the late 1980s, while press ads disappeared, the number of household sunbed adverts dramatically increased in the *Mersey Yellow Pages*. Unlike many other forms of widespread regional advertising, the *Mersey Yellow Pages* allowed their local business subscribers to feature their adverts for free. Also, the small-to-medium sized adverts were described as 'low-cost'.¹¹ Moreover, this particular trade directory was distributed in the sunless and predominantly working-class North-West region, where the demand for sunbeds may have remained high. Quite tellingly, after 1989, in both the *Liverpool Echo* newspaper and *Mersey Yellow Pages* trade directory, Jean Graham salon's adverts (see Chapter One) removed the selling point that a sunbed tan radiated 'wealth'. Yet all the other 'beauty' and 'health' benefits, mentioned in her adverts since the early 1980s, continued into the 1990s.¹² A tan could be sold as 'beautiful' and the media's conflicting sunbed reportage permitted the advertising of 'health'; yet the growing stigma associated with working-class sunbed use made it more difficult to sell sunbeds as an affluent consumer good.

¹¹ *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1988, p.1, unnumbered last page.

¹² Anon., 'WHAT EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW', p.8. *Mersey Yellow Pages* 1989.

Additionally, after the abundance of failed sunbed business start-ups from the early-to-mid 1980s, excess sunbed stock may have led to the advertising of cheaper units. From 1987 to 1988 in the *Mersey Yellow Pages*, sunbed adverts dramatically soared for the first time – in 1987 a total of 48 sunbed-referencing adverts could be found, which increased to 74 in 1988.¹³ Moreover, in 1988, for the first time in over five years, sunbeds were placed in the *Mersey Yellow Pages* ‘health and fitness clubs/centres’ categorical section, featuring 13 adverts in total.¹⁴ This change could have resulted from a new *Mersey Yellow Pages* editor who supported the health-association of sunbeds. Or perhaps gym owners were trying to increase their client memberships, in their response to the increasing nation-wide disinterest in the now ‘old fashioned health club’ movement.¹⁵

Anti-sunbed Medical Research Transmitted Through the Media

After the mid-1980s, the sunbed-positive articles and the reporters’ light-hearted questioning tones in national newspapers were replaced with more serious warnings about regular sunbed use. More significantly, these reporters were no longer interviewing sunbed providers for sunbed information. Instead, these reporters were communicating with medical experts to explain the ‘science’ behind sunbed-induced skin cancer. The media was now supporting the previously unamplified voices of dermatologists and skin cancer specialists.¹⁶

¹³ *Mersey Yellow Pages* 1987; *Mersey Yellow Pages* 1988.

¹⁴ *Mersey Yellow Pages* 1988, pp.458-9.

¹⁵ According to a BBC Special Report researching consumer attitudes to health and health education, an interest in ‘keeping fit’ and ‘healthy eating’ had decreased, whereas an interest in other popular topics from previous years remained relatively static despite the greater demand for AIDS related information, David Bunker, Health: Attitudes Towards Health & Health Education, p.2, pp.9-12; Victoria Mckee, ‘Can a machine make you fit?’, *The Times*, 9 June 1988, p.18.

¹⁶ Virginia Berridge, D. A. Christie, E. M. Tansey, (eds.) *Public Health in the 1980s and 1990s: Decline and Rise* (London: Wellcome Trust, 2006).

By the late 1980s, the general public were demanding clearer, more credible and less industry-biased information relating to sunbeds and skin health.¹⁷ Before the mid-1980s, the more confident sunbed businesses provided the media with answers. Yet the sunbed industry had lost their authority and credibility by the late 1980s. Sunbeds were also now perceived as a working-class staple for the uninformed masses, rather than an upper-class luxury for the 'rational' minority. This encouraged more medical experts to both research and publish information about sunbeds. Some doctors even presented their expertise directly to lay audiences, such as Dr Ronald Marks, who published one of the first popular science books addressing tanning and skin cancer: *The Sun and Your Skin* (1988).

Marks explained that the book's target audience was the 'interested public – for the sun-worshipper and occasional sunbather as well as those fearful of the sun'. Marks presented 'practical' information regarding the public's frequently asked questions about the effects of tanning on the skin, such as "Are sunbeds safe to use?" Aiming to both inform and entertain his readers, Marks wrote and published this cheap (£5.99), relatively short (120 pages), easy-to-read book, formatted as a columned popular magazine. The promotional reviews published in *The Times* newspaper (May 1988) and *The New Scientist* magazine (July 1988) increased lay audiences' awareness of Marks' book. The shift from a review in the highly esteemed *The Times* to a more varied audience reading *New Scientist* demonstrated an attempt to inform as many demographic groups as possible about the effects of UV on skin.¹⁸ Yet not for working class audiences.

¹⁷ Mold, Clark, Millward, Payling, *Placing the Public in Public Health in Post-War Britain*, p.88.

¹⁸ Ronald Marks, *The Sun and Your Skin* (Macdonald & Co, 1988), p.7; McKee, 'Sun sinners', p.20; Bruce Armstrong, 'Pale Skin Peril: Review: Ronald Marks, *The Sun and Your Skin* (Macdonald), 1992', *New Scientist*, 14 July 1988, p.64; The highly regarded and well-read *Times* national newspaper was mainly purchased by middle-to-upper

In the first review from *The Times*, the reporter introduced Marks as the 'Head of Dermatology at the University of Wales College of Medicine' to establish his authoritative position. The reporter then shared Marks' sunbed recommendations with readers. These included: "Always wear goggles. Always match the exposure to your skin's reaction. Don't wear cosmetics or perfumes before session. Don't have more than 20-30 sessions a year ...". Finally, both Marks and the reporter advised seeking ASTO approved sunbed operators as they upheld the Health and Safety Executives' code of practice. This practice of certification likely reduced the public's perception of risk.

Overall, both Marks and the reporter were advising 'safe' sunbed use, rather than condemning sunbed consumption. In his book, Marks even included a positive chapter titled "Sunshine – the good side".¹⁹ The book must have been relatively popular, at least for medical experts wanting to guide their patients, because a second reprint was promoted four years later in the *Physiotherapy* medical journal (1992).²⁰ These reviews reflect medical experts' concerns,

class men and women. During the mid-1980s, *The Times* had the highest grade profile for a newspaper, followed by the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Financial Times*, Sparks, 'The readership of the British quality press', p.430, pp.432-3; First published in 1956, the *New Scientist* was a popular British weekly magazine publishing on science and technology topics. The *New Scientist* was published "for all those men and women who [were] interested in scientific discovery, and in its industrial, commercial and social consequences", Gillian Ingram, 'New Scientist's Evolution: The Science Of Segmentation', *Figaro Digital*, 20 June 2017. Accessed 16 December 2019: <https://www.figarodigital.co.uk/article/new-scientist-science-segmentation/>

¹⁹ Marks, *The Sun and Your Skin*, p.7. McKee, 'Sun sinners', p.20.

²⁰ The second edition of Marks' first was published in 1995, just after the publication of his second book (1992) for the same audience. In 1992, Marks published another 'thin volume', titled 'Sun-damaged skin'. Marks published this book for 'school teachers, outdoor sportsmen, educators who set public health policies in area where cloud coverage is rare, first-year medical students, traveller-vacationists and ... mothers!', Marks, *Sun and Your Skin*; Ronald Marks, *The Sun and Your Skin* (2nd ed)

alongside the growing media and public demand for suntanning-related health information. In these reviews, both media reporters and medical experts praised Marks for turning inaccessible medical research into a more accessible book, aiming to fulfil the demands and needs of concerned lay audiences.

The Anticipation of Sunbed-related Medical Research

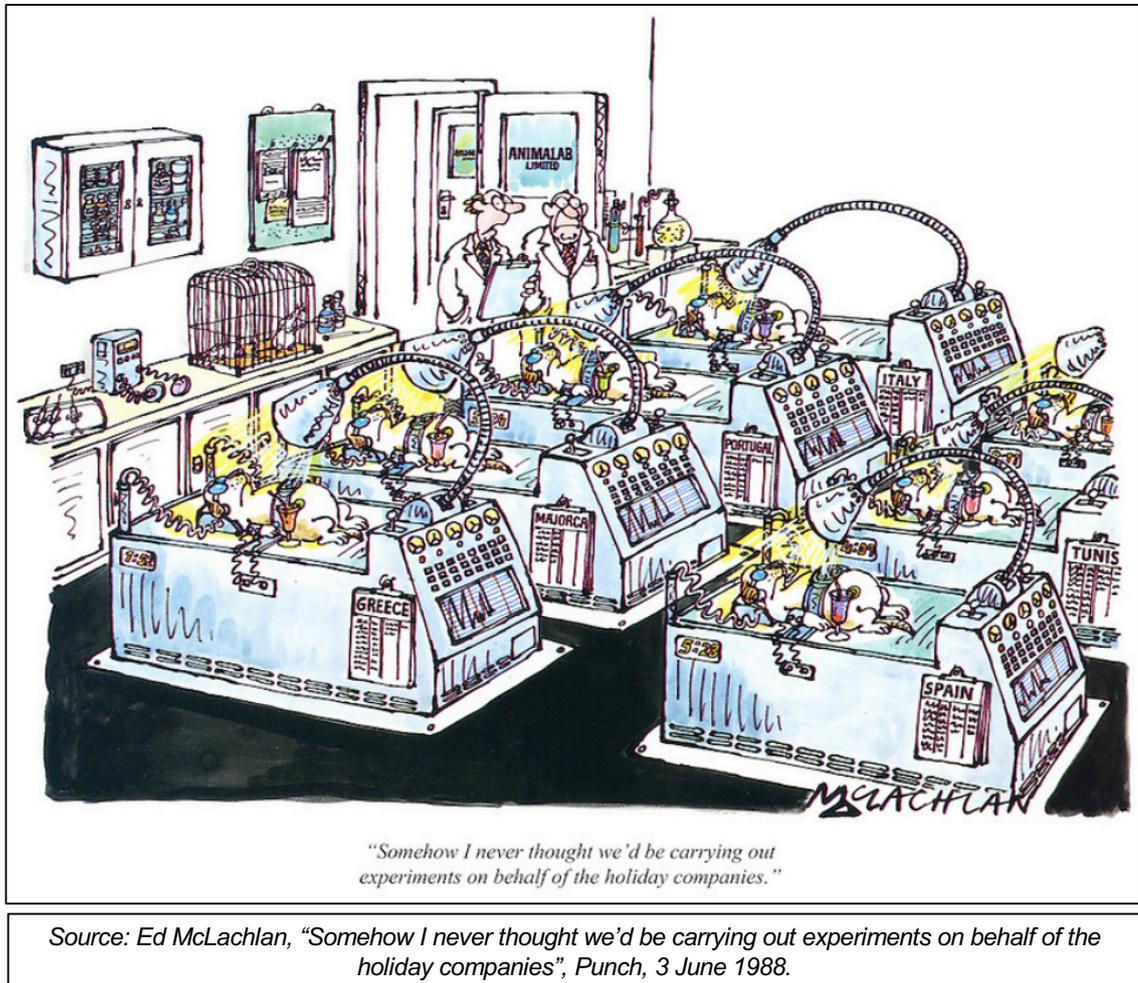
In June 1988, one month after *The Times*' reviewed *The Sun and Your Skin*, the first ultraviolet light and skin cancer themed *Punch* cartoon appeared.²¹ The media were noticing the growing interest in ultraviolet radiation research from suntanning consumers, medical experts and the government. In this cartoon, the backdrop of medicinal cabinets, laboratory glassware, machinery and rodents in cages accentuated the 'Animal Lab' scene. Seven expressionless dogs in sunglasses, accompanied by cocktails, were strapped onto metal machines. The dogs rested their heads on pillows as they lay under the ultraviolet lamps wired to their 'bed'-resembling units. Each machine had a countdown timer set at a different time, creating the resemblance of a sunbed. Each machine also had a complex control panel with an abundance of buttons, and a clipboard; each clipboard cited a sunny holiday destination – Greece, Majorca, Portugal, Italy, Spain and Tunisia. At the back of the room, two white, old, and balding men in spectacles and white lab-coats observed the

(Macdonald & Co, 1995); Ronald Marks, *Sun-damaged Skin* (Martin Dunitz Limited), 1992; Heather Godfrey, 'Review: Ronald Marks, *The Sun and Your Skin*', *Physiotherapy*, Vol.76, No.2, February 1992, p.150. Accessed 17 August 2019: [https://www.physiotherapyjournal.com/article/S0031-9406\(10\)61990-6/pdf](https://www.physiotherapyjournal.com/article/S0031-9406(10)61990-6/pdf)

²¹ *Punch* was first published in 1841. This British weekly magazine was both renowned and widely circulated to the public. The magazine was considered to be the king of humour magazines as it used cartoons to satire political and social affairs. During the late 1980s circulation dropped to an alarmingly low level, yet both publications and nation-wide circulation continued until 1992, Anon., 'Punch', *New World Encyclopaedia*, 16 June 2019. Accessed 5 December 2019: [https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Punch_\(magazine\)](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Punch_(magazine)); Anon., 'A Brief History', *Punch*. Accessed: 17 December 2019: <https://www.punch.co.uk/about/index>

experiment. Both scientists had disgruntled facial expressions. The caption read: "Somehow I never thought we'd be carrying out experiments on behalf of the holiday companies" (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 A UV radiation and skin cancer themed *Punch* cartoon (1988).



This cartoon satirised the growing abundance of 'sunbed' scientific experiments researching ultraviolet radiation, which were providing endless findings for endless reasons in an everlasting pursuit of science. Both the different countdown timers and countries reflected scientists' attempts to both assess and control how the varying levels of ultraviolet radiation would affect their research participants. The docile dogs, rather than mice or rats, were unphased. The cartoon presented the controlled timings, locations, and the relaxed subjects as ridiculous. The satirical positioning of the 'holiday companies' as interested stakeholders in scientific sun research would have amused readers. Similar research, conducted on behalf of sunbed companies,

had been done in the past. On the other hand, the sunbed-resembling machines appeared 'scientifically' clinical, rigid and overwhelming, which contrasted to sunbeds. Although this cartoon radiated a sceptical tone, the cartoon also reflected recognition of emerging sunbed-induced skin cancer, while perhaps unintentionally reinforcing old images of sunbeds as scientific, under the control of medical experts, and therefore safe. These conflicting tensions would fuel an increase in medical research, which led to the rise of media-induced moral panic towards sunbeds.²²

The Upsurge of Sunbed-related British Medical Journal Research

From 1988 onwards, dermatologists showed a significantly greater (and what would prove to be unrivalled) interest in skin cancer, evidenced by their publications in the *BMJ*. From 1980 to 1987, the average quantity of both *BMJ* and *BMJD* sunbed-referenced publications amounted to two per year. In 1988, these two journals published ten sunbed-related articles - nine of these publications were a mixture of research articles, letters and responses from the *BMJ* and one publication was the abstract of the first sunbed-dedicated paper presented at the annual *BMJD* conference. Between the spring and summer of 1988, the sunbed-related *BMJ* content included letters either supporting or challenging the findings from two research articles published that year; these two articles presented case studies on 'Sunbed lentiginosities' and 'Skin fragility and blistering due to use of sunbeds'.²³ In these case studies, all patients were young women, except one 37 year old man.²⁴ One author described 'excessive' sunbed use as a thirty-minute-long session, taking place three-to-four times per

²² Ed McLachlan, "Somehow I never thought we'd be carrying out experiments on behalf of the holiday companies.", *Punch*, 3 June 1988.

²³ 'Sunbed lentiginosities', or liver spots, are benign lesions that occur on the sun-exposed areas of the body.

²⁴ H. Williams, J. Salisbury, et al., 'Sunbed lentiginosities', *British Medical Journal*, 296, (1988); P. M. Farr, Janet M. Marks, B. L. Diffey, Pince, 'Skin fragility and blistering due to use of sunbeds', *British Medical Journal*, 296, (1988), pp.1708-9.

week, for one-to-two years.²⁵ This quantity of sunbed sessions was less than the recommended number from the standard 1980s sunbed advert. The 'sunbed lentigines' report also opened by explaining the authors' awareness of a recent CRUK campaign against melanoma. The concerns about sunbeds from both anti-skin cancer activists and the media pressured medical experts to create information to better inform healthy lifestyle decisions. Dermatologists first discussed their sunbed research within their own circles. They used the media, again, to share their findings with the public.²⁶ This section unpicks these feedback loops, in which media reporters quickly translated scientific studies to the public, first through newspapers and later television, on *Tomorrow's World*. At the time, the HEA also launched their first government-funded campaign to increase women's awareness of skin cancer.²⁷ Yet due to several influences, such as reporters' misinterpretations and cautiousness, the sunbed information often reached the public in conflicted form. A feedback loop of how a sunbed-related medical study was transmitted into a television broadcast provides an example of these science communication and health promotion issues.

'Fluorescent Lights, Ultraviolet Lamps, And Rise of Cutaneous Melanoma' BMJ article (July and September 1988)

In July 1988, the first sunbed-related paper was presented at the annual *British Journal of Dermatology* conference. This paper, titled 'Fluorescent lights, ultraviolet lamps, and rise of cutaneous melanoma', claimed to be the 'first study to suggest that there is a link between artificial UV lamp use and

²⁵ B. L. Diffey, P. Farr, 'Response to 'Sunbed lentigines'', *British Medical Journal*, 296, (1988), p.1468.

²⁶ Virginia Berridge, Martin Gorsky, Alex Mold, *Public health in history* (McGraw-Hill Education, 2011), p.206.

²⁷ For HEA television campaign approaches against smoking and tobacco from the early 1990s, see McVey, Stapleton, 'Can anti-smoking television advertising affect smoking behaviour?', pp.273-282.

melanoma'. The authors, A.J Swerdlow et al., were based in Edinburgh and Glasgow.²⁸ On 10 September 1988, Swerdlow et al. published their research on the risks of UV-induced melanoma. Half of the study examined the effects of fluorescent lights in both work and home environments, and the other half assessed ultraviolet lamps and sunbeds. The study's participants consisted of 180 patients with malignant melanoma, aged 15-84, and a control group of 197 inpatients and outpatients.²⁹ Swerdlow et al. asserted that 'the risks associated with exposure to ultraviolet lamps and sunbeds remained significant after adjustment for other risk factors for melanoma'. The risk of melanoma was 'particularly raised' for people using sunbeds for five years or longer. In the study, thirty-eight patients with melanoma (twenty-one per cent) had used ultraviolet lamps or sunbeds. The melanoma risk did not appear to be greater for participants over thirty; the article claimed that the 'overall relation to age was not significant'. Swerdlow et al. also explained that ultraviolet radiation had historically treated conditions, such as 'vitamin D deficiency neonatal jaundice', tuberculosis and 'sickly children.' Yet, they asserted, the link between ultraviolet radiation exposure and skin cancer needed 'serious consideration'.

Swerdlow's article cited two studies to compare the UV-A radiation emittance between the sun and sunbeds. The first claimed that sunbeds 'generally' delivered 'ultraviolet A at dose rates ... two to three times those of sunlight and may deliver ultraviolet B at rates near to those of bright sunlight'.³⁰ The second article that Swerdlow et al. cited stated that UV-A sunbeds 'produce[d] irradiance causing erythema several times that produced by the

²⁸ Swerdlow, English, et al., 'Flourescent lights, ultraviolet lamps, and risk of cutaneous melanoma'.

²⁹ The 180 patients with melanoma had attended either university departments of dermatology or plastic surgery units between 1979 and 1984. These clinics were based in Glasgow, Edinburgh and the West of Scotland, Swerdlow, English, et al., 'Flourescent lights, ultraviolet lamps, and risk of cutaneous melanoma', p.647.

³⁰ Hawks, 'Sunbeds', p.329

summer noon sun at a latitude of 30 degrees or 40 degrees N[orth]'.³¹ The article concluded that these studies needed a reinvestigation as 'no previous study [had] looked at the relation of risk to the time since exposure'. The dermatologists suggested that melanoma may have a 'long induction period', because of the higher risk of melanoma from exposure several years prior. However, the dermatologists also suggested that this increased risk of melanoma could have been attributed to the older types of late 1970s lamps. These lamps largely emitted UV-B, which 'likely' caused humans and animals skin cancer.³² The dermatologists' research findings were complex and ambivalent, and they would eventually be translated to the public in a confusing way.³³

The general public did not have easy access to the *BMJ* or *BMJD* or the expertise to easily read them. Therefore, the media became the principal outlet and amplifier for these dermatologists' research. The media had the most power to transmit Swerdlow's et al. findings on sunbeds and skin cancer.

Swerdlow et al. BMJ Article in Newspapers (September 1988)

At least three national newspapers (the *Daily Mail*, the *Guardian*, and the *Independent*) published reports explaining their interpretation of Swerdlow's research. One of the three articles, from the *Daily Mail*, was published on the 9 September 1988 - the day before Swerdlow's *BMJ* publication. Medical experts and the media had been communicating as societal skin cancer concerns were

³¹ D.S. Nachtwey, R.D Rundel, 'A photobiological evaluation of tanning booths', *Science*, 1981, 211, pp.405-7.

³² Swerdlow, English, et al., 'Flourescent lights, ultraviolet lamps, and risk of cutaneous melanoma', p.649.

³³ For instance, an *Independent* newspaper articles opened with a typical question from the public: 'WHAT are we to believe about the dangers of sunshine?' This question was followed by a convoluted explanation that UV-A caused cancer, yet UV-A protected consumers from UV-B, which caused more cancer risk, Olivia Timbs, 'Debate over sunbeds' *Independent*, 16 August 1988, p.13.

growing; there were medical and governmental pressures to make sunbed-related health information immediately accessible to the public.

This first *Daily Mail* article addressing Swerdlow's article was titled 'Experts warn of cancer risk from sunbed tans'. The reporter confirmed that 'ultra-violet rays [were] potential killers' and that 'people who use[d] sunbeds triple[d] the risk of getting skin cancer'. The reporter also explained that using tanning lamps for five years increased the risk of 'developing malignant melanomas – cancerous moles – by nine times'. However, this shocking introduction was then softened by the disclosure that 'older sunbeds' might be the cause of melanoma, as they emitted UV-B radiation. The *Daily Mail* article concluded that newer sunbeds emitted 'more ultra-violet A [than UV-B] rays'; therefore newer machines were 'thought to be' less dangerous than older machines.³⁴ The following day, the *Guardian* published their account of Swerdlow's research, titled 'Sun lamp scare', reflecting connotations of skepticism. The *Guardian's* exceptionally brief report claimed that there was a 'three-fold increase in melanoma skin cancer among users of ultraviolet lamps and sunbeds'.³⁵ On the 13 September, in the 'health' section of the *Independent*, a more detailed discussion of Swerdlow's findings was presented under the title: 'Link between sunbeds and cancer'. The *Independent* article began by linking sunbeds to 'unexplained rashes and skin infections and permanent changes in pigmentation'. Next, the article confirmed that the *BMJ* linked 'sunbeds and skin cancer', creating a fearful tone. They stated that 'nearly 400 people' were involved in the research, and roughly half were melanoma patients – melanoma was described as 'the most virulent skin cancer'. The reporter noted that '21 per cent' of these melanoma patients had used sunbeds, and she warned that the people who had used sunbeds for over

³⁴ Anon., 'Experts warn of cancer risk from sunbed tans', *Daily Mail*, 9 September 1988, p.9.

³⁵ Anon., 'News in brief: Sun lamp scare', *Guardian*, 10 September, p.2.

'five years were even more at risk'.³⁶ Days later, the fourth newspaper article (the second *Guardian* report) was the first to acknowledge that the study also researched fluorescent lighting.³⁷ The other newspaper reporters had focused entirely on sunbeds, suggesting that sunbed-related matters were a higher priority and received greater interest from the public. The *BMJ* findings on fluorescent lights and the risk of melanoma were 'slightly but not significant raised'. Comparing these two differences in reporting on the risk of melanoma emphasised the dangers of sunbeds, demonstrating an emergence of moral panic.

A month later, a television report transmitted the Swerdlow et al. article to an even larger audience. In their television guide, both *The Times* and *Daily Mail* used the 'sunbed safety' report to advertise *Tomorrow's World's* weekly show, which featured on BBC1, a mainstream channel. In both *The Times* and the *Daily Mail*, the *Tomorrow's World* teaser content included 'a report on the dangers to sunbed and sunlamp users'. Excluding the weekly 'news' segment, there were six other topics showcased in that episode of *Tomorrow's World*. Yet the BBC and newspapers cited the 'sunbed report' as their main hook as they knew televisual viewers would be most interested in that topic.³⁸

'Sunbed Safety' report on Tomorrow's World (October 1988)

On the 27 October 1988, Judith Hann presented a live transmission of a 'Sunbed Safety' report on *Tomorrow's World*. *Tomorrow's World* aired at 8pm, which was the prime and most watched evening slot on BBC1, reaching millions

³⁶ Olivia Timbs, 'UPDATE: Link between sunbeds and cancer', *Independent*, 13 September 1988, p.15.

³⁷ Judy Sadgrove, 'Body matters: Cancer Lines: Watch the Light', *Guardian*, 14 September 1988, p.23.

³⁸ Peter Dear, Jane Rackham, 'BBC1', *The Times*, 27 October 1988, p.23; Anon., 'TV Mail Programmes in Full', *Daily Mail*, 27 October 1988, p.28.

of viewers.³⁹ Typically, *Tomorrow's World* usual format included six to eight reports on a new development in science, technology or medicine. The first and last report was usually humorous and brief, lasting under two minutes. The middle reports were longer as they were more 'serious' and 'significant', often lasting up to six minutes.⁴⁰ The sunbed report was the second out of five reports, and lasted just under three minutes, suggesting that the sunbed coverage was serious. Hann presented information from only skin cancer and policy experts - not the sunbed industry or sunbed consumers. *Tomorrow's World* was both a long-standing and popular BBC1 series, beginning in 1965. During the 1980s, the programme had the highest ratings of the television programmes dealing directly with science (such as *Horizon* and *Panorama*) and attracted eight to ten million viewers a week. The show's purpose was to introduce new technologies, developments and scientific theories, and the content was presented as 'factual'.⁴¹ Typical of the 1980s Thatcherite era, health was believed to be an individual's responsibility.⁴² Therefore, continuing the political and public attitudes of self-autonomy and individual choice, television reporters suggested rather than instructed the public about sunbed-related health advice. The 'sunbed safety' script for *Tomorrow's World* reflected

³⁹ Rachel Moseley, 'Makeover takeover on British television', *Screen*, 41, 3, (2000), p.301.

⁴⁰ Rachel Kerys Murrell, 'Telling it Like it Isn't: Representations of Science in *Tomorrow's World*', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 4, (1987), pp.91-2.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp.91-2, p.97.

⁴² Almost all respondents agreed that staying healthy is an individual's responsibility (92%), although many also thought that the medical profession could do more to improve general health, Karen Day, *Health: Attitudes Towards Health & Health Education* 1, p.23; Virginia Berridge, *Environment and Infectious Disease in the 1980s: From Passive Smoking to AIDS. In Marketing Health: Smoking and the Discourse of Public Health in Britain, 1945-2000* (Oxford University Press, 2007), p.209; Virginia Berridge, Martin Gorsky, *Environment, Health and History* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp.6-9; Mold, Clark, Millward, Payling, *Placing the Public in Public Health in Post-War Britain*; Alex Mold, 'Patients' Rights and the National Health Service in Britain, 1960s-1980s', *American journal of public health*, 102, 11, (2012), pp.2030-2038.

this style of cautionary yet calm health advice.⁴³ Hann's sunbed report also reflects the typical late 1980s ambivalence of media reporting. She both incited moral panic through her dramatic tone yet reassured the public by undercutting the risk factors of sunbed use, which, in turn, undermined the medical authorities and their research.

Hann was a confident presenter, with fourteen years of experience on *Tomorrow's World* at the time of the broadcast. Hann opened the sunbed report acknowledging that 'the safety of sunbeds and sun-lamps has always been controversial'. She then introduced malignant melanoma as 'the most worrying of the skin cancers as it spreads rapidly through the body'. This language would have heightened audience's attention and their sunbed-related concerns. Hann referred to Swerdlow's *BMJ* article, stating that 'researchers at Glasgow and Edinburgh' had discovered a 'nine-fold increased risk of developing ... cancer for users of sunbed and sun-lamps'. Hann presented this statistic more dramatically than it had been in the print press content. Only the first national newspaper, the *Daily Mail* article, had mentioned the 'nine-fold increased risk' of developing melanoma.⁴⁴ Moreover, the *Daily Mail* had contextualised this statistic reassuring readers that this 'nine-fold increase' occurred after at least 'five years of sunbed use'.⁴⁵ The *BMJ* article had not explicitly mentioned an

⁴³ Although the audio-visual content is inaccessible, the script can be located at the BBC Written Archives. This creates limitations: the visual backdrop, delivery or verbal tone cannot be contextualised; however, the script allows a different layer to be analysed. The pencil markings, script cues, underlining and absences in the script demonstrate where the script writers should emphasise points or were uncertain about how to interpret the *BMJ* article, perhaps waiting to consult with one of the medical experts before the live transmission.

⁴⁴ Experts rarely deliver a neutral assessment of a health risk, and typically, if they are providing information to media outlets, they are perceiving the exchange as an opportunity to framing or reframe the health topic, Rony Armon, 'Interactional Alarms: Experts' Framing of Health Risks in Live Broadcast News Interviews', *Health Communication*, 33, 10, (2018), pp.1257-1266.

⁴⁵ Anon., 'Experts warn of cancer risk from sunbed tans', p.9.

increased risk of melanoma. Yet there were masses of inaccessible numerical calculations alongside the text. Therefore, it was unclear if the *Daily Mail* article had accurately interpreted the *BMJ* study in the first place. Nonetheless, the media were both popularising and dramatising the health concerns of sunbeds. The alarming statistic on *Tomorrow's World* was later softened by the disclosure that the study did "not differentiate between the types of sunbeds or sunlamps used, so it may just be showing the harmful effects of older types of tanning devices'. These underlined words in the script emphasised the possibility that modern sunbeds could be less dangerous. Hann reassured viewers that '8 years ago' sunbed manufacturers had switched to UVA radiation, which was 'less harmful'. The switch from UV-B to UV-A was the sunbed industry's response to the 'mounted' evidence against UV-B, which was said to cause 'sunburn, ageing of the skin and skin cancers' (as explained in Chapter Two). Hann explained the differences between UV-A and UV-B, to explain why 'some [sunbed] manufacturers ... felt confident claiming that UVA was safe'. This reflected a sympathetic consideration of the sunbed industry and their decision to protect consumers. Hann asserted that sunbed providers maintained that their UV-A sunbeds were 'healthy' and did not cause burns or skin ageing. Hann's statement appeared to be defending the sunbed industry and their bold safety claims.

Nonetheless, the next scripted paragraph swung back to a more negative perspective to balance the report. According to 'an increasing number of studies in recent years', which included 'studies on mice', Hann revealed that UV-A itself 'may be a hazard'. Hann listed the reasons why UV-A exposure effected health. First, like UV-B, UV-A was now said to 'suppress the immune response of the skin which help[ed] to fight diseases'. Second, Hann told audiences that UV-damaged skin became 'less elastic ... and more wrinkled'. Finally, she disclosed that as UV-A penetrated the skin more deeply than UV-B, UV-A sunbeds could 'produce even more damage and ageing of the skin'.

Hann's final comment on ultraviolet radiation was that 'uVA appears on the whole to be less dangerous than uVB', which probably confused television audiences. Quickly switching to worldwide sunbed policy changes, Hann

remarked that there had been a new legislation in California. In California, all sunbeds now had to carry 'UVA danger' warnings and the promotional literature had to advise users to wear goggles to prevent cataracts in later life. The promotional literature in England did not include such health warnings or suggestions. The 'Sunbed Safety' report concluded with a confusing mixed message. Hann inferred that it was 'important to keep all this in perspective' as 'a modern sunbed [was] probably safer than a Mediterranean beach'. She asserted that 'regular [sunbed] exposure' caused the risk'. To discourage those who wanted a 'winter tan', Hann quoted advice from the British Medical Association (BMA): 'limit yourself to x hours a week or less if you're fair skinned'.⁴⁶ The ambiguous 'x' in the script demonstrated that the number associated with 'regular' or 'safe' sunbed use was unknown or at least not obvious by the media. The BMA had not yet prepared or provided consumers with a nationally recommended limit of sunbed use.⁴⁷

Following the BBC1 remit to 'inform, educate and entertain' a wide audience, Hann had presented an ambivalent yet accessible sunbed report.⁴⁸ In the typical style of *Tomorrow's World*, the script demonstrated an attempt to consider all stakeholder perspectives, aiming to balance the report and present nuanced, informative, yet engaging information to their audiences. The 'scientific' tone was authoritative, demonstrated by the 'UVA' and 'UVB' explanations obtained from the medical research; however, the level of detail was accessible for lay audiences.⁴⁹ Intriguingly, the report ended on a fairly positive note. Hann, instead of discouraging sunbed use, had provided advice

⁴⁶ BBC Written Archives Caversham, *Tomorrow's World*, Series 25, Episode 4, (Director: Phillip Dolling, Producer: Jack Weber, Editor: Richard Reisz), BBC1, Aired 8.00-8.30pm, 27 October 1988.

⁴⁷ Similar to individual alcohol consumption during the 1970s, the 'experts' could not define 'moderate' consumption, Mold, 'Everybody Likes a Drink. Nobody Likes a Drunk', pp.1-2, p.8.

⁴⁸ Jeanette Steemers, 'Building a Digital Cultural Commons - the Example of the BBC', *Convergence*, 10, 3, (2004), pp.102-7.

⁴⁹ Murrell, 'Telling it Like it Isn't: Representations of Science in *Tomorrow's World*'.

on how to best approach sunbeds. She advised which sunbeds to avoid (old sunbeds); how to use sunbeds (wear goggles); and finally, how often consumers could use sunbeds. Compared to the coverage that was to come, this report was sympathetic towards the sunbed industry and their consumers. *Tomorrow's World* had not mentioned terms such as 'excess' or 'addiction'. The idea of what was sunbed 'over-use' remained unclear, and sunbed consumers were not yet stereotyped, stigmatised or condemned. Nonetheless, the necessity for the report demonstrated a gradual shift towards the media's more negative perspective of sunbeds.

Growing Government, Medical and Media Skin Cancer Scares and Disobedient Tanners

In the summer of 1989, the HEA launched the first government-funded campaign against skin cancer, costing £250,000. The 'stark' copy line was 'ARE YOU DYING TO GET A SUNTAN?' (**Figure 4.2**). After the campaign's launch, Nicola Chapman, a *Times* reporter, interviewed John Flaherty, the HEA's assistant director of advertising. Chapman asked Flaherty about the campaign and the predicted response from the public. Prior to this campaign, the HEA had conducted qualitative research revealing that 'most people [were] unwilling to recognise that sunbathing [could] be dangerous'. The HEA claimed that a "whole series of myths associated with the sun" caused these attitudes, including the belief that sunlight was beneficial. According to the media, the HEA's previous campaigns were unsuccessful as they had deployed shock tactics, such as 'Heroin Screws You Up' and 'Aids Iceberg'. The softer approaches deployed in their "Look after Your Heart" campaign were apparently more successful. Chapman explained that 1970s psychological studies discovered that 'scare tactics [did] not have a lasting effect on people'.⁵⁰ The

⁵⁰ Hand, 'Visualising Food as a Modern Medicine', pp.302-205; Hannah J. Elizabeth, Gareth Millward, Alex Mold, "Injections-While-You-Dance': Press Advertisement and Poster Promotion of the Polio Vaccine to British Publics, 1956–1962', *Cultural and Social History*, 16, 3, (2019), p.324; Mold, 'Dynamic Dualities', pp.107-109.

British nation had responded defiantly to previous health 'scares', such as the heroin and aids campaign. Consequently, the HEA did not 'scaremonger' sun worshippers in their 1989 anti-sunbathing campaign. Nonetheless, the copy line, 'Are You Dying To Get a Suntan?', was perceived as 'hard hitting'. The

Figure 4.2 'ARE YOU DYING TO GET A SUNTAN?', Health Education Authority campaign poster, (Summer 1989).

ARE YOU DYING TO GET A SUNTAN?



At the first sight of the sun the typical British holidaymaker tends to throw caution to the wind.

What they don't realise is that they're in danger of getting skin cancer if they sunbathe for too long.

Skin cancer is now even more common than breast cancer in the UK.

Happily, most skin cancers are curable.

Malignant Melanoma can be another matter. If neglected, it may spread through your body causing secondary cancers and can be

fatal. If treated early, however, it is also curable.

Most at risk from the sun's rays are those with fair skins. Although people with darker complexions, or whose skin tans easily, should still take care.

Babies and children should also be protected as their skin is particularly vulnerable.

Fortunately, there are various measures you can take, without putting a dampener on your holiday.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF.

For instance, before you venture out into the sun, apply a sunscreen with a high Sun Protection Factor or SPF. The higher the number, generally, the greater the protection.

It's also important to reapply your sunscreen after swimming and at regular intervals while sunbathing.

Too much sun can be dangerous. For your skin's sake move about, see the sights but, above all, cover up when you feel yourself burning.

Equally, in the middle of the day, when the sun is at its most aggressive, you should make as much use of the shade as you can.

For further advice, visit your local pharmacist before setting off on holiday.

Your skin will thank you for it.

**PROTECT
YOURSELF
AGAINST
SKIN
CANCER.**



HEALTH EDUCATION AUTHORITY ISSUED BY THE HEALTH EDUCATION AUTHORITY IN SUPPORT OF EUROPE AGAINST CANCER YEAR

Source: I. H. Cameron, Christine McGuire, "Are you dying to get a suntan?" – pre- and post-campaign survey results', *Health Education Journal*, Vol.49, No.4, 1990, p.170.

publics' attitudes to sunbathing were also linked to sunbed use - in Chapman's article on the HEA campaign, Dr Mackie (one of the co-authors of Swerdlow's article) confirmed that sunbeds were 'bad for you too'.⁵¹

Explicitly targeting women, the adverts for this national skin cancer prevention campaign circulated through women-centred magazines, leaflets and public relations activities. The target audience were women from 'social grade AB, C1, C2 aged between 16 and 34' as apparently melanoma killed 'twice as many women as men', and incidence rates were higher among the 'professional classes'.⁵² Moreover, women remained the main purchasers of sun protection products for their families. Men were disregarded – the HEA did not attempt to increase men's awareness or change both their suntanning attitudes and habits on the same national-scale. Sunbeds were not mentioned, demonstrating that the health risks from suntanning were still being presented as worse and more prevalent than those from sunbed use. As the following section will demonstrate, despite the higher melanoma incidence rates in middle-to-upper class women, in the media-induced moral panic of sunbed use, young working class women became framed as the main consumers.

A pre- and post-campaign survey demonstrated that this brief mass media campaign had little influence on consumer attitudes towards suntans and their anti-skin cancer measures. In this study, women were interviewed face-to-face in their homes. 842 women before and 867 women after the campaign were surveyed. In both the pre-and post-campaign surveys, 61 per cent had recently heard that sunbathing increased the risk of skin cancer. The main

⁵¹ Nicola Chapman, 'Scared to come out the water – into the sun. Will the Government's new health advertising work better than its Aids and heroin failures?', *Guardian*, 5 June 1989, p.23.

⁵² Social grade AB, C1 and C2 referred to both upper and middle-class women, Anon., 'Social Grade A, B, C1, C2, D, E', UK geographics, 23 February 2014. Accessed: 17 December 2019: <https://www.ukgeographics.co.uk/blog/social-grade-a-b-c1-c2-d-e>; Cameron, McGuire, 'Are you dying to get a suntan?', p.167.

source of this information was television. Before the campaign '87 per cent' were aware that the sun could cause skin cancer. This increased by only '1 per cent' after the campaign. Women who were wealthier and older were more aware, but generally the women's 'skin type' did not make a difference to their skin cancer awareness. The high level of awareness before the campaign was attributed to publicity about "green issues", such as the depletion of the ozone layer that led to the generally 'well publicised, potential risk of greater increase in skin cancer'. Typical of the Thatcherite period, public health was focused on how they could perhaps reduce risk by changing individual attitudes, rather than focusing on how to reduce the wider structural and environmental risks. Before and after the campaign, the number of women who took sun protection measures when they sunbathed, either at home or abroad, remained the same.

Attitudes to suntans did not change after the campaign either. For 46 per cent of participants, a suntan remained personally important. For 42 per cent, a suntan was 'synonymous with being healthy'. For 29 per cent, a suntan was believed to be 'synonymous' with 'looking good'. A suntan was 'considerably more important', however, to those who tanned easily and did not burn. The authors of this pre-and-post campaign survey acknowledged that they did not expect the brief mass media campaign to influence any significant changes to sunbathing behaviour. They believed that the "bronze is beautiful" attitude of the late 1980s would have to change. Yet the authors recognised they had a 'long way to go before ... [the] widespread acceptance of the slogan, "sensible sunbathing, not sunbaking"'.⁵³

⁵³ The HEA were responding to the 1989 'Europe Against Cancer' programme. The HEA chose Aspect Hill Holliday as their advertising agency. Their main aim was to increase long-term public awareness against the dangers of the sun and to encourage sun protection measures. At the time, the HEA said that skin cancer was the most common cancer in England and Wales, causing '1078 deaths in 1988'. The HEA applied Martyn P. Davis' advertising expertise, from his book *The Effective Use of Advertising*, to determine the campaign's approach. HEA decided that television advertising was too expensive, and magazine advertising would be better than newspaper advertising because of their 'longer "life" form. They assumed that health

From 1989 to 1990, amid this HEA campaign, the bombardment of sunbed-related publications from the *BMJ* and *BMJD* continued.⁵⁴ A watershed of sunbed-related health scares in national newspapers followed, quoting medical experts. Both dermatologists and newspaper reporters were communicating to urgently warn the public that sunbeds were accelerating both the incidence and mortality rates of melanoma, and most reporters assumed only women used sunbeds.⁵⁵ In one *Daily Mail* article, the reporter (a 'medical

magazine readers would be more receptive as they were actively seeking information. Moreover, the form of a leaflet permitted more space for detailed information, and public relations activities could be actively engaged with, Cancer Research Campaign Cancer Incidence (factsheet 8.1) (London Cancer Research Campaign, 1988); Martyn P. Davis, *The Effective Use of Advertising* (London. Hutchinson Business, 1988); Research Unit in Health and Behavioural Change, University of Edinburgh, *Changing the Public Health* (London John Wiley and Sons, 1989); K. Tones, 'The Use and Abuse of Mass Media in Health Promotion' in D. S. Leathar, et al. (eds), *Health Education and the Media* (London Pergamon press, 1981), pp.97-114; Chapman, 'Scared to come out of the water – into the sun', p.23; Cameron, McGuire, 'Are you dying to get a suntan?', p.167.

⁵⁴ J. Rivers, P. Norris, et al., 'UVA sunbeds: tanning, photoprotection, acute adverse effects and immunological changes', *British Journal of Dermatology*, 120, 6, (1989), pp.767-77.

⁵⁵ Anon., '27 Health. Tempted to jump on a sunbed before the summer hols? Don't', *Guardian*, 10 May 1989, p.25; Jenny Bryan, 'The sun syndrome', *Daily Mail*, 24 January 1990, p.12; Jenny Hope, 'Sunbed skin cancer risk as high as a holiday in the Med', *Daily Mail*, 22 August 1990, p.13; A *Times* reporter remarked that the risk of cancer from UVA was described as 'grossly under-estimated', and cited a 1989 study from the *Journal of Photochemistry and Photobiology*. This was one of the first newspapers to explain in detail that UV-A was as detrimental as UV-B, and why this had been overlooked before, Henry Gee, 'Science report: New radiation research casts cancer shadow over sunbeds', *The Times*, 24 April 1989, p.21; Dr John Hawks was quoted saying 'all sunbeds should be banned'. Also, both Swerdlow's *British Medical Journal* and more recent studies, which showed the 'mounting' evidence against sunbed use, were cited in Read's and Mihill's newspaper article, Cathy Read, 'Sunbed

correspondent'), warned that young women were increasingly suffering from sunbed-induced skin conditions. Ironically and contradictorily, an image of a young, slim and culturally attractive woman sexually stretched across a sunbed accompanied this warning. Moreover, the reporter contradicted previous studies by asserting that 'the very people who are most at risks ('blondes and redheads') were those who used sunbeds the most before holidays.⁵⁶ Yet similar to the HEA campaign, the increased media transmission of medical research warning against sunbed 'over-use' did not discourage sunbed use.

Why Did Sunbed Use Persist?

Sunbeds remained embedded within everyday 'health and fitness' locations and beliefs.⁵⁷ Several London universities continued to provide sunbeds in their student unions; sunbeds remained a standard service and were situated in multi-gyms, launderettes and bars.⁵⁸ Marks claimed that roughly 40,000 new sunbed salons had opened in 1988 and that '10% of the population of the UK ... had visited a salon the previous year'.⁵⁹ The government could only monitor a small portion of sunbed manufacturing firms, yet in 1982, the government estimated that 5,000 household sunbeds had been sold, and in 1988 this rose to 80,000.⁶⁰ Sunbeds were still sold as a luxury at both health farms and

of nails', *Guardian*, 10 May 1989, p.27; Chris Mihill, 'Warning that sunbeds are no safe substitute for sun', *Guardian*, 22 August 1990, p.13; Dr Brian Diffey's warnings against sunbeds were quoted in Arline Usden, 'You can look 10 years younger', *Daily Mail*, 10 July 1990, pp.12-13.

⁵⁶ Jenny Hope (Medical Correspondent), 'Fear mount as sunbed fans ignore the health risks', *Daily Mail*, 5 October 1990, p.23.

⁵⁷ Anon., 'Construction Contracts: Tottenham leisure centre', 28 March 1988, *Financial Times*, p.30.

⁵⁸ Sara Driver, 'A to Z Polytechnics: Leicester to Newcastle; Good University Guide; Spectrum', *The Times*, 16 June 1988.

⁵⁹ Marks, *Sun-damaged Skin*.

⁶⁰ Box 6953, Jane Cushion, House of Commons Library, 'Skin Cancer Research Paper 96/84', 23 July 1996, p.22.

'converted Victorian mansions ... amidst breath-taking Lakeland scenery'. The *Financial Times* continued to feature these health farm adverts, which were placed next to articles warning about the melanoma 'epidemic'.⁶¹ The solarium industry was worth '£25 million' at the end of 1990, and remained highly valued - even on hot summer days, clients continued to visit sunbed salons.⁶²

Paradoxically, the industries that were amplifying the anti-sunbed research to the public were also the industries encouraging both men and women to secretly use sunbeds. The media, with its demand for and insistence on using culturally attractive reporters to attract more viewers, was an inherent contradiction. Extensive research had been commissioned to assess which appearances were most positively received through TV broadcasts. As tanned appearances were fashionable and were well received by the public, television presenters were strongly encouraged to use sunbeds by their employers. Caroline Righton had been a morning television presenter and was described as 'blonde, bubbly and pretty ... 'committed [and] intelligent'. Speaking on behalf of her male and female colleagues, Righton remarked: 'We were expected to keep a suntan – sunbed sessions were organised for us twice a week'. Righton refused this expected sunbed use. Consequently, her boss did not renew her contract after her six-month probation period.⁶³

Although a tanned complexion was presented as aesthetically positive, the media still framed men's sunbed use as embarrassing and women's as vain and illogical. For instance, when leading politicians made public appearances, television producers advised sunbed sessions or make-up advisors applied their

⁶¹ Lucia van der Post, 'Down on the farm: Lucia van der Post reports on privilege and tranquillity' and 'WEEK FT REPORT – HEALTH AND FITNESS: The Connaught Health Club: A New Health Club in a Prestigious Central London Location', *Financial Times*, 30 July 1988, p.13; Vivien Tomlinson, 'Soaking up the pounds. Healthy or just plain wealthy?', *The Times*, 4 January 1989, p.9; Anon., 'London Property: Lake District – sedgewick', *Financial Times*, 20 January 1990, p.XIV.

⁶² Hope, 'Fears mount as sunbed fans ignore health risks', p.23.

⁶³ Janice Walmsley, 'TV bimbo? No thanks!', *Daily Mail*, 1 December 1989, p.12.

bronzer.⁶⁴ Marketing organisations also continued to include sunbeds as a free 'perk' when advertising for employees.⁶⁵ Although less frequent, some newspaper reporters still recommended sunbeds to improve people's appearances. For instance, in a *Daily Mail* newspaper article titled 'Tips for a wishful traveller', the author advised sunbed sessions 'before trying to impress' new people when travelling.⁶⁶ Yet from the mid-1980s onwards, the media also revealed when politicians or celebrities secretly used sunbeds, aiming to undermine their reputations - especially of men.⁶⁷ In a marital dispute, the wife of Paul Hogan, famously known as Crocodile Dundee, exposed that Hogan's most 'treasured' possession was his 'expensive sunbed', which he used to maintain his full-body tan on TV.⁶⁸

Faced with these mixed messages, the public perhaps unsurprisingly ignored conflicting pressures from medical experts, government campaigns and the media's anti-sunbed factions to develop anti-tanning attitudes. Skin cancer concerns and a gradual moral panic were influencing consumers to discreetly use sunbeds, rather than outrightly stop purchasing or using them.⁶⁹ From the

⁶⁴ Alexandra King, 'Of men, mode and moisturizer. Will the secret of smooth good looks be revealed when Parliament goes public?', *The Times*, 15 February 1988, p.17.

⁶⁵ Angela Mortimer, 'Marketing PA £14000+ perks (swimming pool sunbeds)!', *The Times*, 24 July 1989, p.33.

⁶⁶ Sophia Watson, 'Tips for a wishful traveller', *Daily Mail*, 24 June 1989, p.6.

⁶⁷ In 1985, a working-class miners' leader in Lancaster, Sid Vincent, was scorned for taking advantage of sunbed rentals as he had a tanned complexion during his public appearances, Anon., 'One Way to Keep your Hair on, Arthur', *Daily Mail*, 30 September 1985, p.8; 'Gorgeous' George Hamilton, famous for his perpetual tan, had been accompanied by an unknown young man on holiday. The *Daily Mail* reporter teased that this young man must be Hamilton's sunbed operator, judging from the 'conker brown hue of Mr Hamilton's skin', Sara Barrett, 'Abroad the Collins Marrakesh excess', *Daily Mail*, 28 May 1988, p.12.

⁶⁸ Richard Shears, 'The wife who ran out of tears for the Croc', *Daily Mail*, 18 July 1988, p.3.

⁶⁹ Hope, 'Fears mount as sunbed fans ignore health risks', p.23.

late 1980s to mid-1990s, the government assumed that 'regular consumers tend[ed] to be young, female and relatively affluent'. This information was retrieved from the sunbed firms that the government monitored.⁷⁰ Yet this gendered assumption was problematic. The sunbed firms certainly used women's bodies to advertise sunbeds. Throughout history, commercial industries and the media have used women's sexualised bodies to market most household 'health' and 'beauty' technologies and products.⁷¹ Moreover, as men were often stigmatised for both purchasing and consuming these technologies and products, women were usually the visible purchasers of domestic sunbeds. Men, however, could use the sunbeds in the privacy of their homes.⁷² Men could also privately order sunbeds from trade directories and catalogues, and have them delivered without visiting sunbed shops.⁷³ Finally, men regularly used sunbeds in more public spaces, such as gyms.⁷⁴ Tanned men were highly visible in the public sphere. Nonetheless, by the late 1980s, the media began to circulate and promote a more extreme and condemning representation of a female sunbed consumer - the blonde, work-shy, emotionally cold and heartless 'bimbo'.⁷⁵

The Emerging Moral Panic and Sunbed Stereotype

The government or medical profession was not responsible for the creation and reinforcement of the sunbed stereotype. Medical and government reports had simply stated that the main sunbed consumers were 'young females'. Nonetheless, media reporters knew entertainment and shock tactics to depict

⁷⁰ Jane Cushion, 'Skin Cancer Research Paper 96/84', p.22.

⁷¹ Redmond, 'Thin white women in advertising: deathly corporeality', pp.170-190.

⁷² Andrews and Talbot, *All the World and Her Husband*.

⁷³ *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1988, p.687.

⁷⁴ *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1990, p.458.

⁷⁵ Newby Hands (style and beauty editor), 'Everything a judge should know about bimettes and their pouting older sisters: The full Bimbo teach-in', *Daily Mail*, 27 January 1990, p.12.

the 'typical' sunbed consumer would drive readership interest. The creation of this repellent stereotype also caused moral panic, which might have discouraged consumers from admitting their sunbed use.

By the late 1980s, sunbeds were no longer portrayed as a rational or moral activity. Instead, a sunbed, as an object, was increasingly used to indicate an 'immoral' lifestyle when the term 'immoral' could not be said. In a *Guardian* newspaper article, for instance, a reporter satirised a fictional couple's appearances, their household possessions, and their weekly routines to frame a frivolous and 'party hard lifestyle'. Jason was described as 'a bit of a lad', with a 'gold earring' and 'golden highlights'. The couple had 'their own sunbed installed in the spare bedroom of their flat' in North London and were offended when 'middle-class snobs' assumed they lived in a council flat. During their non-stop weekend parties, they did 'poppers (amyl nitrate), a few bombers (amphetamines)', a little coke and occasionally 'smoked a little [heroin]'. In this article and others like it, sunbeds were associatively linked with 'excessive', 'irresponsible' and 'self-destructive' drug-taking.⁷⁶

Similarly, in a radio show - where the sunbed tan could not speak for itself - a script writer used a sunbed to depict the heartlessness of the 'dumb'

⁷⁶ Helen Chappell, 'Loadsamoney making fun: Third Person', *Guardian*, 11 May 1988, p.16; The song 'Loadsamoney' quickly turned into a catchphrase and was regularly used in a backlash against Thatcherism and the Thatcherite drive for an aspirational and successful working class. The song presented a parody of a vulgar and flashy plasterer, with a cockney-accent, who waved wads of notes at those less fortunate. The song personified working-class (but not middle-to-upper class) 1980s greed, and in parliament, Thatcher used the catchphrase to defend herself and the British economy. In Britain, from the seventh of May 1988, the song was in the 'top 10' of the charts from two weeks and stayed in the charts for seven weeks, Simon Hattenstone, 'Harry Enfield: 'I don't like doing me'', *Guardian*, 25 September 2010. Accessed 19 December 2019: <https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2010/sep/25/harry-enfield-interview>; Anon., 'Harry Enfield. Loadsamoney. Doin' up the house', *Official Charts*, Accessed 19 December 2019: <https://www.officialcharts.com/artist/24899/harry-enfield/>

heroine's best friend. In a *Financial Times* article, an interview with radio script writers revealed that, without costumes or props, they struggled to establish characters to radio listeners. In November 1988, Anthony Minghella had started writing a play called *Cigarettes and Chocolate*. Minghella explained that the protagonist, Gemma, was the 'dumbest heroine since Katrin in *Mother Courage*'. In one of Lorna's monologues, she admitted that she owned a sunbed, which she hid and secretly consumed in the middle of the night. Lorna's mother had committed suicide, and Lorna's inheritance money had been used to create an 'indulgence account'. Not showing any remorse, and in fact making 'cruel' jokes, Lorna admitted that she was grateful for this money as it paid for her 'hair streaked ... a manicure ... silk underwear ... and the sunbed of course'.⁷⁷ Sunbeds users were being framed as venal and uncaring.

Similarly, in a twenty-part series called *Hollywood Sport* (1989), featuring on Yorkshire television, 'everyday' sunbed use was used to frame an 'immoral' protagonist. The weekly series was based on the relationships between two married couples. Francesca (Jane Cunliffe), was 'blonde, beautiful [and] bored' – everyday she visited the sunbed, swimming and sports centre. Francesca was financially supported by her husband's self-made business. She was stereotyped as self-absorbed and adulterous. This undesirable representation was accentuated by the stark contrast of the other wife, Claire (Andrea Gordon), who 'ooze[d] good looks and charm'. Claire was married to Neil, and they were both 'business and squash' partners. Yet Claire's dedication as a 'bright schoolteacher' often 'bruise[d] her husband's ego'. *Hollywood Sports* was one of Britain's first 'interactive' viewer-controlled soap operas, and the first episode ended on a cliff-hanger with three options for audiences to call in and vote. The options included: a 'passionate fling' between Francesca and Neil; Neil's rejecting Francesca because of his loyalty to Claire, or a secret meeting

⁷⁷ B.A. Young, 'Radio: Drama over the airwaves', *Financial Times*, 12 November 1988, p.XXIII; Anthony Minghella, *Minghella Plays: 2: Cigarettes and Chocolate"; Hang-up; What If It's Raining?; Truly Madly Deeply; Mosaic; Days Like These!*, (Bloomsbury, 1997), pp.32-33.

between Francesca and Neil. All these options presented Francesca as immoral, whereas Neil had one option to redeem his integrity.⁷⁸ Moreover, Neil's continuously 'bruised ego' was presented as an acceptable excuse for an affair, directing the audience to empathise with him. Yet Francesca 'cheating' on her husband was unacceptable as she was supported by her husband. In all three viewer-controlled options, the sunbed consumer protagonist was disempowered and demonised, both framed and perceived as the most immoral character.

The Immoral and Nonsensical Act of Sunbed Use

The media's framing of the unethical sunbed stereotype continued into the early 1990s. In 1990, the *Daily Mail* published an article titled: 'Everything a judge should know about bimbettes and their pouting older sisters: The full Bimbo teach-in'. The reporter described a 'bimbo' as an 'attractive but unintelligent or frivolous young woman'. Her relationship status was depicted as always 'available; the plaything of many a bored businessman, aspiring pop star – or even politician'. In court, the judge was apparently confused about the differences between a 'Bimbette, Bimbo and Ageing Bimbette'. This question, shocking both the legal prosecutor and defendant, apparently led to a definition of the three 'types' of women. The *Daily Mail* used different categories, such as 'Looks', 'Lifestyle', 'Hobbies', and 'Boyfriends' to explain their differences. In terms of appearances, all these stigmatised types had a 'sunbed suntan[s]'. In all 'categories', the reporter depicted the 'bimbos' as unintelligent, self-obsessed and against "commitment". Yet they indulged in 'expensive dinners ... expensive clubs ... gifts, credit cards and holidays offered' by men. In later life, these 'bimbos' became alone. Their life aspirations were based on their

⁷⁸ Out of 1,133 votes, the 'secret meeting' option won, with 450 votes, *Hollywood Sports*, (Director: Cather Morshed, Producer: Sarah Dole, Story Editor: Patrea Smallacombe), Yorkshire Television, Aired 6.30pm Fridays from April 1989 until May 1990; Deborah Ross, 'The soap you can write as you watch', *Daily Mail*, 20 April 1989, p.28.

Two relatively young women were the cartoon's centrepiece in front of a crowd of people, both cocktails and small talk flowing. The men were old, bald, dressed in suits and spectacles – one with a cigar in his hand. These wealth reflecting men were accompanied by their 'trophy wives', 'gold digging' girlfriends and 'escorts'. The two 'Barbie doll' lookalikes wore stilettos and spider-like eyelashes. Both had sunbed tans, which accentuated their bright white teeth as they grinned at each another. They both had long bleached blonde hair – reflecting high maintenance. The women's chiselled faces and pneumatic figures suggested plastic surgery and breast implants. The cartoonist presented the women as brainless 'arm candy', highlighted by the cartoon's caption. This dialogue emphasised that these women were artificial, shallow and vacuous. Both women were posing – one arched back slightly, accentuating her breasts, and the other woman's hand rested on one hip. This curving of her arm directed the viewers focus, again, to her breasts.

The bodily representation of these women radiated vanity, entitlement and confidence. This cartoon illustrated that stereotyped sunbed 'bimbos' were not intelligent enough to self-fund their 'indulgent' beauty regimes and lifestyles. Instead these women lived precariously and unproductively through the financial support of older and richer men.⁸⁰ This stereotyping continued after the 1990s, evident by the villain – Fiona, the evil stepmother - from *Cinderella Story* (2004). Fiona stole her stepdaughter's inheritance and college fund to purchase both minor surgeries and her baby pink sunbed, which she regularly used.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Williams, "Silicone of course ...".

⁸¹ Sam Montgomery (Cinderella) lived in Los Angeles, with Hal, her wealthy widowed father who owned a popular sports-themed diner. Hal then married Fiona, a 'vain gold digger'. During the 1994 Northridge earthquake, Hal was killed and, having supposedly left no will, Fiona received his house, the diner and Sam. The film began eight years later, when Sam was forced to work at her stepmother's diner. Sam was regularly bullied by her step-family. Fiona used the inheritance to live as if she were rich. She spent the inheritance on minor facial surgeries and even refused to save water during the ongoing drought – Fiona was depicted as a drain on public resources. She also transformed Hal's diner into something befitting her own self-image - all pink. Sam was

Although both government and medical reports established that the regular sunbed users were affluent, in all fictional accounts, this wealth was unearned. 'Bimbos' acquired wealth from other financial sources, mainly wealthy businessmen or the deceased.⁸² In the media during the late 1980s and 1990s, in genuine and fictional accounts of 'wealthy', 'successful', 'intelligent' or 'diligent' women, a reference to sunbed consumption was not mentioned. This was not because women from affluent demographics did not use sunbeds. Instead, this was because sunbeds no longer reflected a credible rational or moral worth, which contrasted to the early 1980s representation of sunbeds. Instead, the women who were judged to have repellent personalities and lifestyles were framed by the 'immoral' and 'self-destructive' use of sunbeds. This history of sunbeds demonstrates, yet again, that the media uses the representations of both women's and men's consumptions, possessions and

secretly saving for college. Yet Fiona stole Sam's hard-earned savings to fund her self-indulgent lifestyle and lied to Sam, saying that her college application was rejected, *Cinderella Story*, (Director: Mark Rosman, Producer: Clifford Werber, Hujnt Lowry and Dylan Sellars, Writer: by Leigh Dunlamp), Dylan Sellers Productions and Clifford Werber Products, Warner Bros. Pictures, Released 20 August 2004 (UK).

⁸² In the 1990s, confident and 'high maintenance' women in mixed media were rarely depicted as successful 'career-driven' women, reaping their own financial reward to pay for their own 'beauty' and 'health' consumptions. During the early 2000s, on the rare occasions that they were they were presented as either: emotionally cold; undergoing some personal and moral crisis, or they were secretly being supported by their wealthy family or a man, *Miss Congeniality* (Director: Donald Petrie, Screenplay: Marc Lawrence, Caryn Lucas, Katie Ford), Released 23 March 2001 (UK); *Legally Blonde* (Director: Robert Luketic, Screenplay: Karen McCullah and Kirsten Smith), Released 26 October 2001 (UK); *Devil Wears Prada*, (Director: David Frankel, Story by: Lauren Weisberger, Screenplay: Ailine Brosh McKenna), Released 5 October 2006 (UK).

everyday rituals to frame their moral worth.⁸³ Moreover, for men, unless they were working-class, sunbed use was only fleetingly mentioned by reporters, deployed as a shock tactic to mock their 'metrosexual' tendencies or vanity and undermine their masculinity. A suggestion or visual depiction of men 'regularly' using sunbeds rarely appeared, whereas women's 'regular' sunbed use was framed more derogatively, yet the consumption was also presented as expected from an 'unintelligent' woman.

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated that the public increasingly believed that governing their health was their responsibility, yet there was a greater shift towards preventative measures. The public, at least, wanted more health education to inform their lifestyle choices.⁸⁴ Although government and medical officials held back from creating moral panic and stigmatised stereotypes, the media's translation of their 'health messages' arrived with gender, class, race, age and sexuality-bound judgement. Moreover, these judgemental broadcasts were indirectly endorsed by the 'scientifically' confirmed link between skin cancer and sunbeds. The media presented the immoral sunbed stereotype as 'irresponsible', 'self-absorbed' and 'self-destructive' consumer, making lifestyle choices that took advantage of others in the community. Nonetheless, these scare and stigma tactics failed.

⁸³ In fiction, there is a longstanding history of women being framed as immoral when they have newly entered male-oriented 'public' spaces. The literature then demonstrates that they were therefore deserving of the unfortunate consequences. These stigmatised stereotypes and moral panics emerged when external factors, such as financial opportunities and social mobility, permitted women's geographical, financial and social freedom, Elizabeth Dewolfe, 'Disappointed love and dangerous temptations: Textile factories and true crime', *Nursing Clio*, 8 August 2019. Accessed 8 August 2019: <https://nursingclio.org/2019/08/08/disappointed-love-and-dangerous-temptations-textile-factories-and-true-crime/>

⁸⁴ Bunker, 'Health: Attitudes Towards Health & Health Education', p.2, pp.9-12.

In part, they failed because anti-sunbed messages were competing with over a decade of reinforcement, alongside persistent visual messages, that sunbeds were desirable, 'healthy' and 'safe'. Consequently, consumer attitudes and everyday rituals proved difficult to change. To this day, sunbed manufacturers still advertise that sunbeds provide a protective and ideal pre-holiday and post-holiday top-up tan.⁸⁵ With these conflicting messages, unsurprisingly, consumers continued to use sunbeds, yet they went to greater efforts to conceal their consumption.⁸⁶

Although the 1980s concluded without any hint that sunbeds were addictive, or that sunbed use was disordered, the increasingly discreet nature of sunbed use would make it easier to pathologise and further stigmatise consumers. In turn, secret sunbed use would fit the early 1990s 'addiction'-criteria, which medical experts were developing to explain self-destructive consumptions, both overlooking commercial pressures and how they were historically introduced. Moreover, the creation of the sunbed stereotype would later influence which participants were chosen by healthcare professionals in their 'scientific' experiments, to better understand 'sunbed addiction'.

⁸⁵ Chelle Stewart-Lahmers, 'Establish your skin type and plan your tan!', *The Tanning Shop*, 10 December 2013, <https://thetanningshop.co.uk/establish-skin-type-plan-tan/> (Accessed 16 May 2017).

⁸⁶ During the 1990s, dermatologists continued to be concerned about the rise of melanoma in Britain, which they attributed to the public's resilient sunbed use, B. L. Diffey, 'Epidemiology and Health Services Research A quantitative estimate of melanoma mortality from ultraviolet A sunbed use in the U.K.', *British Journal of Dermatology*, 149, (2003), pp.578-581.

Chapter 5: ‘Fake’ Tan Industry, the Revival of Tanning Culture, and the Birth of ‘Tanorexia’ in the Print Press (1991-1994).

Introduction

“No matter how hard we try to convince ourselves that pale really is interesting, it is impossible not to envy the nut brown legs of women who tan effortlessly at the first sight of sun”, **Louise Atkinson, *Daily Mail*, June 1993.**¹

“We have been aware of the dangers of sunbeds for years. We don’t promote using them at all... we now recommend fake tanning, which is so advanced that you actually get a natural looking colour”, **Eve Cameron, the fashion and beauty editor of *Cosmopolitan*, March 1994.**²

During the early-to-mid 1990s, tanning advertising and subsequently tanning culture spread across the British print press once again, but this time coverage was about ‘fake’ tans, not their sunbed cousins. The media and the public typically described a ‘fake’ tan as a tan that had not developed from UV-exposure (i.e., sunbathing or sunbeds). Fake tan industries, advertising in the print press, often used anti-sunbed medical claims to attract the sunbed industry’s consumers. These tanning technologies included ‘fake tanning creams’ (also lotions and sprays), tanning ‘boosters’ (a cream) and tanning tablets.³ Yet, the newspaper journalists who supported fake tan and wrote against UV-tanning were providing visual contradictions, as the accompanying

¹ Louise Atkinson, ‘GOOD HEALTH. Tomorrow’s tan. Can an injection really give you a suntan?’, *Daily Mail*, 22 June 1993, p.35.

² Richard Duce, ‘Sunbed users ignore danger.’, *The Times*, 9 March 1994, p.7.

³ In this thesis I will use other terms to describe ‘fake tanning’ lotions, creams and sprays, such as ‘self-tanning’, ‘tanning serums’ and ‘alternative tanning’.

images in their articles showcased glamorous models suntanning on beaches. Scientists also began to use their institutional research funding to develop innovative tanning methods that apparently protected the skin against cancer, such as tanning injections and new tanning pills. Ironically, the fake tan industry continued to advertise that a 'natural'-looking tan was desirable, and their competition, sunbeds, were already a long-established, favourable and reliable 'natural' tanning method for the public. The media also continued to promulgate messages about sunbed tanning to the public. Some newspaper and magazine reporters promoted sunbed tanned skin as attractive. They complained about their own 'paleness' and admitted that it was a struggle to convince readers that 'pale' was at least 'interesting'. They also confessed that they envied people with tans and went to great lengths to both develop and maintain a tan themselves.⁴ Public sunbed salons, especially new franchises, were now more widely used than household sunbeds. The franchised sunbed industry, although smaller in numbers and only indirectly and reluctantly supported by the media, remained commercially powerful. The most resilient sunbed franchises were quietly thriving as their customers continued to visit them.

The rising fear of skin cancer drove both medical experts and the media to distinguish between 'healthy' ('fake') and 'unhealthy' (UV-B and now UV-A) tanning. Dermatologists also wanted to create a line between the medical and therapeutic, and the commercial and aesthetic use of sunbeds. In the *BMJ* and national print and broadcast media, these medical experts now confidently presented sunbed use as life-threatening and the sunbed industry as deceitful because of their misleading health claims. However, many members of the public continued to ignore these claims and many sunbed-providing industries, such as gyms, did not respond.

⁴ Anon., 'Fashion editors' secrets – beauty', *Observer*, 22 March 1992, p.118; Louise Atkinson, 'GOOD HEALTH. A unique guide to the latest in fitness, health and medicine. An early warning sunburn system.', *Daily Mail*, 19 May 1992, p.21; Imogen Faux, 'Revival Strategies', *Daily Mail*, 31 December 1992, p.26.

From the early 1990s, newspaper journalists used the term ‘sunbed tan’ incrementally to derogatively describe men and women. Media reporters may not have been able to distinguish between a sunbed and natural tan, yet they used the term to create shame and stigma. The media depicted that these ‘excessive’ sunbed users had shameful and immoral lifestyles. This sunbed stereotype was also applied to ‘shrewish’ women and murderous ‘metrosexual’ men in fictional novels.⁵ Through evaluating these patterns, I argue that these gendered stereotypes extend the histories of women - and ‘metrosexual’ men - being criticised for ‘vain’ and ‘feminine’ consumptions – thus creating a ‘sanction for cultural values’.⁶ Framing cosmetic sunbed use as a feminine, egotistical and disgraceful consumption was perhaps also intended as a preventative strategy, aiming to both condemn those who continued to use sunbeds, and to improve their long-term physical health by shaming them into compliance with health advice.⁷ Like the previous chapters, this chapter evaluates the changing representation of the sunbed industry and their consumers. Analysis of the mass media (public statements, adverts, images and representations) and other public venues most usefully unveils these changes in public life and consumption.⁸

⁵ David Wilson, *Love and Nausea* (Abacus, 1995); *American Psycho* was originally published in 1991, Brett Easton Ellis, *American Psycho* (Picador Classic, 2014).

⁶ Charles Rosenberg, ‘Illness, Society, and History’, in Charles Rosenberg and Janet Golden (eds), *Framing Disease: Studies in Cultural History: Health and Medicine in American Society* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), p.xiii; The creation of the ‘Tanorexic’ stereotype overlaps with stereotypes attached to the sufferers of hysteria and eating disorders presented in media representations, Andrew Scull, *Hysteria: The Biography* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Richard Gordon, *Disorders Anatomy of a Social Epidemic* (2nd edn.) (Massachusetts, Blackwell, 2000).

⁷ Rosenberg, ‘Illness, Society, and History’, p.xiv.

⁸ Kenneth Lipartito asserts that media sources, rather than company records, allow scholars to invaluablely trace the complex representations of an industry in the eyes of the public, Lipartito, ‘Chapter 12: Historical Sources and Data’.

Some reporters both developed and intensified the immoral sunbed consumer stereotype into a pathological 'sunbed addict' - a group of dermatologists from 1991 onwards endorsed this identity. The media often broadcast 'sunbed addiction' under the catchier and more provocative term 'Tanorexia', which they predominantly framed as a female affliction. When men explained that they used sunbeds, they were often stigmatised yet rarely presented as 'addicted'.⁹ Tanorexia first emerged as a colloquial term in the 1980s.¹⁰ Both medical experts and the media defined 'sunbed addiction' as an obsessive desire to acquire and maintain a permanent deep tan by using tanning machines. Individuals with this 'psychological disorder' perceived themselves as pale, regardless of how darkened their skin became. In 1991, a senior consultant psychiatrist in Glasgow, Dr Prim Misra, claimed he was the first medical authority to coin the term in Britain.¹¹

The Revival of Tanning Culture and the Resilient Sunbed Franchises

During the early-to-mid 1990s, both medical experts and the media confirmed that sunbeds were a potential cause of skin cancer, mainly malignant melanoma. Simultaneously, 'safer' tanning industries, such as 'fake tanning creams', tanning 'boosters' and tanning tablets began to advertise in newspapers. Newspaper reporters also interviewed scientists to share their ongoing research about future tanning injections, pills, capsules and even plasters. Some of these tanning methods existed long before the sunbed industry, such as 'fake tan' mixtures and tanning pills. However, their early 1990s successors were newly developed, providing improved versions of these

⁹ Alex Bellow, 'In the land of the giants', *Observer*, 28 November 1993, p.133.

¹⁰ 'Tanorexia' emerged as a colloquial term in the USA press in the 1980s, Glenn Collins, 'Metropolitan Diary', *New York Times*, 2 July 1980; Scott Harris, 'TANOREXIA: Having A Golden Tan Can Become a Compulsion for Some Salon Patrons', *Los Angeles Times*, 25 August 1989, p.2.

¹¹ Anon., 'Girl of 8 are dying for tans on a sunbed', *Daily Express*, 26 June 2004.

past products. In the press, medical experts, science researchers and the reporters encouraged these 'safer' tanning serums and attacked the carcinogenic sunbed industry. The 'fake tan' industries used this support to attract both the general public and the sunbed industry's client base by offering a 'healthier' and entirely 'safe' alternative to sunbeds. But these new tanning industries, still in the early stages of product development, did not have a favourable reputation for providing a failsafe 'natural' looking tan.

Instead, journalists' reporting on these 'new' tanning industries reinforced the public's fixation with tanning. Regardless of the 'hazardous' history of sunbeds, the suntanning public already believed that sunbeds were an effective method to acquire a 'natural'-looking suntan. Moreover, sunbeds continued to feature in health and fitness venues; little advertising expenditure was required to perpetuate their use. Consumer demand remained; a more resilient, supportive and low-risk franchising approach had emerged; new types of technologically advanced sunbeds had launched, and finally, sunbed providers continued to advertise their health benefits, which consumers often believed.¹²

Tanning Creams, Lotions and Sprays for Household Use

In this period, newspaper reporters began to interview and publish beauty experts' knowledge of tanning serums to support the industry. In 1991, the style and beauty editor of the *Daily Mail* revealed her past and present experiences of 'fake tanning' creams in the 'Femail Bodytalk' section. Newby Hands was 15-years old when she first used fake tan in 1981. After 'three hours' her skin turned a 'patchy, pale yellow' and the following morning she was an 'attractive shade of orange'. Hers was such an unwelcome experience that she avoided fake tan for a decade. In 1991, however, she had grown aware of the

¹² Sills, 'The six-minute tanning chamber', p.36; Geraldine Bedell, 'Real Life – The British Way to Burn', *Independent on Sunday*, 4 July 1993, p.20; Louise Atkinson, 'A healthy, all year tan – or basking in ignorance about the risk of skin cancer', *Daily Mail*, 9 March 1994, p.17.

‘potentially hazardous effect of even short-term sunbathing’. This encouraged her to trial a few ‘dramatically’ improved and ‘totally safe’ fake tans.

First, Hands interviewed Alison Young, a skin beauty specialist employed by Clarins. Clarins, a French luxury company, sold their skin care, cosmetics and perfume products in high-end department stores. Young explained how their tanning serum functioned, emphasising that it was safe. The “fading colour” of the fake tan apparently demonstrated that only the top “superficial” layer of skin was stained, proving that the serum was “harmless”. Next, the reporter interviewed a ‘technical development advisor’, who was employed by L’Oréal. L’Oréal, another French company, was one of the largest international providers of cosmetics, focusing on hair care and colour, skin care, sun protection, make-up and perfume. L’Oréal’s advisor explained why their new tanning serums were superior to their 1980s predecessors. The developers had now “stabilised” the chemical (dihydroxyacetone better known as “DHA”) and added “good quality moisturisers”. This prevented the skin from turning “yellow” and made their fake tan “easier to apply”. Finally, they had masked the tanning serums’ historically infamous “metallic” smell with different perfumes.

Hands and the industry ‘experts’ presented these fake tans as a safer alternative to sunbeds. Yet the final paragraph of her article contradicted this message. To achieve the top result, Hands advised ‘natural’ tanning before applying tanning serums. She concluded that tanning creams ‘work[ed] best when used over an existing (real) tan, no matter how light’. Hands, however, did instruct readers to use high sun protection and limit their sun exposure hours. The image chosen for this Daily Mail article, occupying a third of the page, featured a white, conventionally attractive, slim and blonde woman. Laying on a sandy beach, she wore a black and white swimsuit, emphasising her light tan. She smiled as she arched her head upwards towards the sun, which lit her face.¹³ These types of images were used for almost every anti-sunbed and anti-

¹³ Newby Hands presented a brief history of the ‘first’ fake tan, followed by an accessible ‘scientific’ explanation of how fake tan creams tanned the skin, Newby

sunbathing newspaper article, emphasising the contrast between the anti-tanning rhetoric and the visual glorification of a tan.

Tanning Creams, Lotions and Sprays Applied in Beauty Salons

By 1992, the British public had apparently spent £3.6 million on 'self-tanning' products. A year later, self-tanning was allegedly the 'fastest growing sector in the sun care market'. Moreover, the use of these tanning serums had shifted from a ridiculed household consumption - taking place 'in the privacy of your own bathroom whilst standing on your oldest towel' - to a salon service. In these beauty salons, a beauty expert skilfully applied fake tan professionally in 'firm [and] smooth sweeps'. These 'superior' tanning creams were compared to the 'orange ... dirty green-brown' self-tan lotions of the 1980s. The advanced tanning lotions no longer resulted in 'blotch[y]' skin, 'streaky... orange fingers' and 'white bits on the back of ... calves'.¹⁴

In 1993, in another *Daily Mail* article in the 'Femail Bodytalk' section, a journalist interviewed Katherine Neighbour, a Decléor beauty therapist who owned a beauty 'treatment' room. Decléor was another skincare brand owned by L'Oréal. Neighbour remarked that her clients used her tanning services because they did not want to expose themselves to ultraviolet light, yet they wanted the "psychological and aesthetic benefits of a light tan". In the same

Hands, 'FEMAIL bodytalk. Tanning without the tears. How to keep that golden glow all year round', *Daily Mail*, 30 May 1991, p.23; Atkinson, 'GOOD HEALTH. Tomorrow's tan', p.35, In another *Daily Mail* article two years later, even more histories were uncovered to explain the most popular 'fake tan' methods. The 'romans' reportedly used walnut oil; women during the war used 'gravy browning to darken their legs'; during the 1970s, tea bags were applied using a 'ready-made stain pad', and finally, people consumed Betacarotene supplements, or huge quantities of carrots, to develop a yellow tinge, Atkinson, 'GOOD HEALTH. Tomorrow's tan', p.35.

¹⁴ Katie Hayward, 'Femail Bodytalk. A golden tan – and no streaks' and Sills, 'The Six Minute Chamber', *Daily Mail*, 6 May 1993, p.36.

article, the reporter also interviewed Kelly Walsh - a spokeswoman for Ambre Solaire, the sun-care strand of Garnier, a French hair care and skin care company. In the 1970s, L'Oréal acquired Garnier. Walsh asserted that Ambre Solaire now provided at least three more shades to suit different skin types, emphasising that they were close to matching an individual's 'natural tan'. The *Daily Mail* reporter, Katie Hayward, claimed that she was a 'sun-loather'. Yet Hayward endured the 'Decleor self-tanning treatment' in the beauty salon herself to explain the process to her readers. The reporter remarked that her self-tan had successfully lasted one week but should last three weeks. She concluded that her tanning experience 'match[ed] a sunbathing session at the beach'.

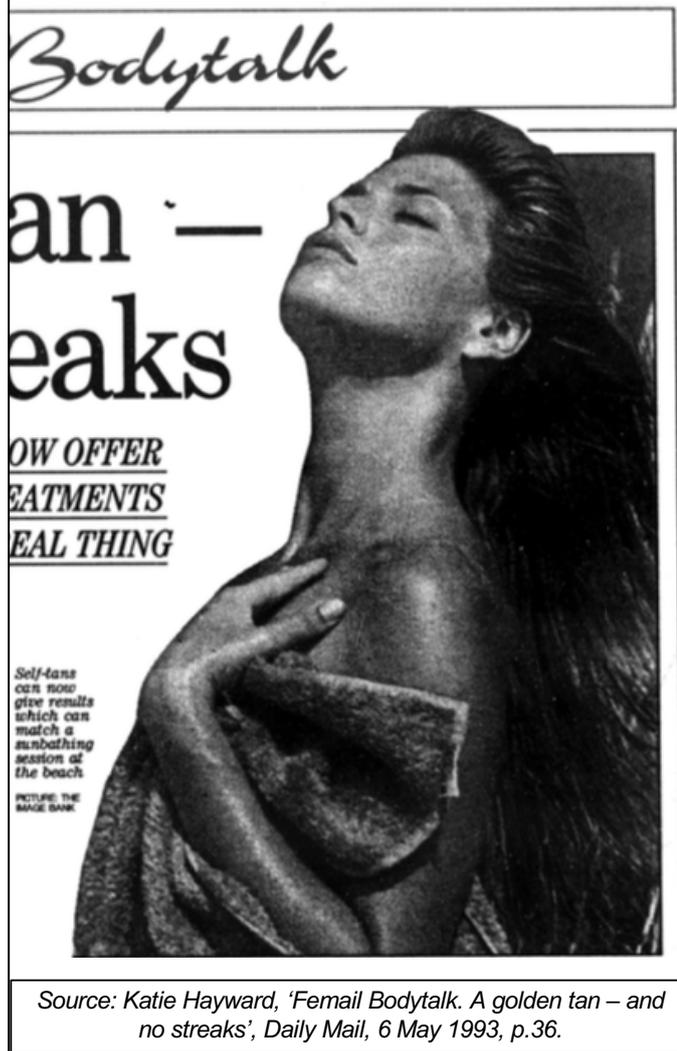
Directly underneath this article that encouraged tanning serums, a client from *The Tanning Shop*, Amanda Sills, had published a small sensationalised report praising the new 'Hex Honeytan' sunbed. This strategically placed article ironically demonstrated that both tanning industries were aware in their competition. Sill described the 'Hex Honeytan' sunbed as safer, quicker, stress free, and both more hygienic and comfortable. Despite this obvious rivalry, both articles were inadvertently supporting each other by promoting tanning culture. Next to these two articles, an image of the same white model from Hand's previous *Daily Mail* article featured, occupying a quarter of the page. This time the image only captured her torso and shimmering gold shoulders. Topless, the model covered her breasts with a towel. Her hand lightly and 'femininely' brushed her collar bones. Again, eyes closed, she was arching her head upwards towards the sun. The shadowing accentuated her tanned neck, jawline and cheek bones (**Figure 5.1**).¹⁵ The image insisted that 'bronzed' was still 'beautiful'.¹⁶

A few months later, the *Daily Mail* published another article on professionally applied self-tan, again, on the 'Femail Special' page. During the

¹⁵ Ibid., p.36.

¹⁶ Cameron, McGuire, 'Are you dying to get a suntan?', p.170.

Figure 5.1 A tanned model enjoying the sun on a *Daily Mail* article promoting tanning serums (May 1993).



early 1990s, this article's journalist, Louise Atkinson, regularly published articles to support the alternative tanning industries against the sunbed industry. Atkinson forcefully discouraged sunbeds stating: 'do not invest in a pre-holiday course of sunbed treatments'. Instead, she advised professional self-tanning, which apparently lasted for the first 'three to five days' of a holiday. Different from other articles, most of this article warned about the ageing and skin cancer effects of the 'UVA rays' from sunbeds. Nonetheless, she

was suggesting how readers could avoid looking 'pallid' at the beginning of a holiday before they could 'naturally' tan under the sun. Atkinson did explain the most protective UV-A, UV-B and SPF rated sun creams, referencing *The Body Shop's* 'Be safe under the sun' campaign and their new sun cream range. Atkinson also warned that 'fake tan' was not a sun cream and did not protect from UV rays. Although most of the article warned against the ill effects of sunbeds and suntanning culture, the large image on the page still featured an extremely tanned woman. Again, the anti-sunbed health message contrasted with the visual of the attractive and darkly tanned model, accentuated by her light denim shorts, low-cut white swimsuit and bright white teeth as she

smiled.¹⁷

'Tan boosters' (1991)

In 1991, a company called Health & Beauty Direct (a division of Anthony Green & Company Ltd.) began to regularly advertise their 'tan boosters' in newspapers, including the *Observer* and *Daily Mail* (**Figure 5.2**). The advert described the tan booster as a 'revolutionary' cream and a 'sensational development in tanning technology'. The 'new innovation' apparently sped up the 'natural tanning process by up to 10 times!'. The advert wanted to set apart tan boosters from other tanning industries. In capital letters, they boldly stated 'NO PILLS – NO DYES – NO COLOURANTS – NO SUNLAMPS'. These adverts repetitively emphasised the 'natural'-ness of the cream. The advert included two testimonies, both from women. One of the women, 'Anna Gooch', claimed that she was a tan booster convert, as her previous tanning method, sunbeds, both dried out her skin and gave her "great worries about skin cancer". Health & Beauty Direct were confident about their product. If a purchaser was not satisfied, they could mail back a 'partly used bottle' for a full refund 'without question'.

In the advert, they explained how tan boosters worked. First, the purchaser had to rub the cream into their implicitly distasteful 'pale white skin'. The skin would then react with low levels of light to produce melanin, turning the skin brown. Again, the advert reported that this cream was different from the 1980s' orange tanning creams. The gradual tan booster could be applied 'three or four' times to control, build and maintain a tan which lasted 'up to 8 weeks'. Apparently, the 'all-over ... rich ... deep luxurious ... golden brown' would be visually the same as a real tan. The tan booster could work in under six hours and on cloudy days. The advert argued that this was quicker than 'normal

¹⁷ Louise Atkinson, 'Femail special: Day two of our ten-day quick weight-loss plan, a healthy tan and exercises for thighs. Protect your skin with a new tan', *Daily Mail*, 13 July 1993, pp.42-43.

Figure 5.2 'Tan Booster' advert in the Observer (August 1991).

TAN NATURALLY WITHOUT THE SUN

— *Indoors or Out* —

TAN BOOSTER is a brilliant new innovation that speeds up the natural tanning process by up to 10 times! NOW – you can even tan in the shade – WITHOUT risk of sunburn.

At last - there is no need to spend days on the beach trying to achieve a healthy looking sun tan. Revolutionary **TAN BOOSTER** will now do it for you in as little as **6 hours**. An attractive, dark golden all-over tan can be achieved **WITHOUT** laying in the sun for hours on end – **OR** exposing your skin to harmful damaging UV rays that can cause burning, peeling and skin irritation. You can achieve a deep luxurious tan – even on dull cloudy days.

Furthermore, this is all possible **WITHOUT** taking capsules or pills, applying artificial dyes or colourants or using expensive sunbeds, solariums and lamps. Within a few hours of applying **TAN BOOSTER** you will begin to tan gradually and evenly to a deep golden brown.

How Does It Work?

TAN BOOSTER is a sensational development in tanning technology. It reacts with low levels of light to produce melanin which turns your skin brown. Unlike normal tanning which takes an average 3 days exposure before your complexion starts changing from red to brown, **TAN BOOSTER** gives you a completely natural tan within 6 hours of application. There's no visible difference between a **TAN BOOSTER** tan and the real thing! The effect is gradual, so you need three or four applications to build up your colour to a rich deep tan. The more times you apply **TAN BOOSTER** the darker you'll get.

Factor 4 Protection

TAN BOOSTER also protects your skin from the strong UV rays that burn. If you use it in strong direct sunlight you will tan even faster – but still in complete safety. **FURTHERMORE** – by having a **FACTOR 4** rating, **TAN BOOSTER** acts also as a sun screen.

Read what delighted recent users say about **TAN BOOSTER**.

"Just a quick note to say how good I have found your **Tan Booster** product, it really has revolutionised tanning for me, instead of sun beds that not only dry out my skin badly and give me great worries about skin cancer."
— **Anna Gnoch**

"I would like to tell you that I am extremely pleased with my last order (**Tan Booster**). I have a beautiful all over natural tan and as a Promotional Model this is extremely important to me. Your Product is Brilliant."
— **Angela Leech**

Send Off Coupon Today

One bottle contains enough cream to cover up to **36 FULL BODY** treatments. If you only require face, arms and legs to be tanned - the one bottle will last considerably longer. **REMEMBER - TAN BOOSTER** is currently obtained only from **HEALTH & BEAUTY DIRECT** by mail order.

Post the coupon **TODAY** to: **HEALTH & BEAUTY DIRECT** (Dept 08220), Sutton Fields, HULL, HU8 6XD.

Our Guarantee of 100% Satisfaction

We promise that you will achieve a deep golden tan within days of applying **TAN BOOSTER** – even in shady conditions. If for any reason whatsoever you require your money returned, send us your partly used bottle for a full refund without question.

TELEPHONE ORDER HOTLINE
CREDIT CARD HOLDERS
0482 822158
(24 HOURS)

HEALTH & BEAUTY DIRECT

YES – I wish to achieve a rich golden tan with **TAN BOOSTER**. Please send me as indicated

1 BOTTLE at £14.95 + £1 p&p. SAVE £5 – 2 BOTTLES at £23.90 + £1 p&p.

SAVE £10 – 4 BOTTLES at £42.80 + £1 p&p.

Allow 21 days delivery

I enclose cheque/PDs for £_____ payable to **HEALTH & BEAUTY DIRECT** or debit my **ACCESS/VISA** card.

Number _____

Signature _____ Card Expiry Date _____

Mrs/Miss/Mr _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

HEALTH & BEAUTY DIRECT (Dept 08220) Sutton Fields, HULL, HU8 6XD
A division of Anthony Green & Company Ltd. Reg. in England No. 1780078.

ONE EXTRA LARGE BOTTLE only **£14.95** + £1 p&p.

SAVE £5

TWO EXTRA LARGE BOTTLES only **£25.90** + £1 p&p

NO PILLS - NO DYES
NO COLOURANTS
NO SUNLAMPS

Rub **TAN BOOSTER** into your pale white skin. 6 HOURS later a beautiful golden tan starts to appear.

Source: Anon., 'TAN NATURALLY WITHOUT THE SUN', The Observer, 11 August 1991, p.34.

tanning', which purportedly required '3 days [of sun] exposure'. Moreover, the purchaser could now tan in the shade without the 'harmful damaging UV rays', which 'cause[d] burning, peeling and skin irritation'. The tan booster was also a sunscreen, with 'factor 4 protection'. The advert offered bulk bargain discounts

to encourage more purchases.¹⁸ The extra-large bottle was advertised as a worthwhile investment as it apparently covered a 'FULL BODY 30 TIMES'. Anyone could purchase the cream, regardless of their work hours. A discreet purchaser could call their twenty-four-hour telephone hotline or effortlessly cut out, fill in and post the attached coupon for a mail order. Although women were present in the adverts, men could discreetly order the creams.

In one 'tanning booster' advert, one third of the advert featured a slim and tanned model in a swimsuit on the beach. She was standing under a palm tree in the shade with a sports cap on her head, resembling a 'sensible' and cancer-aware beachgoer. With the sea and clouds in the background, she gazed at a man looking back at her. The provider of the second testimony was a "promotional model". As a 'tan booster' user, she remarked that 'beautiful' women depended on this product.¹⁹

The tan booster cream confidently deployed the same 'rational' and luxury-seeking consumer discourse as the early 1980s' sunbed adverts. Both 'revolutionary new' technologies, at the time, were quick and required minimal effort. The consumer could control the level of tanning through repetitive applications and reportedly avoided any health risks. The cream, in fact, 'protected' sunbathers from 'the strong UV rays that burn'. The advert also described the cream as long-lasting, luxurious and 'rich' (see Chapter One). Anyone could easily and discreetly order the cream at a discounted price. Although this 'tan booster' cream was attempting to provide a superior method of tanning, and attacked yet imitated the sunbed industry, its advertising

¹⁸ One extra-large bottle 'only' cost £14.95, whereas two cost '£25.90', saving the purchaser '£5'. The largest discount was four bottles for the cost of '£42.80' (saving '£20'), Anon., 'TAN NATURALLY WITHOUT THE SUN – Indoors or Out', *Observer*, 11 August 1991, p.34.

¹⁹ In the second 'tan booster' advert, a face-shot of another attractive young woman with light hair and full lips was presented in a 'before' and 'after' image. The darkened contrast of the 'after' photo emphasised that the product would successfully tan their users, Anon., 'TAN NATURALLY WITHOUT THE SUN', *Daily Mail*, 20 April 1991, p.15.

possibly encouraged sunbed consumption. Ironically, in bold font, to attract the attention of the reader, the advert advised that the cream would '**tan [the consumer] even faster**' if they bathed under 'strong direct sunlight'. This was, of course, 'still in complete safety'. Consequently, although 'tan boosters' were competing against the sunbed industry, some people combined these two technologies to develop a 'deeper' tan.²⁰ More significantly, they were consuming the UV rays under the false impression that their skin was protected from radiation.²¹

Tanning tablets (1992)

During the summer of 1993, on the *Daily Mail's* 'Femail Forum' page, a company called Health Post Ltd were advertising their 'golden tan tablets'. The company was based in Godalming in Surrey. The tablets contained 'L-Tyrosine', which, like the tan booster cream, reportedly sped and enhanced the body's own natural tanning process to produce more melanin. Typical of early 1990s UV-tanning rhetoric, the advert confirmed that sunrays were 'very dangerous'. Yet as the tablets did not require the sun, they were 'completely safe'. The advert listed in bullet points: 'No more burning or peeling', 'No need to worry about premature skin ageing', 'No need for expensive sunbeds or solaria' and finally 'No more pasty white skin'. The tablets cost a similar price to the tan booster cream and could be ordered in the same discreet way.²² The advertising image, again, presented a darkly tanned slim white model – the tan was emphasised by her stark white thong. Like the models in the other tanning

²⁰ Steve Tooze, 'Tanorexia', *Daily Mail*, 16 May 1996, pp.44-45.

²¹ Anon., 'TAN NATURALLY WITHOUT THE SUN', *Daily Mail*, 20 April 1991, p.15; Anon., 'TAN NATURALLY WITHOUT THE SUN', *Observer*, 11 August 1991, p.34.

²² Three courses of tanning tablets cost £17.90. Again, the tablets could be easily purchased through a telephone order or by cutting and mailing out the promotional coupon. A discount was also offered – for every two courses ordered, one course was provided for free, Anon., 'No need to ever get sunburnt. Golden Tan. Completely Safe and Without the Sun', *Daily Mail*, 4 June 1992, p.34.

advert, she tilted her head upwards towards a light source. The light subtly touched her face, and the top of her shoulder and hip (Figure 5.3). The advert criticised the sunbed industry and reflected a concern about skin cancer, yet both presented untanned skin as embarrassing and visually depicted suntanning as desirable – a contradiction in itself.²³ The media was still glamorising both an ‘all over’ and ‘all year round’ tan.

Figure 5.3 ‘Golden Tan Tablets’ advert in the *Daily Mail* (June 1992).

No need to ever get sunburnt

GOLDEN TAN

**Completely Safe
and Without
the Sun**



Introductory Offer
One Golden Tan Course just **£8.95 Post Free**

*** Buy Two Courses and get an extra *
one completely free of charge**

*** Just £17.90 Post Free *
for three Golden Tan Courses**

Golden Tan Tablets have been especially formulated to speed up and enhance the body's own natural tanning process. Golden Tan Tablets contain L.Tyrosine which has been found to help the body produce Melanin - and the more melanin the more tanned the skin becomes.

Golden Tan works without you needing to sizzle in the sun! More and more research indicates that over exposure to some of the sun's harmful rays can be very dangerous. At last here is a simple way of having that Golden Tan which is so often associated with that "just back from holiday look."

**USE GOLDEN TAN TABLETS FOR THAT SAFE ALL YEAR ROUND
GORGEOUS TAN . . . OR YOUR MONEY BACK.**

- No more burning or peeling
- No more pasty white skin.
- No need to worry about premature skin ageing
- No need for expensive sunbeds or solaria

Just a beautiful Golden Tan - All Over!

☎ Telephone Order Hotline (0483) 418182 for ☑ Credit card purchase

From: Health Post Ltd, Mill Lane Studios, Godalming, Surrey

OR POST COUPON

Detach coupon and send to:
Health Post Ltd
Mill Lane Studios
Mill Lane, Godalming
Surrey GU7 1EY

**HEALTH POST -
GOOD HEALTH!
DIRECT TO YOU**

Remember: One
Course Free With
Every Two Ordered

ORDER FORM DM4/6/92

Date

Signature

Please debit my Access/Visa Expiry date

Name

Address

Post Code.....Telephone No.....

Please send me my Golden Tan Tablets by return

1 Course for just £8.95 inc P&P

2 Courses + 1 free £17.90 inc P&P

I enclose my cheque for £.....

payable to Health Post - or Postal Order

Source: Anon., 'No need to ever get sunburnt. Golden Tan', *Daily Mail*, 4 June 1992, p.34.

²³ Ibid., p.34.

Research and Future Prospects for 'Medical' (and/or Cosmetic) Sun Repairing Creams, Tanning injections, Pills, Capsules and Plasters

Louise Atkinson, a *Daily Mail* reporter who regularly published articles on suntanning topics during the early 1990s, wrote some of the first detailed newspaper articles addressing the prospects of sun-damage repairing creams, tanning injections and new tanning pills. Reportedly, the government and medical organisations were demanding this research because of their growing concerns of the depleting ozone layer; the improvements in UV-damage detection technology; the rising prevalence of skin cancer in some countries (i.e., Australia, in which melanoma had become the most common form of cancer, overtaking bowel cancer), and finally, the observed resilience of tanning culture among the British public. The media, commercial industries and even scientific researchers were reinforcing the link between being tanned, attractive and healthy, when discussing these new tanning technologies.

First, at London's St Thomas's hospital, medical researchers were apparently designing a new sun cream that both filtered the ill effects of the sun and repaired sun-damaged skin. The "encouraging" trials were 'backed up' by several beauty companies.²⁴ In a second article, Atkinson evaluated the future tanning injections and new tanning pills that could provide a 'safe and realistic instant tan'. She acknowledged that these future technologies would be a 'dream come true' for the 'typical pasty-white English rose'. These new technologies were apparently 'fuelled by the certainty' that tanned skin was beautiful. In all her newspaper articles, Atkinson had positioned herself strongly against the sunbed industry yet continued to idolise tanned skin. She asserted that 'in laboratories around the world, scientists [were] working on more complicated and infinitely more effective routes to that elusive perfect fake tan'.

²⁴ Between 1990 and 1995, there was no evidence of these "encouraging" trials mentioned in the *BMJD* perhaps meaning that these trials, in fact, prematurely failed, Atkinson, 'GOOD HEALTH. A unique guide to the latest in fitness, health and medicine', p.21.

Reporters were still describing a non-UV-induced tan as ‘fake’, which clashed with the constant evocation of ‘natural’ tans as most desirable by the tanning industries, the media and the public.

In the first half of the newspaper article, Atkinson explained scientists at the University of Arizona were conducting ‘radical research’ by testing a ‘melanocyte stimulating hormone’ on animals. Scientists had created a synthetic version of this hormone, called ‘MelanoTan’, which had been tested on pale-skinned men. After ten days of daily injections the men had developed a tan on both their head and shoulders. According to the scientists, the main purpose of the research was to create an artificially induced tan to ‘protect vulnerable, fair skins’ against the risk of skin cancer. The inventor, endocrinologist Professor Mac Hadley, explained that MelanoTan functioned by ‘closely mimicking the body’s natural tanning process, tricking the pigment cells into behaving as they do in the sun, producing a tan as realistic and long-lasting as a sun-kissed version’.²⁵ When Atkinson was writing the newspaper article, the scientists were adhering to the Federal Drugs Administration guidelines by slowly increasing MelanoTan’s concentration to more evenly darken their test subjects. If MelanoTan were successful, Hadley stated that it would medically treat pigment-based skin problems, such as ‘hypersensitivity, albinism, and vitiligo’. Hadley confidently predicted that within three years Melanotan would be

²⁵ Professor Mac Hadley was renowned for his work, which he began in the 1980s, on melanocytes (a melanin-forming cell, mainly in the skin), Alpha-Melanocyte-Stimulating Hormones (A-MSH) (a hormone that reduces food intake and energy expenditure), pigmentation and melanoma cancer. His research on A-MSH led to biological, biochemical, pharmacological, endocrinological, physiological, and medical investigations led to first his discovery and later the development of Melanotan I and Melanotan II, Victor J. Hruby, ‘Professor Mac E. Hadley: Creative scientist, superb teacher, dynamic collaborator, and wonderful friend’, *General and Comparative Endocrinology*, 151, 3, (2007), pp.358-360; B. Ramos-Molina, M.G. Martin, I. Lindberg, ‘Chapter Two - PCSK1 Variants and Human Obesity’ in Ya-Xiong Tao (ed), *Genetics of Monogenic and Syndromic Obesity* (Progress in Molecular Biology and Translational Science, Academic Press, 2016), pp.47-74.

provided as a 'patch or pill', initially on prescription, to British citizens who were most susceptible to sunburn and skin cancer.

The second half of the article shared the opinion of Professor Patrick Riley, who was both an expert on pigmentation at the University of London and sceptical about MelanoTan.²⁶ Riley asserted that too many other factors effected pigmentation, such as skin thickening, keratin levels and the nervous system, which effected the skin's protection properties. He argued that the value of MelanoTan was 'purely cosmetic', not medical, illustrating the constant tensions and difficulties in the separation of medical, commercial and aesthetic tanning technologies. Instead, Riley supported a French study, funded by French pharmaceutical companies, which explored an external application of other self-tan triggering chemicals to MelanoTan. These chemicals included 'amino acid el[-]tyrosine' - a natural substance that 'trigger[ed] tanning naturally'. Atkinson optimistically concluded that in the future these 'daily pill[s] ... plaster patch[s] ... creams' and 'injections' would reach the British market and overcome the 'undisputed hazards' of the sun and sunbeds. At the top of this article, in-between two headings stating 'Good Health' and 'Tomorrow's Tan', another tanned white model lay on the floor. She wore a black swimsuit, and again, her head was tilted upwards with her eyes closed, enjoying the sun.²⁷

In these newspaper articles, even if the objectives and the science behind these new technologies were misinterpreted or disingenuous, they reflected the importance of tanning culture for medical authorities, scientists, the media and the British public. These stakeholders would rather fund, create,

²⁶ Professor Riley began his research career in the 1960s. He researched the effect of epigenetic changes on the formation of cancer. Similar to Hadley, he spent much of his career researching melanocytes and melanoma, which included the experimental development of drugs for melanoma therapy, Patrick Riley, 'Carcinogenesis: When transmission of epigenetic information goes awry', *Health and Medicine Research OUTREACH*, 105, (2018).

²⁷ Louise Atkinson, 'GOOD HEALTH', p.35.

publicise and demand technologies that enabled 'safer' tanning than abandon the relentless pursuit of maintaining a tanned complexion. These international experts, both medics and scientists, were competing to provide the public with the safest method of tanning in the future. The reporters promoted these future tanning technologies as alleviating some of the public health pressures weighing on the British public - the articles were suggesting that they would not have to give up suntanning in the future.²⁸

How did the Competing Tanning Industries Inadvertently Support the Sunbed Industry?

Although most of these new tanning industries competed against and denigrated the sunbed industry, they also perpetuated tanning culture and inadvertently prompted the suntanning public to consider combining these products with sunbed use. In their advertising, alternative tanning products advised that consumers apply the product after the development of a 'natural' tan (in the case of 'self-tan') or just before bodily UV-exposure ('tan boosters') for a 'deeper' looking tan. The sunbather or sunbed user could also combine any of these technologies in the false belief that their skin would be safe as these tanning serums supposedly provided 'UV protection'.²⁹

Moreover, even newspapers warning against sunbathing, sunbeds and the risk of skin cancer, featured attractive tanned models in fashionable swimsuits selling a glamorous sunbathing lifestyle on the beach. In these newspaper articles, these photos were usually selected from a generic 'image

²⁸ The trials for MelanoTan failed in the 1990s because research continued to be underway in 2004, aiming for a 2006 launch which did not materialise, aside from on the black market commonly purchased by body builders, James Mills, 'Can one drug really give you a tan, make you slim and boost your sex life?', *Daily Mail*, 12 April 2004, p.22; L. Habbema, A.B. Halk, A.B., M. Neumann, W. Bergman, 'Risks of unregulated use of alpha-melanocyte-stimulating hormone analogues: a review', *International Journal of Dermatology*, 56, (2017), pp.975-980.

²⁹ Hands, 'FEMAIL bodytalk. Tanning without the tears', p.23.

bank'.³⁰ The production of new anti-sunbed and anti-sunbathing photos would have taken time, effort and financial resources, which newspaper editors and reporters did not have under quick publishing turnarounds.³¹ The quality of the photographs and the types of swimsuits worn by the models suggest that these sunbathing photos were taken during the 1980s – a less skin cancer concerned decade when sunbathing was ubiquitously glorified in Britain. These widely and quickly available photos were resurrecting the first desirable wave of tanning culture from the 1980s. The combination of anti-UV tanning rhetoric and the visual glamorisation of sunbathing culture gave readers mixed messages.

The media's relentless focus on new 'tan safe' technologies suggests that most of the suntanning public, both women and men, were keen to continue tanning regardless. Most of these people did not seem to care or want to change their sunbed habits. The growing success of the fake tan industry does suggest that some people wanted to change their habits by developing a 'healthier' approach to tanning, but they had not altered their perception of tanning as beauty-enhancing. Celebrities, fashion editors, and television presenters quite confidently refused to stop using sunbeds. In a *Daily Mail* article, a reporter addressed the new trend of the 1990s – a 'puritan' approach to beauty consumptions. This 'puritan' approach upheld new fashionable 'virtues' of 'self-denial' to regain control over their lifestyles and bodies. The

³⁰ Hayward, 'Femail Bodytalk. A golden tan – and no streaks' and Sills, 'The Six Minute Chamber', p.36; Hands, 'FEMAIL bodytalk. Tanning without the tears', p.23; The photos of suntanning models in bikinis and swimsuits on the beach were also taken from 'Bill Ling' and 'Tony Stone Worldwide' image banks, Atkinson, 'Femail special: Day two of our ten-day quick weight-loss plan, a healthy tan and exercises for thighs', pp.42-43; Atkinson, 'GOOD HEALTH. Tomorrow's tan', p.35.

³¹ After the mid-1990s, new photos of 'tanorexics' were used in newspaper reports addressing sunbeds, their consumers and skin cancer. The photo typically consisted of a 'tanorexic' women's face. In the close-up photograph, the 'tanorexic' was captured unnervingly staring at the reader. The frame presented her stern and expressionless face, slightly tilted, as disordered - both disturbed and menacing, Janet Knight, 'Tanorexia', *Daily Express*, 8 July 1997, p.38.

journalist described this 'puritan[ism] as a backlash against the 'excessive' consumer and 'yuppie culture' of the 1980s. The interviewees proudly listed the beauty technologies and products that they had given up, except for sunbeds. A singer, Linda Nolan, refused to 'give up' sunbathing during the summer and sunbeds during the winter, reasoning that she protected her fair skin with a 'strong sun lotion'. Directly under this statement was an advert for a competition to 'win a sunshine holiday'.³² In the *Observer*, a small list exposed the 'beauty secrets' of 'fashion editors'. They revealed that although 'fashion editors [were] always going on about "the paler skin" they 'secretly use[d] fake tans, sunbeds and anything else they can lay their hands on' to acquire a tan.³³ In an interview with a famous soprano, Lesley Garrett, when asked 'What luxury would you take on your perfect weekend?', Garrett said 'a sunbed'.³⁴ Trish Williamson, an English TV presenter, producer and reporter for BBC regional television used sunbeds between her twice yearly trips to the West Indies. She asserted 'I don't care if suntans are not in fashion – I like to have a good colour and it makes me feel good'.³⁵ Moreover, even smaller swimsuits and bikinis were now in fashion, and the additional body exposure encouraged an 'all-over' tan. In these swimsuit adverts, the selected models were increasingly mixed raced yet still somewhat ethnically ambiguous.³⁶ All of these women were extremely visible in the media. With their perpetual tans or darker skin, were both rhetorically and

³² Usden, 'The New Puritans', p.12.

³³ Anon., 'Fashion editors' secrets – beauty', *Observer*, 22 March 1992, p.118.

³⁴ Rosanna Greenstreet, 'My perfect weekend. Lesley Garrett. Soprano', *The Times*, 5 February 1994, p.11.

³⁵ Trisha was most famous for being the "weathergirl" on the ITV breakfast television programme 'Good Morning Britain' during the 1980s, Miranda Ingram, 'Femail. Dressed to kill. Trish Williamson on her love of scruffs and her hatred of frills', *Daily Mail*, 20 June 1991, p.34.

³⁶ In this *Observer* article, the reporter observed that swimsuit attire had shrank from a one-piece bikini to either a string or toplessness, and nudity was underway. Moreover, swimsuits were preferably, 'low at the front and back for maximum tanning exposure', high at the hips and 'searingly bright to contrast with brown skin', Louise Chunn, 'A generous cut above the rest', *The Guardian*, 8 June 1992, p.22.

visually upholding the desirability of a tan, undermining the anti-sunbed broadcasts published by other reporters and medical experts.

Men did not want to change their sunbed habits either. For male strippers, sunbeds were at the top of the 'body-enhancement' priority list.³⁷ A 'Men[*'s*] Only' wedding preparation package included a sunbed session.³⁸ Male celebrities, such as Gary Glitter and The Smiths, used their 'health-enhanc[ing]' sunbeds at home'.³⁹ On the 'Femail' section in the *Daily Mail*, an article titled 'Men, make-up and machismo' provided a list of 'acceptable' and 'not acceptable' beauty routines for men. Sunbeds were at the top of the 'acceptable' list and were most 'popular'. Men also admitted to using their girlfriend's bronzing products and technologies.⁴⁰ This article was written for all

³⁷ Apparently, in the 1980s 'the advertising industry stumbled on the new potential' to 'exploit' men with 'a vengeance'. According to the journalist, on Boxing Day 1985, a nationally successful campaign was the first to show a man on television 'strip down to his boxer shorts in a crowded launderette and machine-wash his 501 [Levi jeans]'. Reportedly, this was a response to the demands of 'newly sexually confident women with spending powers' of the late twentieth century. From the early 1980s, male stripping thrived in the West End. Employers ordered their male strippers to use sunbeds, train in the gym, sleep well, limit their food and alcohol, and avoid drugs. Simon Cotton, a famous male model of the 1990s, was interviewed in the article. He claimed that he was 'one of Maggie's boys, a young entrepreneur who took his chance at the height of the Thatcher years'. The Enterprise Allowance Scheme gave him money to start up his own agency, which became a success. Cotton predicted that these changes in consumer culture would increase the expectations of and social pressures on men's bodies, Alan Jackson, 'What's a nice boy like you ...', *The Times*, 14 May 1994, p.22.

³⁸ Sophie Chamier, 'Alphabet soup for a wedding breakfast', *The Times*, 20 February 1990, p.9.

³⁹ Adam Sweeting, 'Rock 'n' glam Glitter: Gary Glitter is about as seasonal as Santa. He talks to ADAM SWEETING, *Guardian*, 18 December 1993, p.25; Anon., 'Pass Notes: No 182: The Smiths', *Guardian*, 24 June 1993, p.A3.

⁴⁰ Miranda Ingram, 'Femail. Our Beauties of the Boudoir. An image to cherish', *Daily Mail*, 18 May 1989, p.13.

genders, as the *Daily Mail's* 'Femail' section both catered for and was regularly read by men.⁴¹ According to the *Daily Mail*, if men had to undergo beauty regimes, sunbeds were reportedly more acceptable and 'masculine' than other routines.

During the early 1990s, sunbed salons also catered for and advertised to both heterosexual and homosexual men, such as 'The BRONZ factory' in the 'heart of London's West End'. In 1992, a sketched and bronzed torso of a muscular man featured on this salon's summer leaflet, demonstrating a slightly different beauty ideal for gay men when compared to women. The leaflets colour scheme - white, yellow and grey - was subtle. The 'comfortable and discreet surroundings' of the Bronz factory offered a 'BE PROUD ... Europride special offer'.⁴² Close to this salon was Soho, known for 'gay spending power', which created a thriving 'gay' business and entertainment centre. These surroundings included 'gay bars, gay lifestyle and fashion stores, a gay beauty and sunbed centre and a travel agency catering for homosexuals'.⁴³ Sunbed centres were subtly embedded within these homosexual spaces yet their tanned consumers would be seen roaming these busy streets of London.

Finally, and most ironically, the 'Femail' section in the *Daily Mail* (the newspaper most ardently supporting alternative tanning industries and criticising sunbeds), continued to recommend sunbed sessions to their readers. In the winter of 1992, a *Daily Mail* reporter presented sunbed use as a 'revival strategy' for the 'jaded partygoer'. The reporter remarked 'pale may be

⁴¹ Newby Hands, 'Femail. Men, make-up and machismo. Could you love a man who tints his eyelashes?', *Daily Mail*, 7 April 1992, p.13; Ingram, 'Femail. Our Beauties of the Boudoir', p.13.

⁴² Wellcome Trust Collection, Box 628, Sunbathing ephemera Box 1, The Bronz Factory leaflet, London, 27 June 1992.

⁴³ Louise Hildalgo, 'Close-knit community is riven by fear', *The Times*, 17 June 1993, p.3.

interesting at this time of year' yet recommended a 'quick' sunbed session accentuate freckles. The reporter continued to warn against regular 'intense UVA tan treatments' yet asserted that '20 minutes can be just enough to put a fresh healthy glow back into winter cheeks'.⁴⁴ A suntanned complexion was also presented as a vital 'beauty' component for brides. In 1993, another *Daily Mail* reporter suggested a course of sunbeds for 'any bride-to-be' unhappy with her pale complexion. The reporter remarked that 'four to six' sunbed sessions would be enough to form a 'healthy' colour, demonstrating the persistent association of tanning and aesthetic well-being.⁴⁵

As demonstrated, during the early to mid-1990s, in comparison to all other newspapers, the *Daily Mail* and particularly the 'Femail page' continued to fixate on tanning culture and sunbeds. For two main reasons the *Daily Mail* 'Femail' page heavily reflected the many contradictions when addressing tanning and sunbeds. First, the *Daily Mail* reflected an early-to-mid twentieth century tabloid approach to cater for women's interests, upholding women's traditional roles and expectations. The *Daily Mail* expected women to become the 'homely supporting' or the 'glamorous trophy wife', by preserving family values; prioritising her husband and motherhood, and by maintaining a desirable appearance in public to reflect familial respectability. Consequently, the *Daily Mail's* women's page continued to present topics on 'fashion, body management, relationships, celebrity, cooking and careers'.⁴⁶

Yet, in the early 1970s, the *Daily Mail's* remit for women altered. In 1971, Shirley Conran attempted to revitalise the *Daily Mail's* women's section by rebranding it as 'Femail'. The same topics continued to dominate this women's

⁴⁴ Imogen Faux, 'Revival Strategies', *Daily Mail*, 31 December 1992, p.26.

⁴⁵ Justine Hancock, 'Femail Body talk. How to avoid those wedding belle blues', *Daily Mail*, 8 April 1993, p.46.

⁴⁶ Bingham, Conboy, *Tabloid century*, pp.160-1; Clare Walsh, 'Gender and Mediatized Political Discourse: A Case Study of Press Coverage of Margaret Beckett's Campaign for the Labour Leadership in 1994', *Language and Literature*, 7, 3, (1998), p.202.

page, yet these subjects reportedly reflected a new “post-feminist” discourse, aiming to more readily acknowledge ‘women’s agency, earning power and dislike of being patronised by men’. The Femail page wanted to support new ideals of confident, strong, independent and career driven women, by amplifying their opinions. Yet, despite being read by both lower-class and middle-class women, the Femail page both reflected and fed the growing middle-class preoccupation with health, diet and fitness, and offered fashion advice using a remarkably similar style and tone to the early decades of the twentieth century.⁴⁷ As sunbeds were originally introduced in ‘health, diet and fitness’ environments for middle-to-upper class women (and men) during the early 1980s (see Chapter One and Two), sunbeds were fixed within 1990s’ Femail pages (see Chapter Six).

This clash of both traditional and 1990s’ modern expectations of women, combined with the conflicting representation of a sunbed tan – originally advertised as a status mark of wealthy, healthy and fit middle-to-upper class woman yet later a working-class signifier of ‘excessive’, irrational and self-destructive behaviour – was bound to be prevalent in the *Daily Mail*. Some *Daily Mail* reporters wanted to present their ‘Femail’ readers with inspiring role models, and created golden frames of independence, wealth, experience and health to radiate this representation. Other reporters invited the public to both judge and scrutinise women’s bodies and their beauty routines. Paradoxically, women’s bodies were either not attractive enough, or women were ridiculed for focusing their efforts on their bodily appearances. Either way, reporters condemned these women’s decisions to reflect their spending powers.⁴⁸ On the *Daily Mail*’s Femail page, the expectations of women, and their pale or tanned bodies, were layered in contradictions. These contradictory messages from

⁴⁷ Bromley, Stephenson, *Sex, lies and democracy*; Clive Seale, Sharon Boden, Simon Williams, Pam Lowe, Deborah Steinberg, ‘Media constructions of sleep and sleep disorders: A study of UK national newspapers’, *Social Science & Medicine*, 65, 3, (2007), pp.425-6; Bingham, Conboy, *Tabloid century*, pp.160-1, p.195.

⁴⁸ Bingham, Conboy, *Tabloid century*, pp.160-1.

different reporters from the same newspaper, combined with sunbed supporting celebrities, would have confused readers. In the UK, the *Daily Mail* also had the largest female readership than any other newspaper.⁴⁹ Therefore, these ongoing opinions about sunbeds were highly visible in the media limelight for consumers.

Sunbeds and Sunbed Tanned Bodies in Health and Fitness Venues (early 1990s)

During the early 1990s, sunbeds remained in health and fitness spaces, and the tanned bodies exercising in these venues were still considered aspirational.⁵⁰ Unsurprisingly, sunbeds were resiliently presented as “healthy by association”, which concerned dermatologists.⁵¹ In 1991, Ultrabronz, a leading manufacturer for sunbeds in the UK, merged with Cardiff-based Hawkin’s, a leading company in the professional fitness market, strengthening the original link between sunbeds and fitness. Ultrabronz sunbeds were provided by Hawkin’s established health and fitness providers, ‘Powersport’ and ‘Life fitness’, for the British public.⁵² According to the *Financial Times*, sunbeds also remained in private and luxurious health clubs in the North-West and Greater London area,

⁴⁹ By 2010, if not before, the *Daily Mail* was the only newspaper to have a larger male than female readerships, because of its *Femail* features and health sections, Carolyn M. Byerly, *The Palgrave International Handbook of Women and Journalism* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p.178.

⁵⁰ Anon., ‘London Borough of Camden Leisure Services Department’, *Guardian*, 5 February 1991, p.30.

⁵¹ David Shuttleworth, ‘Sunbeds and the pursuit of the year round tan should be discouraged’, *British Medical Journal*, 207, 11 December 1993, pp.1508-9. *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1991, pp.533- 535; *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1992, pp.521-523; *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1993, pp.479-480; *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1994, pp.463-465.

⁵² Anon., ‘Hawtin acquires sunbed manufacturer’, *Financial Times*, 13 August 1991, p.16.

which had hundreds of registered members.⁵³ At health farms, clients continued to 'succumb' to sunbed use as a part of their 'health' routine.⁵⁴

Physique-orientated, fitness and sports celebrities regularly used sunbeds, including West End performers, dancers and volleyball players. These celebrities remarked that their sunbed indulgences were an important part of their fitness routine and performance aesthetic.⁵⁵ For bodybuilders, such as Dorian Yates, sunbed use remained an everyday consumption. Yates was born and lived in England. In 1993, he won the title 'Mr Olympia' – a title that Arnold Schwarzenegger had won seven times in the 1980s.⁵⁶ In Ashford, after fifteen years' military service, he entered the health and fitness club industry by creating a novel personal training service for young men wanting to join the military or the police. His club provided sunbed services.⁵⁷ Sunbed adverts also both targeted and catered for athletically 'fit' women.⁵⁸ The association between fitness, health and sunbed use remained popular. During the early-to-mid 1990s, everyday men were known to 'work out and sun-bed frantically', in

⁵³ Anon., '10,000 SQ FT PRIVATE FITNESS CENTRE, ESSEX', *Financial Times*, 3 April 1992, p.11; Anon., 'LADIES HEALTH AND FITNESS CLUB', *Financial Times*, 3 December 1993, p.11.

⁵⁴ Nicole Swengley, 'Fight the flab. A weekend of healthy living can ease away the winter's excess', *The Times*, 13 March 1993, p.2.

⁵⁵ Gillian Widdicombe, 'Big boys are such a tease. Flexed pectorals and bare buttocks have taken over at the Strand Theatre in the West End', *Observer*, 26 April 1992, p.51; Sarah Lonsdale, 'Still having a ball at 44. Sarah Lonsdale mourns the end of another season of 'Come Dancing'', *Observer*, 22 August 1993, p.59; Angela Levin, 'Stepping out with my barbie in the swirling, twirling world of ballroom', *Daily Mail*, 6 December 1994, p.31; Gareth A. Davies, 'Life's a beach for volleyball partners', *The Times*, 14 January 1994, p.38.

⁵⁶ Bellow, 'In the land of the giants', p.133.

⁵⁷ Pat Hogan, 'Enterprise Money Mail. Trainer Terry's beefing up the Army's rookies', *Daily Mail*, 21 November 1994, p.43.

⁵⁸ Anon., 'FOR THAT CALIFORNIA BRONZED LOOK call 21st CENTURY TANS', *Observer*, 1 December 1991, p.74.

preparation for maximum body exposure in public during the summer.⁵⁹

Nonetheless, these fitness role models used sunbeds guiltily, by using rhetoric such as ‘admitted’, ‘succumbed’ or ‘indulged’ to describe their sunbed habits.

These role models acknowledged that they should not be using sunbeds, or at least should not be openly discussing their sunbed use in the media.

The New Sunbed Industry Franchises

In the print press, the number of companies advertising household sunbeds continued to decline. In 1993, only one obvious ‘factory-produced’ and cheap household sunbed advert featured in the *Daily Mail*.⁶⁰ The *Financial Times* did not advertise sunbeds, despite having been a popular supporter of sunbeds during the early 1980s. The number of advertised public tanning salons had also narrowed. Yet, as previously demonstrated, the British public continued to demand sunbeds.⁶¹ The few remaining sunbed franchises thrived in England by satisfying this demand, and advertising in the *Daily Mail* invited new entrepreneurs to join these sunbed franchises.⁶² During the twentieth century, franchising was a typical business approach, especially during the economic boom after the early 1990s.⁶³ This boom assisted the emerging sunbed franchise monopoly.

⁵⁹ Maev Kennedy, ‘The adventures of Inspector Mirth: Diary’, *Guardian*, 8 July 1994, p.24.

⁶⁰ Anon., ‘Sunbeds Twins From £349. Factory Direct’, *Daily Mail*, 6 November 1993, p.67.

⁶¹ Anon., ‘BUSINESSES WANTED. SUNBEDS WANTED’, *The Times*, 14 June 1991, p.32.

⁶² Anon., ‘Franchises. START YOUR OWN BUSINESS’, *Daily Mail*, 7 June 1993, p.36.

⁶³ Moseley, ‘Slimming One’s Way to a Better Self?’, p.2; Anon., ‘History of Franchise’, *The British Franchise Association*, 2017. Accessed 4 January 2020:

<https://www.thebfa.org/about-franchising-the-bfa/history-of-franchising/>; Anon., ‘The role of the small firm in the UK economy’ *Management Services*, 43, 9, (1999), p.6; Andrew Gamble, ‘Why Is Neo-Liberalism so Resilient?’, *Critical Sociology*, 45, 7–8, (2019), pp.983–994; Carlota Perez, ‘The double bubble at the turn of the century:

British sunbed franchises continued to proliferate during the 1990s, leading to renewed abundance and accessibility of sunbeds. In 1994, *The Tanning Shop* and *Kwik Tan* were part of the largest national 'British Franchise Exhibitions', placing sunbed salons in a league with McDonalds. For over a decade this exhibition toured Manchester, London and other large English cities. Such exhibitions supported the sunbed industry. These exhibitions promised entrepreneurs success and profits if they both joined and extended the sunbed franchises, even if they lacked experience. The levels of investments ranged from '£3,000' to '£1 million', attracting a large variety of entrepreneurs.⁶⁴ *The Tanning Shop* continued this approach for three decades.⁶⁵

New Sunbed Technologies and Persistent Health Claims

These sunbed franchises complicated further the public's opinions about sunbeds by offering 'improved' units and resiliently advertising that sunbed use was healthy and harmless, challenging the medical experts who said otherwise. In 1993, *The Tanning Shop* advertised that they were responding to consumers' complaints about their horizontal sunbeds by providing new and improved vertical sunbeds. In an advert in the *Daily Mail*, a sunbed user, Amanda Sills,

technological roots and structural implications', *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 33, 4, (2009), pp.779-805.

⁶⁴ In the mid-1990s, these advertisements claimed that sunbed franchises employed over 200,000 people and generated £4.5 billion per annum. The successful franchising continued for over two decades, Anon., 'Multiple Display Advertising Items', *Daily Mail*, 10 January 1994, p.38; Anon., 'The Display Advertising Items', *Daily Mail*, 5 October 1995, p.67; Anon., 'Multiple Display Advertising Items', *Daily Mail*, 22 March 2004, p.55.

⁶⁵ Chelle Stewart-Lahmers, 'Franchising at the Tanning Shop', *The Tanning Shop*, 28 November 2012. Accessed 28 June 2016: <http://thetanningshop.co.uk/franchising-tanning-shop/>.

described the unpleasant experiences of 1980s' sunbeds: *'Half an hour spent heavily perspiring, bottom burning from the heat of the tubes, teeth gritted, fighting feelings of claustrophobia in the group of a 'sandwich toaster' style sunbed – and all for the sake of a rich tan'*.⁶⁶ *The Tanning Shop* was one of the first well-established firms to introduce the new 'Hex Honeytan' cubicle. This upright tanning booth was powerful enough to reduce the typical minimum of 30-minutes per session to a 6-minute sunbed session. Reportedly, these upright sunbed models were less claustrophobic and had more tanning tubes. The high-powered ceiling fan kept the chamber cooler and prevented the 'hot redness' of the skin.⁶⁷

During the mid-1990s, health officials and the media began to intensely broadcast the potential link between sunbeds and skin cancer (see Chapter Six). Sunbed operators had to respond quickly to maintain their popularity and their customer's loyalty. They either increased the protective measures of sunbeds or launched campaigns that defended their services against some of the medical communities' 'overreaction to cancer fears'.⁶⁸ For customer protection, they introduced safer ultraviolet lamps that followed the European standard. 'High-tech' bronze foil tabs were created as eye shields and were more regularly provided for free.⁶⁹ 'Protective' tanning enhancement creams were increasingly offered.⁷⁰ Simultaneously many authorities in the sunbed industry, such as Terry Dinham, a managing director of a leading British manufacturer of sunbeds, contradicted the medical authorities (see Chapter Six). Leaflets circulated in tanning parlours promoted sunbeds as a healthy source of Vitamin D (see Chapter Two). They argued that sunbed use lowered the chances of various cancers and diseases. Additionally, Dinham claimed that

⁶⁶ Sills, 'The six-minute tanning chamber', p.36.

⁶⁷ Wellcome Trust Collection, Box 628, Sunbathing ephemera, Box 1, The Tanning Shop voucher, Covent gardens, 29 July 1994.

⁶⁸ Bill Laitner, 'Warnings don't deter indoor tanning', *Gazette*, 16 February 1994.

⁶⁹ Sills, 'The six-minute tanning chamber', *Daily Mail*, 6 May 1993, p.36.

⁷⁰ Diana Civil, 'The Tanning Shop Source Tan Energizer Body Drench. Sex and Shopping', *Daily Mail*, 3 June 1995, page number not found.

the rise of skin cancer was caused by the ‘depletion of the ozone and the ... price of package holidays’, not sunbeds.⁷¹ In 2005, the Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) first officially challenged *The Tanning Shop* for advertising these health claims.⁷² Yet these claims can still be found on the posters and websites of sunbed firms.⁷³

The Misleading and Life-threatening Sunbed Industry: Medical Expert Opinions

In the early 1990s, the advertised health claims of sunbeds contradicted the findings of medical experts’ research. Consequently, medical experts began to report more forcefully that sunbed providers were deceitful and that sunbeds were life-threatening for consumers. Most medical experts also wanted to separate their ‘controlled’ use of UV-A and UV-B (sunbed-resembling) ‘medical’ technologies from the ‘non-medical’, ‘commercial’ and ‘aesthetic’ use of sunbeds. It is important to recognise that although the consensus from most dermatologists (in their publications and media statements) was hostile to the

⁷¹ Bedell, ‘Real Life – The British Way to Burn’, p.20; Atkinson, ‘A healthy, all year tan – or basking in ignorance about the risk of skin cancer’, p.17.

⁷² The ASA received a complaint against a leaflet from The Sunbed Association (TSA), titled ‘Vitamin D essential for good health – Sunbeds sessions ARE good for you’. The ASA supported the complaint as they did not agree with the health claims of sunbed use and it was not considered appropriate for TSA to suggest that sunbeds prevented the development of serious medical conditions. TSA had to remove all claims relating to the medical efficacy of sunbed use, Department of Health, *UV radiation exposure health risks from artificial tanning devices*, Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE), (2009), p.32.

⁷³ Chelle Stewart-Lahmers, ‘Health’, *The Tanning Shop*, 10 July 2012. Accessed 17 May 2016: <http://thetanningshop.co.uk/16/>; Chelle Stewart- Lahmers, ‘Sunbeds Proven to be the Best Source of Vitamin D’, *The Tanning Shop*, 3 December 2012. Accessed 18 June 2016: <http://thetanningshop.co.uk/sunbeds-proven-source-vitamin/>; Anon., ‘What are the benefits of using a sunbed?’, *The Sunbed Association*. Accessed 12 July 2016: http://www.sunbedassociation.org.uk/UV_Tanning/FAQs.aspx.

sunbed industry and non-medical sunbed use, other dermatologists undercut this by suggesting that commercial sunbeds could assist the NHS.⁷⁴

Between 1991 to 1994, the *BMJ* and *BMJD* published fewer articles focusing entirely on sunbeds. Most articles only fleetingly mentioned sunbeds. For instance, in one article, a dermatologist observed that a patient had to visit a hospital burns unit because of their 'over indulgence on a sunbed'.⁷⁵ Other medical journal articles included a fleeting sentence or a brief yet strong confirmation that 'UVA' sunbeds caused skin cancer, ageing, lesions and actinic keratoses (scaly patches of skin).⁷⁶ Most dermatologists confirmed this when addressing sunbeds, but not all, which weakened the overall anti-sunbed consensus of medical experts in their medical lobbying against the sunbed industry. For instance, some other dermatologists supported the 'medical' and monitored use of commercial sunbeds for their patients. At the 1991 annual *BMJD* conference, a poster asserted that 'UVA, UVB and photochemotherapy' were important for dermatological therapy. The poster was based on the research of four dermatologists from the Departments of Dermatology & Medical Physics at Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham. According to a survey, most dermatology units were only available during office hours. Moreover, patients had to travel 'long distances' for this therapy. As a result, these four dermatologists visited a variety of 'institutions with UVA sunbeds' to determine if patients could 'safely use commercially available equipment where

⁷⁴ L. Shall, G. C. Kinnear, B. D. Holt, A. J. Crawford, E. M. Saihan, 'SUMMARIES OF POSTERS. SUN PARLOURS; THE NOTTINGHAM EXPERIENCE', *British Medical Journal of Dermatology*, 125, 38, (1991), p.40.

⁷⁵ G. Hinchley, A. Ahmed, 'Cold weather burns', *British Medical Journal*, 302, (1991), p.963.

⁷⁶ John Hawk, 'Ultraviolet A radiation: staying within the pale. Sunscreens offering high protection factors are not enough', *British Medical Journal*, 302, (1991), pp.1036-7; Julie Wench (freelance journalist), 'Soundings. Why I hate sunbathing', *British Medical Journal*, 305, (1992), p.198; N. H. Cox, 'Minerva', *British Medical Journal*, 305, (1992), p.1236; N. H. Cox, 'Actinic keratoses induced by a sunbed', *British Medical Journal*, 308, (1994), p.977.

it was the only practical alternative'. They assessed twenty-seven sunbeds from eight institutions. These included a 'leisure centre, a hairdresser, an up-market beauty salon and a sales centre'. The dermatologists noticed that Philips was the most popular supplier of sunbed tubes. The dermatologists documented how often the tubes were changed; how many hours they were used per day; how many tubes, on average, did a sunbed have; the space between the sunbed tubes and the 'patient', and finally, the UV-A output. They concluded that the 'median of this [UVA] range [was] similar to the output of [their] UVA unit' from their dermatology departments.

All sunbed 'institutions', except for one, were prepared to accept the dermatologists' 'patients as clients' if they provided a doctor's letter.⁷⁷ Most of the institutions had helpful leaflets, and one sunbed salon required a completed questionnaire before treatment. Most of the sunbed providers were open after office hours and a 30-minute session cost between '£2 to £3'. The dermatologists concluded that these sunbed shops provided a 'safe and useful adjunct to hospital UVL therapy as long as the patient [was] seen at regular intervals by a dermatologist'.⁷⁸ There did not appear to be any follow ups regarding this poster, or if the medical use of commercial sunbeds occurred in the future.

Acceptable 'Medical' Light Therapies - Different from Misleading and Life-threatening 'Sunbeds'?

During the early-to-mid 1990s, two articles from the *BMJD* researched the treatment differences between UV-A and UV-B phototherapy, and then provided guidelines, which the British Photodermatology Group supported. Dermatologists were clearly still using both UV-A and UV-B phototherapy

⁷⁷ The summary of the poster did not explain why one sunbed salon would not except accept dermatologists' 'patients as clients'.

⁷⁸ Shall, Kinnear, Holt, Crawford, Saihan, 'SUMMARIES OF POSTERS. SUN PARLOURS', p.40.

technologies.⁷⁹ The print press occasionally mentioned these ‘sunbed ... light therapy’ technologies. The light therapy’s ‘life-saving’ properties for young children with jaundice were particularly sensationalised by the *Daily Mail*.⁸⁰

Nonetheless, almost all dermatologists had confirmed that sunbeds were both detrimental to health and differed to their own light therapy treatments, and one piece – a letter in the *BMJ* - went to great lengths to explain how the sunbed industry was unethical. In December 1993, a consultant dermatologist, Dr David Shuttleworth, published an article titled ‘Sunbeds and the pursuit of the year round tan should be discouraged’.⁸¹ The article argued that the sunbed industry advertised disingenuous health claims, feeding into his point that sunbeds were a life-threatening consumption, and that mainly ‘young females’ were most at risk as they mostly used these sunbeds.

Shuttleworth acknowledged that the sunbed industry was satisfying public demand, yet he condemned their ‘economic interest’ in persuading people that ‘a glowing tan [was] a visible sign of good health’ and a ‘social necessity’. Shuttleworth observed that sunbeds were associated with health because they were located at sports and fitness locations. He criticised the sunbed promotional literature for reassuring ‘prospective purchasers that sunbeds were entirely safe’. A large European sunbed manufacturer had also astounded him by challenging medical authorities. The sunbed manufacturer had publicised that “incorrect and uniformed reports on the negative effects of

⁷⁹ J. Jekler, O. Larko, ‘UVA solarium versus UVB phototherapy of atopic dermatitis: a paired-comparison study’, *British Medical Journal of Dermatology*, 125, (1991), pp.569-572; British Photodermatology Group, ‘British Photodermatology Group guidelines for PUVA’, *British Medical Journal of Dermatology*, 130, (1994), pp.246-255.

⁸⁰ Jenny Hope (Medical Correspondent), ‘Girl waits in hope for liver transplant that ‘freed’ her brother’, 12 July 1993, *Daily Mail*, p.24; Jenny Hope (Medical Correspondent), ‘GIRL HAS LIVER SURGERY THAT CHANGED BROTHER’S LIFE. Sarah makes it a transplant double’, *Daily Mail*, 27 September 1993, p.25.

⁸¹ Shuttleworth, ‘Sunbeds and the pursuit of the year round tan should be discouraged’, pp.1508-9.

sun and sunbeds [were] fuel[ling] hysteria and even panic". Shuttleworth was concerned as the same manufacturer had in fact provided 'testimonial support' that sunbed use prevented "both melanoma skin cancer and internal cancer, stimulated the immune system, and "regenerate[d] calcium for building our bones". Shuttleworth challenged the public opinion that sunbeds provided a 'protective shield against holiday sunburn', emphasising that they instead increased the risk of melanoma. From his perspective, Shuttleworth argued that the sunbed industry were misleading prospective purchasers and consumers with their health claims as most medical experts had in fact confirmed sunbeds as life-threatening.

Although Shuttleworth published this article in the *BMJ* to perhaps strengthen support from other dermatologists, most dermatologists already agreed that commercial sunbeds were fatal. By this period, medical experts often framed sunbed induced skin-cancer in the same light as tobacco smoking and lung cancer. The *BMJ* reflected this by placing Shuttleworth's anti-sunbed article above a letter titled 'Making murder sound respectable. Time for the European Union to ban tobacco promotion'. By the early 1990s, the media also regularly discussed both smoking and sunbeds as cancer causing in the same reports. In a *Daily Mail* article explaining how to reduce cancer by the year 2000, the reporter encouraged the public to stop sunbathing, using sunbeds and smoking.⁸²

Shuttleworth also challenged the sunbed industry's claims that they emitted 'safe UVA', by citing two medical journal articles on the detriments of

⁸² Jenny Hope (Medical Correspondent), 'Shape up by the year 2000', *Daily Mail*, 9 July 1992, pp.12-13; In the *Financial Times* the 'Anti-smoking aids on NHS urged' brief report was positioned directly above a 'Sunbed caused skin cancer' report, Anon., 'News: UK. Sunbed caused skin cancer', *Financial Times*, 8 March 1994, p.13; In articles about sunbed 'addicts', the addiction was said to resemble smoking and tobacco addiction, Westcott, 'I'd rather be wrinkled and brown than white and smooth', pp.24-5.

repeated UV-A exposure on the skin. These included "increased skin wrinkling, irregular pigmentation, and altered skin texture (photoaging)", "sunbed lentigines" and "pseudoporphyria".⁸³ He also argued against the claim that sunbeds "stimulated the immune system" by citing more evidence that UV-A in fact had an "immunosuppressive effect", leading to an activation and acceleration of human viruses, including HIV. Yet Shuttleworth was most concerned about the development of melanoma by sunbeds. According to animal studies, if humans used sunbeds less than twenty times a year over a lifetime the risk of non-melanoma skin cancer still doubled. Shuttleworth concluded that both the British Photodermatology Group and the International Non-Ionizing Radiation Committee had reviewed the scientific evidence and concluded that UV-A sunbeds should be discouraged. Shuttleworth remarked that 'almost all modern commercial sunbeds emitted UVA and small amounts of UVB'. Therefore, he was astonished that 'despite all of this, marketing and use of sunbeds remains entirely unregulated in Britain'.⁸⁴ Despite the dominance of hostility towards sunbeds, even a minority of medical professional views supporting their use prevented the formation of an effective medical consensus. Without a clear and total medical consensus that sunbeds were entirely detrimental, the DHSS would have been slow to create an anti-sunbed legislation.⁸⁵

Five days later, Dr Thomas Stuttaford, both a reporter and a medical authority, transmitted Shuttleworth's findings in a *Times* newspaper article. Stuttaford supported Shuttleworth's opinion, agreeing that sunbeds were 'more likely to lead to disease than health' as they accelerated the 'growth of HIV and

⁸³ H. Williams, J. Salisbury, et al., 'Sunbed lentigines', *British Medical Journal*, 296, (1988); G. M. Murphy, J. Wright, D. S. Nicholls, P. H., McKee, A. G Messenger, J. L. Hawk, et al., 'Sunbed-induced pseudoporphyria', *British Medical Journal of Dermatology*, 120, (1989), pp.555-62.

⁸⁴ Shuttleworth, 'Sunbeds and the pursuit of the year round tan should be discouraged', pp.1508-9.

⁸⁵ See footnote 130 from Chapter Two.

other infections'. Medical research had confirmed the acceleration of HIV after ultra-violet radiation exposure, yet the association of sunbeds and HIV in the media would both incite fear and pathologise the use of sunbeds further to the public.⁸⁶ Struttaford also challenged the sunbed industry, arguing that UV-A sunbeds did not protect against burning and instead increased 'skin wrinkling, irregular pigmentation, altered skin texture (photoaging), skin fragility and deeply pigmented freckles'. Stuttaford cited another medical authority, Professor Truetta from Oxford university and his longstanding anti-sunlight and ultraviolet light research from the 1950s, to strengthen further his warning against sunbed use.⁸⁷ The authoritative weight of *The Times*, which was widely read by young adults, and the united agreement of three medical experts against the sunbed industry might make readers feel tense about the continued use of sunbeds.⁸⁸ Even if sunbed users continued to consume, most would do so anxiously.

The Media-Medical Creation and Circulation of 'Tanorexic' Women

During the early-to-mid-1990s, newspapers argued that sunbeds were one of the main reasons for the rise in skin cancer. In July 1992, a *Daily Mail* reporter remarked that the Government's *Health Of the Nation White Paper* 'point[ed] to the growing popularity of sunbeds as one of the reasons for the worrying rise in skin cancer'.⁸⁹ Blaming the sunbed industry was far easier than implementing

⁸⁶ P. J. Flegg, 'Potential Risks of Ultraviolet Radiation in HIV Infection', *International Journal of STD & AIDS*, 1, 1, (1990), pp.46–48.

⁸⁷ Dr. Thomas Stuttaford, 'BEWARE A GLOW OF ILL-HEALTH - MEDICAL BRIEFING.', *The Times*, 16 December 1993, p.15.

⁸⁸ During the mid-1990s, *The Times* was a "upmarket" broadsheet with a young adult readership, Bromley, Stephenson, *Sex, lies and democracy*, p.3.

⁸⁹ Westcott, 'I'd rather be wrinkled and brown than white and smooth', pp.24-5; When reading the July 1992 parliamentary *discussion* about the "Health of the Nation" (July 1992) white paper, the parliamentarians did not mention the term 'sunbed'. Instead Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman (representing Lancaster) exclusively addressed the higher incidences of all forms of skin cancer in Lancaster compared to 'similar' districts.

change to reduce other causes of UV-exposure, such as the degradation of the atmosphere (see Chapter Six). Nonetheless, as this chapter has demonstrated so far, the publicity campaigns against UV-A sunbeds were not discouraging sunbed consumers. Medical experts, such as Shuttleworth, argued that sunbed use continued because they remained in health-associated environments (i.e. gyms), and these providers refused to remove them and their accompanying health adverts.⁹⁰ As the media could not remove sunbeds from health environments (except for in fictional portrayals), reporters focused on more forcefully discouraging sunbed users. Newspapers continued to shift the sunbed tan away from 'fit' and 'healthy' bodies onto a more extreme 'addicted' and stigmatised 'sunbed stereotype', supported by medical authorities. If the media framed to the public that 'tanorexia' was affecting one particular demographic group, the disorder would be easier to disseminate and discourage across the national print press.⁹¹

In 1991, the term 'Tanorexia' appeared in the media for the first time in the UK.⁹² Dr Prem Misra, a psychiatrist working for the Greater Glasgow Health Authority, described 'tanorexia' as a 'psychological addiction to sunbathing –

Mrs Virginia Bottomley (The Secretary for the State for Health) responded that they would use 'special factors such as a special health promotion campaign or other means' to decrease these increasing skin cancer rates. Mrs Bottomley asserted that this was a part of their new target to halt the spread of skin cancer across all regions by the year 2005. The topic of skin cancer was apparently mentioned on page sixty-nine of the "Health of a Nation" white paper, yet I could not find this paper, Anon., "Health of the Nation", 08 July 1992, Vol.211, cc335-51. Accessed: 9 January 2020:

<https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1992/jul/08/health-of-the-nation>.

⁹⁰ Shuttleworth, 'Sunbeds and the pursuit of the year round tan should be discouraged', pp.1508-9; Diffey, 'Use of UV-A sunbeds for cosmetic tanning', pp.67-76.

⁹¹ Rosenberg, 'Illness, Society, and History', p.xvi, p.xiii.

⁹² The term 'Tanorexia' first appeared in professional literature in the mid-2000s; however, the term 'sunbed addiction' was preferred in medical journals, C. Murray, E. Turner, 'Health, risk and sunbed use: a qualitative study', *Health Risk Society*, 6, (2004), pp.67-80.

either on a sunbed or in the sun'. Doctors 'diagnosed' the 'new condition' as an 'obsessive desire to maintain a honey-brown skin all year round'. Misra claimed that sunbed addiction 'affected young women, and some young men'.⁹³ During the early 1990s, an interest in 'sunbed addiction' peaked in medical journals.⁹⁴ The participants selected for these studies consisted of either mostly, or entirely, white, educated, adolescent women, similar to the stereotype associated with anorexia.⁹⁵ In general, a wider trend was emerging as both medical experts and the media were more regularly using 'addiction' rhetoric and theories to both describe and explain women's increasingly 'dangerously obsess[ive]' behaviour towards many other beauty consumptions (particularly

⁹³ Shuttleworth, 'Sunbeds and the pursuit of the year round tan should be discouraged', pp.1508-9; Diffey, 'Use of UV-A sunbeds for cosmetic tanning', pp.67-76.

⁹⁴ In 2012, American scholars of Public Health and Skin Cancer Prevention, Joel Hillhouse and Rob Turrisi, both correspond that the emergence of medical journals on sunbeds 'increased dramatically' from 1992 onwards, Joel Hillhouse, Rob Turrisi, 'Chapter 4: Motivations for Indoor Tanning: Theoretical Models', in Heckman, Manne, *Shedding the Light on Indoor tanning*, p.70.

⁹⁵ The belief that only women could be 'tanorexic' imitates the history of anorexia nervosa, which medical experts believed was exclusively a female affliction. Yet both historians and sociologists have observed that men also developed the 'symptoms' of anorexia. Commercial pressures, particularly the diet industry and changes in advertising, encouraged men to lose weight in the 1970s. These social pressures intensified during the late 1980s and 1990s, Elliott Coups, L. Alison Phillips, 'Chapter 3: Prevalence and Correlates of Indoor Tanning', in Heckman, Manne, *Shedding the Light on Indoor Tanning*, p.58; A. Andersen, L. Cohn, T. Holbrook, *Making Weight: Men's Conflicts with Food Weight, Shape & Appearance* (Calsbad, CA: Gurze Books, 2000), p.xviii; Joan Jacobs Brumberg, *Fasting Girls: The History of Anorexia Nervosa* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univeristy Press, 2000), p.24; Gordon, *Eating Disorders Anatomy of a Social Epidemic*, p.187; E. Rothblum, S. Solovay, *The Fat Studies Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), p.76; Stearns, *Fat History*, p.23; Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth* (London: Vintage, 1991), p.289.

cosmetics and cosmetic surgery).⁹⁶ Yet medical experts and the media were overlooking the increasing commercial and visual pressures in the media, pressuring both women and men to develop certain body appearances. In particular, during the boom of the fake tan industry, and their advertising, combined with reporters' mixed yet persistent discussions on tanned skin in the print press (particularly the widely read *Daily Mail* which catered for the largest female readership in the UK), was bound to encourage an anxious preoccupation with both pale and tanned skin. Moreover, the association of first 'tanorexia' with 'anorexia', and then 'tanning addiction' with medically verified biological and psychological addictions (i.e, nicotine and alcohol), would have further pathologised sunbeds and their consumers.⁹⁷

From 1991 onwards, reporters depicted the stigmatised and typically female 'Tanorexic', or less provocatively, the 'sunbed addict', across national newspapers. An evaluation of three *Daily Mail* special reports, published in May 1991 and July 1992, provided several 'Tanorexic' case studies to reinforce this stereotype. Both a quantitative and qualitative overview of these case studies will demonstrate who the reporters and medics framed as sunbed addicts; what were these sunbed addicts' priorities according to the reporters; and why, how often and in what way these 'tanorexics' used sunbeds. Finally, the reporters created a moral message by predicting the repercussions of 'tanorexia' if these women continued to ignore health messaging. The reports framed 'Tanorexic' women as vain, deranged, out of control, excessive and self-destructive, whereas the framing of 'Tanorexic' men was brief and superficial.

⁹⁶ Sara Barrett, Jane Kelly, 'Femail Exclusive. Special report on the Beauty Addicts Whose Desire For a Perfect Body Controls their lives. Day One. Women who become hooked on their looks', *Daily Mail*, 27 May 1991, pp. 14-15.

⁹⁷ Berridge, *Demons*; Brandt, *The cigarette century: Courtwright, Forces of habit*; Penny Tinkler, *Smoke signals: Women, smoking and visual culture* (Berg Publishers, 2006); Skelly, *Addiction and British Visual Culture*; Skelly, *The Uses of Excess in Visual and Material Culture*.

The Changing 'Tanorexic' Stereotype

In one *Daily Mail* article (May 1991), the reporter depicted the 'addict[ed]' women as 'smart, confident', 'high-achieving and successful' – women who both needed and could afford their 'fix'. The reporter described their beauty addiction cycle. First, the addict was desperate, furtive and excited. Next the addict felt 'tremendous relief followed by guilt when the substance ha[d] finally been purchased'. The reporters claimed that the 'beauty addicts' were no longer older women in their thirties, whose vanity was funded by their husbands. Instead, the 'addicts' were now young women in their twenties who earned their own incomes. The reporter remarked that these women spent their money 'irrationally' on beauty consumptions at the expense of more important priorities. These priorities included 'their homes, their husbands, their families, their jobs and their social lives', which they could not commit to until they were aesthetically 'perfect'.⁹⁸ Women were being condemned for exercising their increasing financial independence and spending powers beyond their traditional 'household' and 'motherly' expectations.⁹⁹

A year later (July 1992), another *Daily Mail* article also asserted that 'Tanorexics' were typically white women in their twenties.¹⁰⁰ In the article, the seven 'tanorexic' profiles consisted of six women and one man. An example of a 'tanorexic' man was rare. In 1994, the overall ratio of men to women who had

⁹⁸ Barrett, Kelly, 'Femail Exclusive. Special report on the Beauty Addicts Whose Desire For a Perfect Body Controls their lives. Day One', pp. 14-15; Sara Barrett, 'Femail Exclusive. Concluding our special report on the beauty addicts whose desire for a perfect body takes over their lives. Confessions of the cosmetic junkies', *Daily Mail*, 28 May 1991, pp.14-15.

⁹⁹ Amélie Couvrette, Serge Brochu, Chantal Plourde, 'The "deviant good mother" motherhood experiences of substance-using and lawbreaking women', *Journal of Drug Issues*, 46, 4, (2016), pp.292-307.

¹⁰⁰ Only three out of the six 'tanorexic' women were in their twenties.

used a sunbed was seven to eleven.¹⁰¹ Yet female sunbed users were significantly overrepresented in the media and scholarly texts as print press reporters and medical researchers typically excluded men. Although the *Daily Mail's* inclusion of a 'tanorexic' man was unique and somewhat balanced the discussion for readers, the depth of 'Alan Nunn's' description did reflect a typical example of when reporters addressed 'tanorexic' men. Nunn had a feminised job as a 'florist'. Moreover, in contrast to the women's profiling, Nunn's profile consisted of two extremely small and superficial paragraphs. As these paragraphs featured in the bottom corner of the two-page article they could be easily overlooked. The readers, like the journalists, would focus on the profiling of the 'tanorexic' women.

Six out of the seven women and men were most at risk from developing melanoma as they were white. The reporter emphasised that three, in fact, had 'fair skin', of whom two were 'redheads'. This stressed to readers that their 'tanorexic' habits were even more hazardous and senseless. The article also stated that 'tanorexics' were usually 'models' or in careers where their appearance was 'important'. Most of these women's social roles or jobs – a housewife, divorcee, beauty therapist, secretary and hairdresser – would demand an outward representation of aesthetic upkeep (**Table 5.4**). Therefore, with the controversial yet continued fashion for tanned skin, the pressures felt by these white women to maintain a tanned complexion was not 'irrational'.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ In 1994 the Department of Health commissioned the omnibus survey of the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys to interview British adults, who were randomly selected and stratified by socioeconomic variables. The survey consisted of 2017 interviews, A. Bulman, 'Letters. People are overusing sunbeds', *British Medical Journal*, 310, (1995), p.1327.

¹⁰² Westcott, 'I'd rather be wrinkled and brown than white and smooth', pp.24-5; Liz Frost, *Young women and the body: A feminist sociology* (Springer, 2001).

Table 5.4 'Tanorexic' Profiles in the *Daily Mail* (July 1992).

| | Name | Gender | Location | Age | Job/Status | Skin Type |
|---|-----------------|--------|--------------|-----|----------------------|--|
| 1 | Tanja Wieck | Female | Windsor | 19 | Beauty Therapist | 'Olive skin' (Sri Lankan mother) |
| 2 | Elizabeth White | Female | London | 23 | Secretary | White |
| 3 | Amanda Sayles | Female | Berkshire | 25 | Hairdresser | White |
| 4 | Sue Catchpole | Female | Dorset | 27 | Telesales controller | 'Red hair' and 'pale, Anglo-Saxon' skin |
| 5 | Andrea Brimmell | Female | | 37 | Divorcee | 'Fair-skinned redhead' |
| 6 | Avril Button | Female | | 44 | Housewife | White |
| 7 | Alan Nunn | Male | Peterborough | 44 | Florist | 'Fair Skin' |

Source: Patsy Westcott, 'I'd rather be wrinkled and brown than white and smooth', *Daily Mail*, 21 July 1992, pp.24-5.

'Irrational' Reasons for Sunbed Use

Nonetheless, the newspaper reporters, supported by healthcare professionals, framed 'Tanorexics' as impulsive and irrational consumers who were out of control. In May 1991, the *Daily Mail* published two 'female exclusive special report(s)' on 'beauty addicts' and 'beauty slaves'. The reporters told the public that these 'cosmetic junkies' had 'neurosis', 'compulsions' and 'obsessions', which explained their sunbed use.¹⁰³ These descriptions were repeated in the July 1992 *Daily Mail* article to describe 'tanorexics' in more depth. Dr Misra claimed that 'Tanorexia' was a 'psychological addiction' tied to a sense of self-esteem. He remarked that a sunbed addict's 'vanity overcame her' fear of cancer. Dr Misra's patient, Catchpole, corresponded that her behaviour was 'madness'. She was a 'fanatic', who was 'utterly hooked' and

¹⁰³ Barrett, Kelly, 'Female Exclusive. Special report on the Beauty Addicts Whose Desire For a Perfect Body Controls their lives. Day One', pp. 14-15; Forth-Finegan, 'Sugar and Spice and Everything Nice', pp.19-48; Keane, *What's wrong with addiction?*; Kopelson, 'Radical Indulgence: Excess, Addiction, and Female Desire'.

'obsessed' with sunbeds.¹⁰⁴ As a heavy smoker, Catchpole believed she was 'immune' from skin cancer and that sunbed concerns were 'superfluous'. Brimmell had bought her own sunbed as she went 'lobster pink in the sun' but did not burn on sunbeds, whereas sunbeds made Wieck's skin 'feel healthier' and 'nourished'. White used sunbeds because she could not afford a holiday and became 'hooked' to the 'psychological lift', which cured her depression. Sayles believed that sunbeds were 'less harmful' than the sun, and the heat alleviated her 'neck problem'. During the 1980s, the sunbed industry had advertised these 'irrational' motives as a 'rational' reason for sunbed use (see Chapter Two), yet both reporters and medics framed these women's resilience to pathologise them further. Moreover, it was typical for the British public to be unphased by the growing abundance of 'endless stories' on cancer.¹⁰⁵ The public were often in 'denial' as they perceived cancer as an 'invisible' and mysterious illness that affected others and not themselves.¹⁰⁶

The *Daily Mail* reporter did begin by acknowledging the 'psychological benefits' of sunbeds. Reportedly, 'countless surveys' had confirmed that sunbed tans made their consumers feel 'slimmer, more sexually attractive and therefore more confident'. The reporter then emphasised that insecurities, 'vanity' and low self-control caused 'Tanorexia'. The sunbed addicts' fixation with a sunbed tan outweighed their fear of skin cancer.¹⁰⁷ Even when these women tried to provide logical reasons for their continued sunbed use, the reporters and medical experts often argued that these 'excuses' were unjustified.¹⁰⁸ Yet, in both social and working spaces, aesthetic imperfections were also pathologised

¹⁰⁴ Westcott, 'I'd rather be wrinkled and brown than white and smooth', pp.24-5.

¹⁰⁵ Anon., 'Femail Bodytalk. The double life of the bit-part models', *Daily Mail*, 14 April 1994, pp.46-47.

¹⁰⁶ Jackie Stacey, *Teratologies. Cultural Study of Cancer* (London: Routledge, 1997), p.2, p.6, p.2; Timmermann, Toon, *Cancer patients, cancer pathways*, pp.62-3, p.88.

¹⁰⁷ Westcott, 'I'd rather be wrinkled and brown than white and smooth', pp.24-5.

¹⁰⁸ Anon., 'Excuses, Excuses ... For Using a Sunbed', *Daily Mail*, 22 January 1994, p.3.

and presented as an economic disadvantage, particularly for women.¹⁰⁹ This combination created a moral and social contradiction in the expectations of women's health and bodies. Nonetheless, the pathologising of their guilt-ridden consumer sunbed behaviour was a typical public health approach to discourage consumption.¹¹⁰

Any Young Working-Class Woman Using a Sunbed Could be An Addict

Sunbed addicts were 'regular' sunbed users. Yet 'regular' use was open to interpretation – this could mean daily, weekly or seasonally. The duration or protective measures that sunbed 'addicts' undertook did not matter.¹¹¹ Some of the 'tanorexics' even argued that they used sunbeds responsibly. Nonetheless, this newspaper article framed the acceptance of the 'risk' was irrational.¹¹² The reporter emphasised the association with addiction by quantifying their 'dependency' on sunbeds. Yet these reporters disregarded the sunbed adverts

¹⁰⁹ Jean McHale, 'Children, cosmetic surgery and perfectionism: A case for legal regulation' in P.R. Ferguson, G. I. Laurie (eds.), *Inspiring a Medico-Legal Revolution: Essays in honour of Sheila McClean* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2015), pp.189–200; D. Griffiths, A. Mullock, 'Cosmetic Surgery: Regulatory Challenges in a Global Beauty Market', *Health Care Analysis*, 26, (2018), pp.220–234.

¹¹⁰ Alex Mold, 'Illicit drugs and the rise of epidemiology during the 1960s', *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 61, (2007), pp.278-281; Virginia Berridge, 'Passive smoking and its pre-history in Britain: policy speaks to science?', *Social Science and Medicine*, 49, (1999), p.1190, p.1188.

¹¹¹ Catchpole used a sunbed twice a week from May until December. For three or four years, Brimmell had used a sunbed for four hours every week. Wieck used a sunbed 'at least once a week'. For seven years, Sayles had used a sunbed once or twice a week, Westcott, 'I'd rather be wrinkled and brown than white and smooth', pp.24-5.

¹¹² Wieck asserted that she used sunbeds 'in moderation' and 'always looked carefully at the dosage time'. To tan 'safely', she read the sunbed literature and always wore goggles and protective cream. Sayles also used protective gel and cream before and afterward her sunbed session, Westcott, 'I'd rather be wrinkled and brown than white and smooth', pp.24-5.

from the 1980s in which 'everyday' sunbed use was both encouraged and presented as harmless (see Chapter Two).

'Tanorexic' women were depicted as using sunbeds both absurdly and secretively – emphasising that their 'fix' was unreasonable as they felt guilty about their almost illicit use of sunbeds.¹¹³ In the first *Daily Mail* article (May 1991), a section captioned 'Bizarre', focused on sunbed 'addicts'. The reporter ridiculed a bride for wanting a beauty salon owner in London to open her salon at 7.30am on a Saturday morning before her wedding day.¹¹⁴ This reporter directly contradicted the advice from another *Daily Mail* reporter two years later, who advised a course of sunbed sessions if a bride were to be unhappy with her 'pale' complexion on her 'big wedding day'.¹¹⁵ The secretive and 'guilty' use of sunbeds continued into the mid-1990s. A model remarked that everyone continued to use sunbeds but refused to admit it as they did not want to be stigmatised and condemned.¹¹⁶ Reporters and medics often pathologised this guilt, but as this chapter has previously demonstrated, they were overlooking the mixed messages in the print press, between medical experts and sunbed industry experts, and the reluctance for public health to implement a policy change.

The Fatal Consequence of Sunbed Use

The media presented that 'sunbed addiction' was 'costly' and life-threatening –

¹¹³ Nonetheless, by April 1994, a model remarked that people (including other models) won't admit it, but everyone continued to use sunbeds, they hid it to prevent the stigmatising and condemning attitudes towards them ... 'Donna Humphris said: 'I also use a sunbed once a week. A lot of models won't admit to it, but most do use them. Your skin just looks better. I don't really think about skin cancer', Anon., 'The double life of the bit-part models', pp.46-47.

¹¹⁴ Barrett, 'Femail Exclusive. Concluding our special report on the beauty addicts whose desire for a perfect body takes over their lives', pp.14-15.

¹¹⁵ Hancock, 'Femail Body talk. How to avoid those wedding belle blues', p.46.

¹¹⁶ Anon., 'Femail Bodytalk. The double life of the bit-part models', pp.46-47.

a burden on the NHS, the taxpayer and the public. The reporter and medical experts remarked that sunbeds risked ‘a whole host of skin problems, which included ‘28,000 cases of skin cancer a year and 1,500 deaths’. Dermatologist Dr John Hawk provided another mixed message, suggesting that a cosmetic sunbed tan was deliberate damage, whereas if the public were outside in the sun, they were ‘at least ... enjoying life’. Sunbeds reportedly caused ‘itching, irregular freckling ... prickly heat ... dry skin ... mild sunburn and premalignant moles’ and also ‘skin fragility syndrome - nasty crusts, scabs and blisters’. Yet these were not as ‘insidious’ as the ‘Tanorexia’ ‘syndrome’.¹¹⁷ Hawk and the reporter were framing sunbed use as self-destructive. The specific focus on the aesthetic damage of sunbeds on the skin reflects their attribution of vanity to these consumers, ignoring the users’ alleged sunbed benefits.

Nonetheless, in the early 1990s, the term ‘tanorexia’ remained relatively uncommon, and the media and general public did not widely interpret or condemn sunbed use as an abnormal or addictive activity. The concept of sunbed use as a self-destructive and irrational addiction was not widespread and evidence was scarce. This changed in 1994. The melanoma deaths of two women from Newcastle marked a turning point. Newspapers reported that these ‘sunbed’ deaths were ‘the first cases in England to be directly linked by a doctor’. This strengthened the medical profession’s authority over public sunbed use. In newspapers, dermatologists, such as Peter Farr and John Hawk, who regularly featured in newspapers on sunbeds, narrated the fatalities in a way that would significantly increase public fears. Farr and Hawk, who worked together for the British Photodermatology Group, stated that these two deaths were entirely caused by sunbeds.¹¹⁸ He claimed that one of these ‘young’ women ‘had been on only one foreign holiday’ and neither ‘sunbathed topless or nude’, therefore they were “fairly confident that natural sunlight played no role at all”. One of these ‘young’ women was, in fact, in her forties. As ‘leading skin experts’, the dermatologist outrightly ‘condemn[ed] regular’ sunbed use. Dr

¹¹⁷ Westcott, ‘I’d rather be wrinkled and brown than white and smooth’, pp.24-5.

¹¹⁸ Duce, ‘Sunbed users ignore danger’, p.7.

Farr claimed that these deaths were the 'tip of the iceberg' of sunbed related deaths as they were certain that the sunbed-induced skin cancer process took several years. The 'worse offenders' were those who used sunbeds 'indiscriminately' at home.¹¹⁹ Such unmonitored household use was now, of course, constructed as a vain and feckless consumption of working-class people, not the rational affluent early consumers (see Chapters One, Two and Three).¹²⁰

The timing of this incident created a strong public response. First, skin cancer in western culture was often headline news in the 1990s.¹²¹ Second, the deaths of two white, 'young' women in the media would more powerfully evoke sympathy compared to other demographic groups.¹²² This heightened the moral panic associated with sunbeds. In a response to these two deaths, England's biggest sunbed hire group, HSS Hire Shop, abandoned the launch of new sunbeds across 170 stores.¹²³ A month later, a television programme

¹¹⁹ David Goodhart, 'Sunbed caused skin cancer', *Financial Times*, 8 March 1994, p.13; Jenny Hope, 'A woman's skin cancer is blamed on sunbed', *Daily Mail*, 8 March 1994, p.6; Atkinson, 'A healthy, all year tan – or basking in ignorance about the risk of skin cancer', p.17.

¹²⁰ Dr Farr's statement is weakened when correlated with a review of severe sunbed incidents throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. In 1985, for instance, the annual report of the Department of Trade and Industry's Home Accident Surveillance System stated that, after stairs, the main cause of incidents at home were attributed to sunbeds, The Department of Trade and Industry's Home Accident Surveillance System report calculated a total of one hundred and forty-three reported sunbed incidents in 1985, Kenneth Gosling, 'Peril of summer weekends / Accidents in the home', *The Times*, 5 November 1986, p.3.

¹²¹ Hansen, 'Shades of Change', p.192.

¹²² Jessica Mosebach, 'A content analysis of gender differences in newspaper book reviews', Unpublished Thesis, University of Nevada, (2007), p.20.

¹²³ Anon., 'Sunbed launch off after cancer scare', *Daily Mail*, 10 March 1994, p.21.

highlighted the dangers of sunbeds and 'Tanorexia'.¹²⁴ These two deaths also influenced the *Cosmopolitan* June 1994 edition to promote further that the "pale" look was now acceptable.¹²⁵ Yet, during the early 1990s, *Cosmopolitan* had a reputation for publishing mixed messages to their readers. Rhetorically, *Cosmopolitan* encouraged women to liberate themselves from their beauty routines yet visually both promoted and glamourised beauty and tanning cultures.¹²⁶

Charles Rosenberg, a medical historian, states that 'it is difficult indeed to think of any significant area of social debate and tension – ideas of race, gender, class ... in which hypothetical disease aetiologies have not served to project and rationalize widely held values and attitudes'.¹²⁷ This certainly applies to the creation of the 'Tanorexic' stereotype, which overlapped with the

¹²⁴ Anon., 'Watching Brief', *Guardian*, 15 April 1994, p.52; On the BBC News, two dermatologists, Dr Peter Farr and Dr Clifford Lawrence, used the Newcastle incident to confirm that sunbeds caused skin cancer, BBC Broadcast Archive, 'NEWS – SUNBED CAUSES SKIN CANCER', BBC News, Aired 6pm, 7 March 1994.

¹²⁵ Duce, 'Sunbed users ignore danger', p.7.

¹²⁶ In an article titled 'Jailing new women', the *Financial Times* provided their annual inspection of 'smart women' *Cosmopolitan* magazines. Although women mainly staffed the magazine, the magazine mainly repressed women by encouraging them to conform to the stereotypes of women in advertising campaigns, which were mainly written and published by men in industry and marketing. The *Financial Times* reporter observed that although 'aprons and frumpiness' were absent, the *Cosmopolitan* models were 'stick insects, marinated in rich moisturisers and then barbecued on a tropical beach'. Moreover, *Cosmopolitan's* rhetoric and images encouraged women to 'shed their clothes, shed their surplus flesh, and sizzle in the sun'. The summer issues were particularly marked for their myriad of advertisements. Apparently, women had escaped the prison of domesticity to then be imprisoned in a new routine of dieting, psychiatric diagnosing, sunbeds and exercising, often within 'health farms'. The reporter concluded that the women tanning on the beach in *Cosmopolitan* were not experiencing a "feast of summer fiction" but instead a 'fiction of female emancipation', Nigel Spivey, 'Jailing new women', *Financial Times*, 11/12 July 1992, p.XX.

¹²⁷ Rosenberg, 'Illness, Society, and History' p.xxii.

stereotypes attached to sufferers of hysteria and eating disorders. Tellingly, during the mid-1990s, melanoma mortality rates were higher in men than women;¹²⁸ nonetheless, these individual cases, which were sensationalised by the *Daily Mail* and supported by medical professions, created a 'social role and individual identity' linked to 'Tanorexia'.¹²⁹ The media made the associated social role of Tanorexia accessible to sunbed users.¹³⁰ The Tanorexic stereotype had been created, and the media and medical journals would continue to emphasise that sunbed users were young, white women who were insecure, self-destructive, vain and lacked self-discipline well into the late 1990s.¹³¹ Nonetheless, the public continued to 'reject advice about the risk of sunbed tanning despite warnings that the practice can be as dangerous as natural sunlight'.¹³² Also, many reporters and the public continued to believe that UV-A sunbeds, unlike the sun, only 'tan[ned] not burn[ed]'.¹³³ High Street Tanning Shops continued to defend their sunbed services as 'safe' because of their equipment and regulations.¹³⁴

Conclusion

During the early 1990s, fake tan and health club industries, the media, scientists, healthcare professionals - and even the ASA and public health authorities through their reluctance to create a sunbed legislation - publicised

¹²⁸ Henrike E. Karim-Kos, Esther de Vries, Isabelle Soerjomataram, Valery Lemmens, Sabine Siesling, Jan Willem W. Coebergh, 'Recent trends of cancer in Europe: a combined approach of incidence, survival and mortality for 17 cancer sites since the 1990s', *European journal of cancer*, 44, 10, (2008), p.1365.

¹²⁹ Rosenberg, 'Illness, Society, and History', p.xiii.

¹³⁰ Rosenberg, 'Illness, Society, and History', p.xiii.

¹³¹ B. Fiala, M. Kopp, V. Gunther, 'Why do young women use sunbeds? A comparative psychological study', *British Journal of Dermatology*, 137, (1997).

¹³² Duce, 'Sunbed users ignore danger', p.7.

¹³³ Anon., 'Keeping a log of logos', *Guardian*, 1 July 1994, p.A6.

¹³⁴ Atkinson, 'A healthy, all year tan – or basking in ignorance about the risk of skin cancer', p.17.

mixed messages about sunbed use to the public. Most of these stakeholders either directly or inadvertently encouraged tanning culture, and they hierarchised a “natural” tan above all “artificial” methods (although it was unknown if anyone could differentiate), further fuelling the public’s desire to continue using sunbeds. Even alternative tanning advertising often concluded that previous or post-UV exposure would “deep[en]” the tanning effect of the lotions or tanning tablets. The scientific research to develop more technologies that would enable tanning also confirmed to the public that tanning was to remain a part of British culture. Health clubs and health farms refused to remove their sunbeds and a monopoly of quick-spreading franchises (*The Tanning Shop* and *Kwik Tan*) continued to advertise health claims.

Even dermatologists generated mixed messages by both condemning commercial UV-A and UV-B sunbeds alongside promoting their own medical UV-A and UV-B light therapies. Some dermatologists even suggested that patients could use commercial sunbeds as many patients could not access NHS photo-dermatology units. Unsurprisingly, these mixed messages, simultaneously encouraging and stigmatising tanning culture, made sunbed users feel anxious. Tanning consumers wanted a tan yet wanted to hide the source of their tan to avoid being stigmatised.

Soon, both the media and medics followed the traditional narrative of labelling young, white and working-class women as the ‘addicted’ ‘tanorexics’. Both their bodies and their beauty regimes were scrutinised. Paradoxically yet unsurprisingly, the *Daily Mail* was the newspaper that most scrutinised and shamed these women for embracing popular tanning culture and provided the greatest number of tanning-related articles and products. In the media, some of these women argued back. They explained that a tanned complexion, albeit controversially, continued to be fashionable in most public spaces and was an expected aesthetic to reflect upkeep in most social roles (from households to the workplace). Some even asserted that they used sunbeds responsibly. Nonetheless, the media, supported by healthcare professionals, condemned these women’s sunbed use as ‘irrational’ and vain. The early 1990s ended with the media and medics sensationalising the deaths of two women to warn

against the fatal consequences of sunbed use. Yet the media and medic's attacks on the sunbed industry and their consumers was still in its infancy.

Chapter 6: The Attack on the Sunbed Empire and Their 'Tanorexic' 'Slaves' in a 'War' against Skin Cancer (1995-1997).

Introduction

*'What drives these [sunbed] addicts on? Even though they know it can ... be fatal for them', 'Tanorexia' on BBC2's Esther (4.55pm, 18 June 1997).*¹

During the mid-1990s, the emerging global war against the increase of skin cancer triggered more anti-sunbed research and new attacks on the sunbed industry in Britain.² The first section of this chapter evaluates how medical experts, mainly dermatologists, spearheaded anti-sunbed industry concerns to weaken the industry. These medical experts used both the print press and television programmes to pressurise providers to remove their sunbeds, aiming to reduce overall sunbed consumption. To discourage users, medical experts and media reporters broadcast claims that sunbed providers were irresponsibly providing the public with life-threatening sunbeds. The British government's research on sunbeds demonstrated that the 'sunbed epidemic' was instead a moral panic, mainly against young working-class women. This chapter illustrates how the 'moral panic' concerning 'tanorexia' had now spread from the print press, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, to national television, reaching more audiences. Nonetheless, the lack of consensus within the medical profession, and both the visual and rhetorical contradictions in the media-medical anti-sunbed warnings, undermined their direct attempts to weaken the sunbed industry's commercial power.

The second section of this chapter will evaluate both the strengthening

¹ *Esther*, 'Tanorexia', (BBC2, 4.55pm, 18 June 1997).

² Cushion, 'Skin Cancer Research Paper 96/84', pp.22-23.

and growing number of anti-sunbed groups, rendered visible by the media. Yet only the legal authorities were successful in reducing the expansion of the sunbed industry. Ironically the fake tan industry and media groups continued to propagandise tanning culture even when they criticised the sunbed industry. Television broadcast producers and presenters, in support of medical groups, also led their own attack by presenting sunbed providers as exploitative, profit-focused, 'pernicious' and unconcerned about the health of their consumers, which tarnished the sunbed industry's reputation even further. Levels of sunbed advertising in the media also declined. Yet sunbed companies continued to advertise directly to their consumers, using the same 'health' and 'safety' claims. Sunbeds remained just as popular as the tanned complexion they allowed celebrities to maintain. As a result, the commercial power of the sunbed franchise industry was not deteriorating quickly enough for concerned medical experts and media producers.

The final section of this chapter demonstrates how the media subsequently developed a greater focus on changing the behaviours, attitudes and consuming habits of sunbed users. To achieve this, media reporters and television producers, supported by medical experts, more confidently affirmed a widespread 'condition' across Britain, termed either 'sunbed addiction' or 'tanorexia'. Psychologists and the media stigmatised working-to-middle class women's pleasurable use of sunbeds as irrational, addictive and pathological. From 1995 to 1997, dermatologists and then psychologists endorsed the 'tanorexic' stereotype in newspapers, magazines and later on television talk shows. Reportedly, 'tanorexia' affected both women and men; however, the mass media predominantly framed this 'sunbed addiction' as a woman's affliction. In contrast to the lightly stigmatised men, 'tanorexic' women were aggressively interrogated, and condemned as irrational, self-destructive and 'selfish'. The talk shows framed mothers as both immorally and unforgivably 'ruining' their children's lives, especially when they defended their consumer right to use sunbeds.³ This last section also demonstrates the late-twentieth

³ *Esther*, 'Tanorexia'.

century increase of ‘patient experts’ in the media, as melanoma ‘survivors’ confidently shared their own experiences to discourage the public’s sunbed use.

The Worldwide War against Skin Cancer (and the Sunbed Industry)

During the mid-1990s, the drastic increase of melanoma across the global population - particularly as observed in the UK, across Europe, the USA and Australia - sparked a global ‘war’ on skin cancer. In response, the Department of Health published the *Health of the Nation*, which included a target to stop the year by year skin cancer increase in Britain by 2005.⁴ The *Health of the Nation* was concerned about the depleting ozone layer and other skin cancer-causing ‘green issues’, yet sunbeds became the prime target.⁵ As sunbeds were thought to be a highly visible, stoppable and quantifiable cause of skin cancer, especially when compared to sun exposure, both medical groups and the British government became fixated on stopping the commercial sunbed industry from providing their services. Both the media and leading dermatologists spearheaded anti-sunbed opinions and popularised negative research findings

⁴ Jane Cushion, ‘Skin Cancer Research Paper 96/84’, pp.22-23.

⁵ Launched in 1992, the *Health of the Nation* strategy (HOTN) was the British government’s first attempt to develop a strategy to explicitly improve the population’s health. Based on the WHO’s *Health For All* strategy and similar developments in the US, its overall aim was extend both the quality and length of life. The strategy focused on five key areas: coronary heart disease and stroke, cancers, mental health, sexual health, and the prevention of accidents. The government chose these areas because they were the main causes of premature deaths yet with effective interventions they were considered avoidable. The government also thought that it were possible to set objectives and targets in these five areas, and monitor their progress. Twenty-seven targets were set across these key areas, Department of Health, ‘The health of the Nation – a strategy for health in England’, Her Majesty’s Stationery Office (1992); David J. Hunter, Naomi Fulop, Morton Warner, *From “Health of the Nation” to “Our Healthier Nation”*, World Health Organization, (Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen, Policy Learning Curve Series, No.2, August, 2000), p.3.

to the public. To discourage sunbed use, dermatologists and the media wanted to weaken the industry's reputation and prompt more restrictive regulations.⁶ These growing fears of skin cancer and sunbeds from interlinked stakeholders (mainly government and public and charitable health organisations) led to a snowball of anti-sunbed messages in the media. An increasing number of dermatologists had also become extremely concerned. They began to repeatedly critique sunbeds at renowned and influential British dermatology conferences. Yet these dermatologists and other medical groups (geneticists) continued to publish mixed messages and contradictions, some endorsing and others condemning UV-exposure. This confused government officials, the media and sunbed consumers, and damaged these dermatologists' attempts to outrightly ban sunbeds from public facilities.⁷

Media-Medical Lobbying Against Skin Cancer and the Sunbed Industry

During the mid-1990s, in the media, both the British government and leading dermatologists were visibly concerned about skin cancer and the sunbed industry. The government used the national press to broadcast sunbed warnings and recommended guidelines to protect consumers. In these newspapers, media-savvy medical experts who were renowned for their research and publications on sunbed-related skin cancer matters, endorsed these health messages. In May 1995, within a two-week time frame, medical lobbying by the *Guardian*, the *BMJ* and *The Times* led to a government-funded skin cancer research initiative. Two of its main aims included an evaluation of sunbed risks and the effectiveness of public health campaigns. In the newspapers, the medical experts were dermatologist Dr Margaret Price (who

⁶ Anon., 'Call to ban council sunbeds', p.4; Health Education Authority, 'Calls to phase out sunbeds from council premises', Press release can/96/005, London, 1996.

⁷ Anon., 'The Fifth Meeting of the BEES (British Epidermo-Epidemiology Society), 12 January 1996, Queen's Medical Centre, University Hospital, Nottingham', *British Journal of Dermatology*, 133, (1995), pp.1004-1007.

would later appear on an anti-sunbed talk show)⁸ and a senior medical officer from the Department of Health, Dr Andrew Bulman. Two dermatologists, Dr John Hawk and Dr Johnathon Norris also appeared on television to discourage the public from using sunbeds.

Mid-May 1995, in the *Guardian*, the Department of Health advised people to stop using sunbeds and asserted that sunbeds needed to display skin cancer warnings.⁹ According to the *Guardian*, the dermatology committee from the BMA supported these proposals. Previously, in 1994, the Department of Health had commissioned an omnibus survey about sunbed use, undertaken by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) in England, Scotland and Wales. The survey, based on 2,017 households, revealed that one quarter of people aged between 16 and 24, and ten per cent of people aged 25 and 54, had used a sunbed in 1994. A quarter of these sunbed users had more than twenty sessions in one year, which was the British Photodermatology group's recommended maximum limit. The *Daily Mail* accurately reported that 'one in four of the women' from this survey had exceeded this recommended limit. The newspaper article did not mention the nine per cent of male users who had also exceeded this limit.¹⁰ According to the reporter, the survey also revealed that many women – and presumably men – wrongly believed that sunbeds provided a "safe" tan. The *Daily Mail* cited Dr Margaret Price's confirmation that sunbeds damaged health. The Department of Health's senior medical officer, Dr Andrew Bulman, also claimed that skin cancer would be 'almost entirely preventable by avoiding excessive exposure to ultraviolet light'. Apparently, eleven per cent of women and seven per cent of men were using sunbeds every year.¹¹ Official

⁸ *Esther*, 'Tanorexia'.

⁹ Anon., 'Sunbed warning', *Guardian*, 19 May 1995, p.5.

¹⁰ Bulman, 'People are overusing sunbeds', p.1327.

¹¹ In this survey 'black skinned' individuals were not asked questions about sun burning, Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, Social Survey Division, (1998). *OPCS Omnibus Survey, UK Data Service, SN: 3739, January 1995*. Accessed 25 January 2020: <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-3739-1>

guidelines repeated the advised maximum of '30 minutes on a sunbed for no more than 20 times a year'.¹²

The following day, Bulman published this exact information in a *BMJ* letter. This letter revealed that the 'overall ratio of men to women who had used a sunbed was 7:11', which had been incorrectly translated in the *Daily Mail* as '11 per cent of women used sunbeds during a year, against seven per cent of men'.¹³ In his letter, Bulman revealed that out of the 184 people who used sunbeds, half used sunbeds at home (of this, one third hired and two thirds owned the household sunbed). The other half of the consumers used public sunbed facilities - one fifth of these were provided by local councils.¹⁴ Alongside the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the British Standards and the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management also provided safety guidelines for sunbed use.¹⁵ A day later, *The Times* announced that the government were revising sunbed guidelines because the link between artificial tanning and skin cancer had strengthened. The HSE wanted to collect medical opinions and publish new guidance by the late summer.¹⁶ The existing sunbed recommendations had been introduced in 1982 - at a time when UV-A radiation from sunbeds was thought to be safer than natural sunlight.¹⁷

Despite widespread publicity about the health risks of sunbeds, the industry continued to be widely used. An owner of a health club in Brighton, Sandra Bevan, defended her customers, explaining that the demand for

¹² Jenny Hope (medical correspondent), 'The deadly vanity of Britain's slaves to sunbeds', *Daily Mail*, 19 May 1995, p.36.

¹³ Hope, 'The deadly vanity of Britain's slaves to sunbeds', p.36.

¹⁴ Bulman, 'Letters. People are overusing sunbeds', p.1327.

¹⁵ British Standards Institution, *Specification for safety of household and similar electrical appliances: ultraviolet and infrared radiation skin treatment appliances for household and similar use*, (London, 1995).

¹⁶ Health and Safety Executive, "Keep your top on", Press Release, 27 June 1995.

¹⁷ Health and Safety Executive, *Commercial ultraviolet tanning equipment* (London: HMSO, 1982) (Guidance note GS18.). See Chapter Two.

sunbeds had not decreased yet fewer clients were ‘over-do[ing] it’. Yet Dr Margaret Price argued that the sunbed-providing gyms and fitness centres were misleading the public with the “double message [that sunbeds] [were] healthy”.¹⁸

This medical lobbying in the media to prompt a change in sunbed regulations was successful. A few days later, the *Guardian* publicised news that the Health Education Council were creating warning leaflets for sunbed users.¹⁹ A week later, again in the *Guardian*, the Department of Health advertised funding for ‘Skin Cancer and Ultraviolet Radiation’ research (**Figure 6.1**). The successful researchers would help the Department of Health achieve their *Health of the Nation* target by decreasing the yearly increase of skin cancer by 2005. The research scope focused on three aims. The first aim explored the causes of skin cancer (explicitly including sunbeds as an influence) and the populations at risk. The second aim focused on how public health intervention could affect prevention. The Department of Health wanted to know if the public would change their behaviour if they understood the health risks, and they wanted to develop a better method to measure the effect of their campaigns. The final aim measured the progress of their *Health of a Nation* target. The research would begin in November 1995.²⁰

¹⁸ Lin Jenkins, ‘Cancer link prompts rewrite guidance on sunbed use’, *The Times*, 20 May 1995, p.7.

¹⁹ Anon., ‘The Sunbed Scare’, *Guardian*, 24 May 1995, p.9.

²⁰ Tim Elliott, from the Department of Health, Research and Development Division was in charge and could provide a more detailed research brief and instructions for the application, Anon., ‘Department of Health. Skin Cancer and Ultraviolet Radiation Research Initiative. Invitation for Research Bids to the Department of Health’s Policy Research Programme’, *Guardian*, 30 May 1995, p.30.

At the end of July, the *Daily Mail* predicted that the new sunbed restrictions, due early August, would irritate the British public as they would

Figure 6.1 Invitation for government funded research on skin cancer and UV radiation in England (May 1995).



**Skin Cancer and Ultraviolet Radiation
Research Initiative**

**Invitation for Research Bids to the
Department of Health's Policy Research Programme**

A recent review of skin cancer and ultraviolet radiation has identified a requirement for research relevant to the Department of Health's skin cancer prevention policy. This is designed to make progress towards achievement of the Health of the Nation target - to halt the year-on-year increase in the incidence of skin cancer by 2005.

The Director of Research and Development wishes to commission research, the results of which can be clearly linked to the main policy questions under three broad headings. These are illustrated below with examples. These are not exclusive, and proposals for addressing other relevant questions within the three broad headings will also be considered if the arguments for policy relevance are convincingly made.

Risk factors leading to skin cancer, and populations at risk:

- How important are (a) episodes of sunburn, and (b) cumulative UV exposure in the induction of malignant melanoma?
- What is the relative importance of UVA and UVB in the induction of malignant melanoma?
- Is there such a thing as a safe suntan?
- Do sunscreen products protect against skin cancer as well as sunburn?
- Does the use of sunbeds cause skin cancer?
- Who is most at risk?
- Should 'Safety in the Sun' messages be targeted at high risk groups or be broadly aimed at the whole population?

Public health interventions aimed at primary prevention:

- How can the UK experience of primary prevention programmes in other health promotion areas be best applied to the skin cancer programme?
- Can improved methods be developed to measure the effect of public information campaigns? To what extent does increased public understanding of the risk lead to a change in behaviour?

Measuring progress towards the target:

- Can a better short-term progress measure than sunburn prevalence be developed?
- What is the cost/effect of various options for cancer registration methodology to measure time trends in incidence and mortality?

To receive a more detailed research brief and instructions for application, please write to: Tim Elliott, Department of Health, Research and Development Division, Skipton House, 80 London Road, London SE1 6LW.

Outline research proposals from researchers who preferably have a proven research record must be submitted no later than 7 July 1995. Those whose proposals are shortlisted by the Commissioning Group will be invited to submit detailed proposals for selection for commissioning. Successful proposers will be notified by November 1995.

Source: Department of Health, 'Skin Cancer and Ultraviolet Radiation Research Initiative', *Guardian*, 30 May 1995, p.30.

inconvenience their pre-holiday routines.²¹ This illustrates how immersed sunbeds were in popular cultural consumptions and routines, and suggests that the *Daily Mail* and their female orientated readership continued to be fixated with tanning culture and sunbeds (see Chapter Five). In December 1995, the National Radiological Protection Board also discouraged sunbed use, confirming that they were “likely to carry a risk”. As malignant melanoma deaths were rising fast, the board also recommended research on sunbed-induced skin cancer or eye damage. Sunbeds had apparently caused ‘one in 12 cancers in people aged 20-39’.²² These speedy public broadcasts and quick responses demonstrate that most individuals within government, healthcare professional and media groups were working together to both broadcast health warnings, and prompt policy changes to restrict sunbed use. A consensus was emerging against the widespread public use of sunbeds.

Department of Health Research on Skin Cancer (and the Sunbed Industry)

In July 1996, the House of Commons Library published this skin cancer and UV research initiative paper. In 1997, the Department of Health produced a statistical bulletin on sun exposure, which they published in 1998. Both government documents confirmed that sunbeds were a cause of skin cancer.²³

In the first paper, skin cancer cases were apparently rising by roughly ten per cent each year in the UK. In England and Wales, again per year, almost 40,000 new cases of skin cancer were newly registered, causing approximately 1600 deaths. The paper argued that many of these cases were ‘preventable

²¹ Anon., ‘THE WEEK AHEAD. 7 GOOD THINGS. 7 BAD THINGS’, *Daily Mail*, 29 July 1995, p.3.

²² Nigel Hawkes, ‘Sunlamps ‘carry risk of cancer’, *The Times*, 13 December 1995, p.8.

²³ Cushion, ‘Skin Cancer Research Paper 96/84’, pp.22-23; Wellcome Trust Collection, Box 4303, ‘Sun exposure: adults’ behaviour and knowledge 1997’, Statistical Bulletin, Great Britain, Department of Health, Office for National Statistics, Social Survey Division, June 1998.

and that skin cancer offer[ed] great scope for successful intervention by public education and preventative measure'. Although only '10%' of all skin cancers were malignant melanomas, melanoma had a '20-50%' chance of mortality.²⁴ Indoor rather than outdoor workers were most affected by melanoma, contrasting to all other forms of skin cancer. Moreover, the affected areas were not 'everyday' exposed areas, such as the hands, neck and face. Also, the 'affluent [were] at greater risk than the poor although the prognosis in higher socio-economic group individuals [were] better than in the less affluent'.²⁵ The greatest risk factors for developing melanoma in later life were: childhood sunburn; intensity of exposure; country of origin; being 'skin type 1' ('red hair and fair skin which does not tan'); having many moles, and finally, showing a genetic disposition to and family history of melanoma. Other environmental factors included 'fluorescent lighting' and the 'controversial' role of sunbeds and tanning parlours.²⁶ The paper also presented the short and long-term adverse and beneficial effects of ultraviolet radiation on the body.

²⁴ Department of Health, *Cancers. The Health of the Nation Key Area Handbook* (1993), Cancer paragraph 4.1.

²⁵ Yet the 'poor compared to the rich, especially in men' were least likely to survive melanoma, during the 1990s. As working-class groups did not access healthcare as confidently or regularly as middle-to-upper class groups, they were least likely to survive because they were diagnosed at a later stage, which reduced the success of treatment. A decade later, medical articles similarly concluded that there needed to be an increase in public education, yet they added that there also needed to be widening access to care for disadvantaged groups to reduce overall melanoma mortality rates, M. Coleman, B. Rachet, L. Woods, et al., 'Trends and socioeconomic inequalities in cancer survival in England and Wales up to 2001', *British Journal of Cancer*, 90, (2004), pp.1367–1373; Ortiz, Carlos A. Reyes, James S. Goodwin, Jean L. Freeman, 'The effect of socioeconomic factors on incidence, stage at diagnosis and survival of cutaneous melanoma', *Medical Science Monitor*, 11, 5 (2005), pp.RA169-70; Anon., 'Incidence and thickness of primary tumours and survival of patients with CMM in relation to socio-economic status', *British Medical Journal*, (1996), pp.1125-6.

²⁶ Cushion, 'Skin Cancer Research Paper 96/84', pp.11-13.

Section F of this paper researched industrial, medical and cosmetic 'artificial ultraviolet radiation sources'. The researchers wanted to discover if there was any evidence that sunbed use contributed to the development of skin cancer. This section re-iterated that the British public widely used sunbeds and that 'regular users tended to be young, female and relatively affluent', yet the author included no evidence to support this last statement. Citing *BMJs*, the researcher concluded that the influence of sunbeds on skin cancer 'remain[ed] controversial and undecided' because of the lack of 'long term studies'. In the absence of certainty, the reporter supported the British Photodermatology Group's discouragement of sunbeds, reiterating their advice that if the public continued to use sunbeds they should undergo no more than twenty sessions per year.

The following and final section of the paper discussed skin cancer prevention. The content ranged from behaviour changes to sunscreens and the government response for change. The *Health of the Nation* believed that changing the public's 'attitude and behaviour' was the best approach to achieve 'sensible levels' of UV sun exposure.²⁷ To 'encourage healthy attitudes' towards sunlight exposure, the Department of Health had launched a national skin cancer public health campaign in partnership with the HEA; the NHS; both commercial and professional bodies, and finally, other government departments. The research paper's conclusion described some of these public campaigns. The UK's 'Sun know how' campaign was in its third year. The new 1996 summer campaign theme was 'Shift to the shade'. For a full week in June 1996, the UK Skin Cancer Working Party also ran a Sun Awareness Week. The last question evaluated the effectiveness of public health campaigns. Incidence rates used to be a good indicator of long-term public education measures. Yet as cancer development could take up to '40 years', the researcher asserted that the *Health of the Nation* target was 'slightly optimistic'. The researcher suggested that the health education approach in Australia, which had changed

²⁷ Mold, Clark, Millward, Payling, *Placing the Public in Public Health in Post-War Britain*, pp.1-2.

their public's anti-skin cancer attitudes, knowledge and beliefs, was a model example for the UK.²⁸

This research paper demonstrated that tanning continued to be associated with affluence. During the 1970s and 1980s, both melanoma incidences and mortality rates, were in fact more common in 'occupational class II', which were 'professionals'. Moreover, men within higher socio-economic groups reflected the highest incidence rates – not women.²⁹ These incidence trends continued to climb into the 1990s, though the mortality rates decreased for those with higher socio-economic status.³⁰ Although affluent groups were experiencing higher incidence rates, healthcare professionals, public health and government officials did not suggest that middle-to-upper class groups should become the prime targets for UV-health education to deter their tanning habits.

²⁸ Cushion, 'Skin Cancer Research Paper 96/84'; By the late twentieth-century, the British government, industries, the media and the civil society became felt responsible for persuading the public to make healthier choices, Mold, Clark, Millward, Payling, *Placing the Public in Public Health in Post-War Britain*, pp.1-2.

²⁹ In this study, there were five types of 'occupational classes' listed. Occupation type 'II' were 'professional occupations'. During the 1970s and 1980s, skin cancer was significantly less common among men with manual occupations when compared to middle-to-upper employees in 'intermediate' and 'professional' occupations, Annika Rosengren, and Lars Wilhelmsen, 'Cancer incidence, mortality from cancer and survival in men of different occupational classes', *European journal of epidemiology*, 19, 6, (2004), p.535, p.533, p.536; Higher Education Statistics Analysis, 'Standard Occupational Classification: SOC90'. Accessed 5 January 2020:

<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/support/documentation/occupational/soc90>

³⁰ Although affluent groups reflected higher melanoma incidence rates, as they had greater access to medical diagnosis, care and treatment, they had lower mortality rates compared to lower socioeconomic groups, Ortiz, Carlos A. Reyes, James S. Goodwin, Jean L. Freeman, 'The effect of socioeconomic factors on incidence, stage at diagnosis and survival of cutaneous melanoma', *Medical Science Monitor*, 11, 5, (2005), p.RA170; C. G. Luke, B. J. Coventry, E. J. Foster-Smith, D. M. Roder, 'A critical analysis of reasons for improved survival from invasive cutaneous melanoma', *Cancer Causes Control*, 14, (2003), pp.871–78.

Instead, the government, medical experts and the media continued to target lower socioeconomic groups, particularly young women. Even though evidence showed the opposite, these public health actors presumed that affluent groups tanned responsibly, either in the sun or through sunbed avoidance. The difference, however, was that wealthier demographic groups were more effective healthcare seekers. Moreover, the government, medical and media focus (and later pressure) on working class groups, particularly young women, demonstrates the immediate assumption that these individuals consumed, or in this case were tanning, irresponsibly.

In September 1997, the Government Statistical Service conducted an Office for National Statistics (ONS) Omnibus Survey to assess the public's behaviour towards both sun exposure and sun protection awareness. In June 1998, the results from 1,888 interviews were published.³¹ The survey revealed that most adults were aware of the publicity regarding the risks of excessive sun exposure; 75% of women and over 60% of men thought it was important to protect from excessive sun exposure. Half of these women and one third of these men had developed these behavioural changes because of their awareness of skin cancer. Nonetheless, some men and women, mainly the young, continued to pursue a tan. Finally, more men than women had been sunburnt in the previous year and 'men were less likely than women to know which factor cream should be used'.

One section of the survey reviewed the participants' use of sunbeds. Similar to the previous section on sun exposure, the researchers did not ask adults who were 'naturally black or brown skinned'.³² In 1997, six per cent of

³¹ Out of 3000 people, seventy-one per cent had responded.

³² This suggests that government researchers did not want to research sun exposure or sunbed use within a diverse range of ethnic groups. Perhaps because they assumed that racialised groups could not develop skin cancer or they wanted to avoid racialised medical and political tensions in their development of new public health considerations or approaches. For a twentieth century history of cancer as a 'white woman's nemesis'

men and ten per cent of women had used a sunbed. Also, younger adults were more likely than older adults to have used a sunbed. In the previous year, a quarter of younger women had used a sunbed; eight per cent of these women had used a sunbed more than twenty times in one year (**Table 6.2**).³³

Table 6.2 Statistics on sunbed use in Britain from a national survey (September 1997)

| | TOTAL % | Age | | | | |
|------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------|
| | | 16-24 % | 25-44 % | 45-54 % | 55-64 % | 65 & over % |
| Men | | | | | | |
| Used sunbed: | | | | | | |
| 1-10 times | 4 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| 11-20 times | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 21 or more times | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Not used | 94 | 86 | 93 | 94 | 99 | 99 |
| Women | | | | | | |
| Used sunbed: | | | | | | |
| 1-10 times | 6 | 15 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 0 |
| 11-20 times | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 21 or more times | 2 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Not used | 90 | 74 | 85 | 93 | 98 | 100 |

Base as Table 1

Source: ONS Omnibus Survey September 1997

¹Excludes naturally dark skinned people

Source: Wellcome Trust Collection, Box 4303, 'Sun exposure: adults' behaviour and knowledge 1997', Statistical Bulletin, Great Britain, Department of Health, Office for National Statistics, Social Survey Division, June 1998, p.7.

This survey confirmed that very few adults used a sunbed more than twenty times in one year. Moreover, the survey demonstrated that women were not ignorant. Despite being the main consumers who *admitted* to UV-tanning, women were more knowledgeable and responsible in their skin cancer

in American, see Keith Wailoo, *How cancer crossed the color line* (Oxford University Press, 2010).

³³ 'Sun exposure: adults' behaviour and knowledge 1997', Department of Health.

protection approaches (i.e., they avoided burning and were educated about sun cream protection). Women knew that sunburn was a significant risk factor of melanoma. Consequently, they were more conscious about 'safe' tanning, and went to greater lengths to tan responsibly when compared to men.³⁴ Mortality rates in women were also lower. Between 1996 to 1999, out of 7983 men that were diagnosed 77.9% survived, whereas out of 10831 women, 89.5% survived.³⁵ Yet in health education, women continued to be the main target audience. Social-cultural bias towards young working-class women deemed them as irresponsible consumers. This government research reflected a moral panic about women using sunbeds rather than a justifiable response to differentiated health risk.

The class-based assumption also reflected a medical-media induced moral panic. The increases in mortality rates during the 1970s and 1980s were less striking than the incidence rates, and in the 1990s, the mortality rates actually decreased, more so in women than men. The stabilising or falling rates of mortality despite the rapid increase in incidence rates (even if this was the result of improved detection technologies) suggested a substantial increase in survival.³⁶ Moreover, by the 2000s, womens' annual incidence rate were marginally higher than mens' (respectively, 15 and 12 out of 100,000), and the risk remained two-to-three times higher among the most affluent groups – both of these facts were 'unusual' for malignancy.³⁷

³⁴ Cushion, 'Skin Cancer Research Paper 96/84', pp.11-13.

³⁵ This study was based on 2.2 million patients diagnosed aged 15-99 years in between 1986 and 1999 in England and Wales, M. Coleman, B. Rachet, L. Woods, et al, 'Trends and socioeconomic inequalities in cancer survival in England and Wales up to 2001', *British Journal of Cancer*, 90, (2004), pp.1367–1373.

³⁶ B. Rachet, M. Quinn, N. Cooper, et al., 'Survival from melanoma of the skin in England and Wales up to 2001', *British Journal of Cancer*, 99, (2008), p.1370., p.S47.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.1370.

Concerns about Skin Cancer and Sunbeds at British Dermatology Conferences

While the government and public health researchers were researching sunbed-induced skin cancer, an increasing number of dermatologists had become even more concerned about sunbeds, evidenced by their annual British dermatology conferences. This concern was perhaps influenced by their greater awareness of those affected, through media broadcasts. The government papers often cited the research discussed at these conferences. Media agents regularly interviewed the dermatologists who attended these conferences and presented their work to the public. Although most dermatologists strongly advised against sunbed use, some of their more nuanced research and opinions weakened the emerging overall medical consensus against sunbed use.

In January 1996, at the Queen's Medical Centre at the University Hospital in Nottingham, the British Epidermo-Epidemiology Society (BEES) hosted their fifth conference. Sunbeds were presented as a low risk factor of melanoma, and issues were raised about the iatrogenic risk of certain UV- 'protective' measures, which inadvertently encouraged sun exposure (i.e, sunscreen). The day-long event consisted of a mixed array of presentations. The first two panels presented skin cancer research. In a response to the *Health of the Nation* strategy, and then skin cancer prevention campaigns, these two papers acknowledged that all skin cancers were 'now receiving substantial attention'. Dr Rona Mackie from Glasgow presented one of these papers, titled 'Sunbed, sunscreens, Vitamin D and melanoma risk – risk of a backlash'. She argued that the use of sunscreen was a greater risk factor than sunbeds, which was a 'weak risk factor for melanoma' according to four international studies. Yet Mackie warned that this finding required careful interpretation because of the 'relatively little data on the exact type of sunbed use [and] hours of exposure', and because the diseases caused by sunbeds needed ten years to develop.³⁸ Nonetheless, Mackie's research challenged the

³⁸ Anon., 'The Fifth Meeting of the BEES', pp.1004-1007.

medical consensus that sunbeds should not be publicly accessible, although this was not reported in the print press.

In July 1996, dermatologists continued to reinforce themselves as experts on skin cancer, sun exposure and sunbeds at the British Association of Dermatology (BAD) Annual Meeting (Bournemouth). On the first full conference day, a whole panel focused on skin cancer research.³⁹ On the second day, John Hawk chaired another panel that featured three papers on ultraviolet light or sun protection for the skin – Dr Margaret Price presented one of these papers.⁴⁰ The conference also showcased sixty posters. At least ten of these posters presented research on either melanoma; sun protection or awareness; sunbathing attitudes; skin cancer public education campaigns; skin types and sun exposure, and finally, the skin cancer education of medical students.⁴¹ In 1997, BAD hosted another conference. Similar to the previous year, several papers presented research on sunbeds. The topics covered the effects of UV-A and UV-B exposure on psoriasis (by media-renowned sunbed research spokesmen, Brian Diffey and Peter Farr); the global melanoma comparison between Scotland and Australia (supported by CRUK and the Queensland Cancer Fund Mackie) and finally, the risk of skin cancer following Psoralen

³⁹ The five papers addressed either Scotland's skin cancer issue since 1979; the effect of current publicity campaigns, and rational approaches to melanoma follow-up, Anon., 'British Association of Dermatologists Annual Meeting, 1996 Bournemouth', *British Journal of Dermatology*, (1996), 135, 46, pp.1-12; Anon., 'Summaries of papers', *British Journal of Dermatology*, 135, 47, (1996), pp.13-27.

⁴⁰ Margaret Price and her colleagues presented one of these papers, titled 'Human cellular DNA damage following sunbed exposure'. Brian Diffey and his colleagues presented a paper on women's sun protective stockings. On the third day, papers focused on non-melanoma skin cancers.

⁴¹ Anon., 'British Association of Dermatologists Annual Meeting, 1996 Bournemouth', pp.1-12; Anon., 'Summaries of papers', pp.13-27.

Photochemotherapy, again, presented by another media-renowned sunbed research spokesman, John Hawk.⁴²

Throughout 1997, in the *BMJD*, dermatologists (including Margaret Price) continued to voice their fury against commercial UVA sunbed manufacturers' insistent claims that their beds were 'less damaging' and a 'safer way to tan'. Supported by the Department of Health, most dermatologists agreed that the government should strongly discourage sunbed use and that the public should be informed of their harmful effects.⁴³

Medical Expert Attacks on the Sunbed Industry - Contradicted and Undermined

Although most dermatologists were against sunbeds, their intradisciplinary lack of consensus on how to reduce skin cancer rates created many contradictions for both the government and public. On mainstream television, medical experts and health organisations agreed that the sunbed industry was pernicious. Yet these authorities regularly offered contradictory messages about safety and skin cancer-preventative measures, which undermined medical experts' recommendations. For example, dermatologists could not collectively agree that local councils should remove their sunbeds. Renewed medical support for 'sunbed-resembling' light therapy had also re-emerged in the media, and finally, other medical experts had suggested that genetics were a more influential factor than sunbed use.⁴⁴ These mixed messages undermined wider stakeholder efforts to more successfully challenge the sunbed industry and discourage the public from sunbed use, and were reflected in the media.

⁴² Anon., 'BAD: SUMMARIES OF PAPERS', *British Journal of Dermatology*, (1997), pp.1-37.

⁴³ This research was supported by the Department of Health and the Brighton Cancer Charitable Fund, A. Woollons, P.H. Clingen, M. L. Price, C.F. Arlett, M. H. L. Green, 'Induction of mutagenic DNA damage in human fibroblasts after exposure to artificial tanning lamps', *British Journal of Dermatology*, 137, (1997), pp.687-692.

⁴⁴ Jane Alexander, 'Lighten up your life with a ray of sunshine', *Daily Mail*, 25 February 1995, p.34.

On Monday, 8 January 1996, a 30-minute *Beauty Consumer Watchdog* aired on BBC1 - a nationally widely watched television channel.⁴⁵ During the 1990s, BBC1 typically aired their primetime shows between eight and nine pm. As *Watchdog* started at 7.30pm, the viewership would have been large.⁴⁶ A 3-minute report on the sunbed industry was this *Watchdog* episode's main feature. The *Guardian* advertised that this episode featured 'sunbeds ... [and] sunworshippers who are as hooked on UV as others are on cigarettes'.⁴⁷ The sunbed industry was being associated with tobacco-induced addiction and cancer. The overall show investigated the 'unacceptable face' of the beauty industry, including reports on cosmetic surgery risks and cosmetic 'rip-offs' alongside reviews for hair removal products.⁴⁸ The sunbed industry was being presented as exploitative, not to be trusted by the public.

The sunbed report opened with Alice Beer walking down the high street, observing the 'cold and dull and grey' weather. She stops in front of '*The Tanning Shop*' – a renowned sunbed tanning franchise which remains successful to this day. Reportedly, 'electric tanning' was still a 'booming industry'. The sunbed chain had 'grown from 1 to 140 branches in just 5 years', and now had '750,000 customers on their books alone'. While Beer provided a

⁴⁵ License fees financed the BBC. As a result, the BBC were obliged to provide 'something for everyone, to listen to the opinions of the viewers and respond to these'. For BBC1 this meant being a "channel for everyone", need to provide material to 'inform, educate and entertain' their large and varied audience. The BBC, and particularly their longest established BBC1 channel were perceived as the "mirrors of the British culture" and reflected mainstream political and socio-cultural sentiments, A. Swann, K. Förster, 'BBC1: A trademark of Britishness' in K. Förster (eds), *Strategien erfolgreicher TV-Marken. VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften*, (2011), p.80, p.82, p.79; Jean-Noel Kapferer, *The New Strategic Brand Management. Creating and Sustaining Brand Equity Long Term* (4th ed) (London, Philadelphia, 2008).

⁴⁶ Moseley, 'Makeover takeover on British television', p.301.

⁴⁷ Des Christie, 'Dial P for Panic', *Guardian*, 9 May 1997, p.26.

⁴⁸ Anon., 'BBC1', *Guardian*, 8 January 1996, p.56.

voiceover of government figures, viewers watched a tanned young man use a sunbed, wearing boxers and protective goggles. Apparently '1 in 10 women' and '1 in 12 men had at least 1 sunbed session in the last 12 months,' and '1 in 4 of [these people] ... had more than 20 sessions'. Beer explained that skin cancer experts wanted users to take sunbeds 'just as seriously' as the sun. In the next segment an extremely tanned and professionally presented 'Consultant Dermatologist', John Hawk, warned that every use of a sunbed caused skin damage. Researchers had spent years setting up research programs to prove that sunbeds caused skin cancer, skin ageing and 'virtually all the same things that sunlight cause[d]'. This bold assertion contrasted to the advice from former medical experts on television during the 1980s, who had hesitantly explained that sunbeds 'may' be a cause of skin cancer (see Chapter Three).

The next segment confusingly presented different sunbed use recommendations. Beer explained that 'nobody can agree on how many sunbed sessions are safe'. The recently formed *Sunbed Association* ('the voice of the industry'), organised by sunbed manufacturers, suggested 80 to 90 sessions per year. The Health and Safety executive recommended no more than 20 sessions a year, and finally a Belgian report claimed that '10 hours spent on a sunbed in a lifetime increase[d] threefold the chance of getting skin cancer'. The *Watchdog* report then featured an 'addicted' sunbed user who confirmed that 'tanning [was] addictive'. The report concluded with John Hawk in his office, exclaiming that sunbed use was 'not safe'. Sunbeds were '**NOT SAFER** than being in the sun' - '**BOTH** [were] the same'.⁴⁹ Yet, the visual of Hawk's suntanned complexion, again associating tans with affluence and professionalism, contradicted his boldly exclaimed anti-sunbed rhetoric. The young man videoed also sold youth-associated bronzing. The public were receiving mixed visual and rhetorical messages about tanning culture and sunbeds. *Watchdog* presented an unclear recommendation of yearly sunbed

⁴⁹ British Film Institute Stephen Street Archive, *Beauty Consumer Watchdog*, (Presenter: Alice Beer), BBC1, 7.30pm, 8 January 1996.

sessions, and then a bronzed dermatologist told viewers that any amount was unsafe and hazardous for health.

An attempt by dermatologists to pressurise local councils to stop providing sunbeds also failed, illustrating the public's unabated demand of sunbeds. In October 1996, Dr Johnathon Norris, a consultant dermatologist from Dumfries Royal Infirmary, published a letter in the *BMJ*. The sub-heading read 'local councils should remove sunbeds from leisure centres'. In the letter, Norris first acknowledged the 'worldwide epidemic of skin cancer'. He cited UV-A radiation as largely responsible for this increase in skin cancer. Norris argued that the 'risk-benefit ratio of using ultraviolet A sunbeds should be re-examined, and the medical profession should be more critical of sunbed salons that operate purely for financial gain'. Norris mentioned that both the Health Education Board in Scotland and Department in Health 'unequivocal[ly]' advise[d] against sunbeds for cosmetic tanning'. Norris was concerned by the 'considerable number of sunbeds' that local councils continued to operate in their health-orientated leisure centres, which did not reflect the constituents' best interest. The councils argued that they were catering for the public's demand, which Norris said was 'ignorant'. He congratulated South-West Scotland councils for removing their sunbeds from at least six leisure centres. This, he lauded, placed the 'health of their constituents ahead of financial gain'. Norris argued that 'all local authorities' to 'seriously consider closing their sunbed facilities' and urged all doctors and dermatologists to encourage this.⁵⁰ Norris's letter was transmitted to the public through a *Guardian* newspaper article. The reporter supported Norris, the 'skin expert', and cited the *BMJ*. The HEA also supported Norris as their skin cancer campaign manager, Katie Aston, disagreed with the cosmetic use of sunbeds. She was also concerned that the sunbeds in health spaces were giving the public mixed messages.⁵¹

⁵⁰ J. F. B Norris, 'Sunscreens, suntans, and skin cancer. Local councils should remove sunbeds from leisure centres, *British Medical Journal*, 313, (1996), pp.941-2.

⁵¹ Anon., 'Call to ban council sunbeds', p.4; Health Education Authority, 'Calls to phase out sunbeds from council premises'.

Yet, half a year later in April 1997, the *BMJ* published Andrew Wright, Graham Hart and Liz Kernohan's letter, which directly challenged and contradicted Norris' recommendation to remove sunbed services from the public sector.⁵² These dermatologists had studied the output of fifty commercial UV-A sunbeds and found a striking threefold variability in the output of both UV-A and UV-B.⁵³ The researchers then compared roughly a third of these commercial sunbeds with thirty-three local authority-based sunbeds. The output of both UV-A and UV-B was higher in the commercial sunbeds. Consequently, these dermatologists advised the HEA to stop removing sunbeds from local authority premises.⁵⁴ The dermatologists argued that the removal of sunbeds from council premises would drive users to the commercial sector. The researchers suggested that greater sunbed education and the set-up of national sunbed guidelines and their recommended power outputs would be 'a more sensible approach'.⁵⁵ Although sunbed awareness and education had not stopped the public from using sunbeds, this reflected a typical public health approach that focused on 'individual risk', alongside other attempts to prompt a policy change that would deter sunbed providers.⁵⁶

The continued medicalisation of new 'health'-enhancing light therapies, many of which resembled sunbed-units, also contradicted dermatologists anti-sunbed health broadcasts. In 1995, a *Daily Mail* article advertised Dr Damien Downing's new 'spring light' therapy to overcome institutionally induced SAD.

⁵² Andrew Wright, Graham Hart, Liz Kernohan, 'Dangers of sunbeds are greater in the commercial sector', *British Medical Journal*, 314, 7089, (1997), p.1280.

⁵³ A.L. Wright, G. C. Hart, E. Kernohan, G. Twentyman, 'Survey of the variation in ultraviolet outputs from ultraviolet A sunbeds in Bradford', *Photodermatology, Photoimmunology & Photomedicine*, 12, (1996), pp.12-16.

⁵⁴ Health Education Authority, 'Calls to phase out sunbeds from council premises'.

⁵⁵ Wright, Hart, Kernohan, 'Dangers of sunbeds are greater in the commercial sector', p.1280.

⁵⁶ Mold, 'Everybody Likes a Drink. Nobody Likes a Drunk', pp.1-2, p.8.

Downing was the author of *Day Light Robbery*.⁵⁷ His research confirmed that sunlight had highly beneficial effects on both physiological and psychological health. Reportedly, the 'spring light' therapy machine did not produce 'harmful UVB rays which cause[d] burning and skin cancer'. The *Daily Mail* reporter trialled the therapy. She observed that the lights looked like 'sunbed lamps' and she gave the 'treatment' a glowing report as it improved both her body pains and energy. Dr Downing also offered portable household light units for £245, which the public could order through the contact information attached to the newspaper article.⁵⁸ In 1996, *The Times* offered another type of medicalised light therapy. Again, the machine looked 'a bit like a sunbed'. The therapy treated skin conditions, SAD and strengthened the body by stimulating Vitamin D production in the skin. When the reporter asked about skin cancer, the therapist reassured her that 'the harmful ultraviolet rays are screen[ed] out, and responsible use will not damage the skin or eyes'.⁵⁹ The high-voltage UV machines at hospitals, renowned for treating burn victims, were also a familiar treatment.⁶⁰

Finally, newspapers reported the experiences of women who were developing melanoma because of their genetic predisposition – they had never sunbathed or used sunbeds. Professor Johnathon Rees and Sam Shuster from Newcastle University used these case studies to assert that genetics played a much larger part in the risk of skin cancer than UV-exposure. This medically endorsed claim caused a 'row' with other medical authorities.⁶¹ Health

⁵⁷ Damien Downing, *Day Light Robbery* (Arrow Books Ltd., 1988).

⁵⁸ Alexander, 'Lighten up your life with a ray of sunshine', p.34.

⁵⁹ Rachel Kelly, 'Let there be light for winter', *The Times*, 16 November 1996, p.2.

⁶⁰ Anon., 'Red-faced hospital thief's body of evidence', *The Times*, 1 June 1996, p.11.

⁶¹ C. Boldeman, H. Beitner, B. Jansson, B. Nilssons, H.Ullen, 'Sunbed use in relation to phenotype, erythema, sunscreen use and skin diseases. A questionnaire survey among Swedish adolescents', *British Journal of Dermatology*, 135, (1996), pp.712-6; Mrs Bruss, 'Letters. Don't cloud the sun's dangers', *Daily Mail*, 10 September 1997, p.60; Helen Renshaw, 'Skin cancer is like a plague in our family', *Daily Mail*, 9 September 1997, p.39.

organisations and healthcare professionals could not agree in their health messages concerning UV-exposure, often undermining each other. This confused the public and weakened government and medical claims that sunbeds were life-threatening.

The Mounting Attack against the Sunbed Industry

During the mid-1990s, the fake tan industry and legal authorities joined the government and healthcare professionals in the media-visible 'war' against the sunbed industry. The fake tan industry had grown commercially stronger, still supported by CRUK, yet some newspaper reporters continued to weaken their anti-sunbed campaigns by both upholding tanning culture and criticising the effectiveness of tanning serums. Nonetheless, legal authorities more successfully challenged the sunbed industry.

Anti-Sunbed Fake Tan Industry

During the mid-1990s, the 'fake tan' industry (see Chapter 5) continued to flourish, gradually improving their products and becoming more widely accepted. To encourage their alternative tanning products, most fake tan producers criticised the sunbed industry. Endorsed by health organisations and medical authorities, the print press supported this advertising strategy.⁶² In June 1995, a reporter from *The Times* acknowledged that she was part of the *Baywatch* generation, which sought 'sun-kissed skin'. The reporter acknowledged that UV-A rays caused premature skin aging yet argued that a tan made you appear slimmer and healthier. She then criticised former 'orange' and 'messy' fake tans. Yet, her recent fake tan experience positively yielded a 'subtle hint of colour' and had not smelt chemically unpleasant. The public were apparently against 'artificial beauty', yet natural-looking tanning serums were 'paradoxically chic'. To remove the association of artificiality, the 'fake tan' industry were trying to erase the term 'fake', and encouraged other terms, such

⁶² Anon., 'Fashion choice. Tinted moisturisers', *Observer*, 2 June 1996, p.119.

as 'self-tanning lotion', 'skin-tint' and 'auto-bronzant'.⁶³ Jean King (CRUK, head of education), also endorsed the fake tan industry. As tanning culture was 'resilien[t]' and some self-tan products provided sun-protection, King supported self-tanning lotion as the least harmful option. The reporter concluded that the most expensive self-tans were the most effective.⁶⁴ Although the tanning serum industry was clearly growing, these lotions were not as easily accessible or desired by all, unlike sunbeds. Moreover, their 'artificial' association and cost, discouraged both men and working-class groups from both purchasing and applying tanning lotions.

Moreover, different groups of newspaper reporters were challenging the fake tan industry and their public health supporters. In May 1995, a *Guardian* reporter observed that the summer sun was encouraging the public to use 'ultraviolet coffins' – sunbeds. *Baywatch*, and particularly its star Pamela Anderson, was inspiring both men and women to develop bronzed bodies. Despite the ongoing health warnings, the TV screen was 'stimulat[ing] a universal hankering for the mahogany look'. 'Reckless narcissism' was apparently more persuasive than the sunbed horror stories. The reporter – a 'pink, freckled, ginger' – blamed her own tanning 'addiction' on her mother, who was part of a "no woman can be too brown" generation and had a sunbed-induced 'all-over, all-year-round tan'. The reporter then criticised all self-tan lotions, regardless of their price range. She mocked Jean King's and Dr Kenneth Calman's (Chief Medical Officer) attempts to change tanning attitudes and decrease skin cancer by concluding: 'try telling that to Pamela Anderson'.⁶⁵ On television, bronzed and glamorous actors were counteracting the skin

⁶³ For a history of 'healthy' and 'natural' sun exposure in Britain, see Woloshyn, *Soaking Up the Rays*; Carter, *Rise and Shine*; Annie Jamieson, 'More Than Meets the Eye: Revealing the Therapeutic Potential of 'Light', 1896–1910', *Social History of Medicine*, 4, (2013), pp.715-737.

⁶⁴ Megan Turner, 'The Midas Touch', *The Times*, 24 June 1995, p.11.

⁶⁵ Imogen Edwards-Jones, 'Browned off with the tanning business', *Guardian*, 24 May 1995, p.8.

cancer horror stories. The media was not demonstrating a united consensus against tanning culture or 'fake tan', leaving ample room for consumers to draw their own conclusions and persist in sunbed use.

Legal Action Against the Sunbed Industry

Perhaps more damaging for sunbed providers, sunbed incidents were resulting in lawsuits, which damaged the reputation of sunbed providers on both a small and large commercial scale. Since the early 1980s, Henlow Grange Health Farm had regularly advertised their sunbeds. Yet in April 1995, lawsuits fined Henlow Grange £3,500 because of their irresponsible provision of sunbeds. Helena Rowe, a 26-year-old public relations officer, had used their sunbed for an hour too long - amounting to one and a half hours in total - causing burns and heatstroke.⁶⁶ The automatic timer was broken and the health farm's staff had forgotten to wake her.⁶⁷ From January 1996, Henlow Grange stopped mentioning their sunbed services in their newspaper advertising, suggesting their discontinuation.⁶⁸

On a larger scale, Hawtin's leisure group experienced a similar situation when they attempted to spread their sunbed branch overseas to the USA. A subsidiary of Hawtin's, called Power Sport, were forming sports, health and wellbeing resorts for the employees of large organisations, such as car maker Rover. In 1996, near Birmingham, Rover opened one of these health club resorts for 15,000 of their employees. The large on-site gym complex provided a gym, saunas, sunbeds and whirlpool baths. Reportedly, Hawtin's had twelve more resorts in the pipeline to improve the employee headquarters of other large organisations, such as American Express (their European headquarters in

⁶⁶ Tom Bussman, 'Foreword', *Guardian*, 15 April 1995, p.3.

⁶⁷ Anon., 'Sunbed fine', *The Times*, 11 April 1995, p.2.

⁶⁸ Anon., 'A Times Reader', *The Times*, 6 January 1996, p.19.

Brighton), Lincoln City Council and Birmingham University.⁶⁹ In November 1996, to continue this success, Barclay Leisure (another subsidiary company owned by Hawtin that manufactured sunbeds), confirmed that they would launch their Ultrabronze sunbeds in the USA from January 1997. Barclay Leisure had already secured pre-tax profits of £589,000 on sales of £3.44m, which included £2.52m from mainly USA exports. Hawtin's predicted that their USA provision of Ultrabronze sunbeds would expand their USA sales to approximately £5m.⁷⁰ Yet in December 1997, Hawtin's revealed that their pre-tax profits had decreased from '£6.31m to £2.05m' from September 1996 to September 1997. Hawtin had lost their profits to pay for lawsuits to protect their sunbed products against mounting legal action in the USA, causing financial repercussions for Barclay Leisure.⁷¹

The Attack Against the Sunbed Industry on Television

Television reporters also polemicised against the sunbed industry, yet the accompanying audio-visuals again often contradicted their anti-sunbed warnings. Guest appearances from expert skin cancer dermatologists, who had renowned reputations within dermatological groups and organisations, endorsed these anti-sunbed programmes. On ITV, on the 8 May 1997 at 7.30pm on a Thursday, a half hour episode titled 'Burning Issue – Healthy Choice?' featured on 3-D, which was a current affairs programme.⁷² In this

⁶⁹ Stefan Wagstyl (Industrial Editor), 'Rover to exercise gym deal for staff', *Financial Times*, 19 March 1996, p.11.

⁷⁰ Anon., 'Hawtin distribution deal', *Financial Times*, 14 November 1996, p.20.

⁷¹ The reporter did not clarify if these lawsuits were the result of technology failures or health and safety incidents, Anon., 'Closure hit Hawtin', *Financial Times*, 5 December 1997, p.20.

⁷² Current affair programmes differed from regular news broadcasts as they offered more in-depth information. Regular news broadcasts prioritised presenting a simple news report as soon as possible to the public, often with minimal analysis. During the mid-1990s, ITV was a mainstream television channel which could attract millions of viewers – even through their regional networks. Also, the 3-D programme was at 7pm,

episode, Julia Somerville led with a nine-minute report 'on the health risks associated with sunbed[s]'. In the *Financial Times*' television guide, only the sunbed report was mentioned, demonstrating the topic's importance and its perceived appeal to televisual audiences.⁷³ In the *Guardian*'s television guide, the programme was the 'pick of the day', accompanied by a rare image of a man using a sunbed.⁷⁴ In the *Times* television guide, the sunbed report was the 'critic's choice'. In the critic's description, Dr Norris asserted that sunbeds caused skin cancer, yet they were 'enjoying a boom' on high streets and in leisure centres. He continued to remark that the public's demand for sunbeds was based on "ignorance and [that] an ethical local council should be rejecting such demands".⁷⁵ On the show, the programme headline read 'DYING FOR A TAN – warning about sunbeds'. Professionally dressed in a cream suit and gold jewellery, yet untanned, Somerville greeted her televisual audiences. Speaking seriously in a business-like upper-class accent, Somerville explained why dermatologists no longer believed sunbeds were safe. Reportedly, dermatologists were concerned that sunbed operators were not warning their consumers about the health risks, despite new safety guidelines. Using hidden cameras, the aim of the sunbed report was to visit leisure centres across the country to disclose if providers were following the guidelines and protecting their clients.

Dr Norris forthrightly condemned sunbeds for tanning. Also professionally presented in a suit, and both a bookshelf and white lab coat hung in the background, Norris authoritatively explained that local authorities should not provide sunbeds. Yet the accompanying visuals began to advertise a sunbed

leading to the evening prime time slot between eight and nine pm, meaning it would have been watched by many, 3-D, *BURNING ISSUE - HEALTHY CHOICE?*, (Presenter: Julia Somerville), ITV Yorkshire Television, 7.00-7.25pm, 8 May 1997; Julia Hallam, 'Independent Women: Creating TV Drama in the UK in the 1990s', *Critical Studies in Television*, 2, 1, (2007), p.22.

⁷³ Anon., 'Today's Television and Radio', *Financial Times*, 8 May 1997, p.23.

⁷⁴ Anon., 'The directory', *The Times*, 3 May 1997, p.44.

⁷⁵ E.C., 'Critic's choice', *The Times*, 3 May 1997, p.45.

tan. The audio-visual content showed a conventionally attractive woman – slim, tanned, blonde, diamond earrings, with plump glossy lips, long eyelashes and make-up – using a sunbed. Shot from a side-angle, the slow camera pan began from her tanned knees and stopped at her left hand - her middle finger featured a large diamond ring. Although the background music was ominous sounding, the sexualised visual undermined Norris's advice by selling glamor and a 'wealth' associated tan. The producers of media content struggled to remove their own positive associations of tanning culture despite their purpose to discourage sunbed use.

Councils were under pressure to stop providing sunbeds to the public. Yet for the meantime, operators had to warn about the potential dangers and restrict users to '20 sessions a year'. A reporter interviewed Nick Reeves, a director of policy from the Institute of Leisure & Amenity Management. He asserted that the literature for sunbed users should explain both the benefits and potential hazards of sunbeds. Consumers had to also complete forms to assist the monitoring of their sunbed use. Moreover, the public who were most at risk on the poster warning, were meant to be banned from sunbed use. Yet Reeves asserted that 'posters on their own [were] not sufficient'. Customers needed both verbal advice and literature to take home. The programme tested these skin cancer prevention measures by sending their red haired, pale and freckled researcher, Jane Bower, to visit eight council sports centres across the country.

At the first three centres, no one advised Bower – the staff simply handed her the keys to use their sunbeds. The fifth centre in Nottingham had signs yet staff did not verbally warn Bower. In Sheffield, Bower changed tactics and prompted the staff by asking if there was anything she needed to know as she had not used a sunbed before. The receptionist answered 'No... you should be alright [for] 20 minutes'. In Leicester, after her sunbed session, the staff gave Bower warning information and asked her to fill out a card to monitor her sunbed use. In Nottingham, the receptionist, without making eye contact, also passed Bower a yellow form. Bower prompted 'it does say, people with sensitive skin should restrict their session to half the recommended time?' The

receptionist, with blonde hair and blue eyes, froze and then nervously laughed. After reading the yellow form herself, the receptionist responded, 'I've got ... really sensitive skin, and I've done the full time ... it doesn't burn you'. In a voiceover, Reeves remarked that leisure centre staff should be refusing [ginger and fair skinned users] sunbed use. The visual switched to Reeves, suited and in a power stance. He informed viewers that leisure centres should be most concerned about their customers, not their 'balance sheet'. The sunbed instructor in Coventry was the only one to notice that Bower was in the highest risk category. Nonetheless, he advised ten minutes and gave her sunbed goggles.

The report concluded with Dr Norris re-asserting that local authorities needed to phase out sunbeds, that private sunbed providers needed to have a license, and that the government should outlaw household sunbeds for hire or private purchase. The hidden cameras, undercover reporters, policy director and assertive medical expert both critiquing and condemning this relaxed provision of sunbeds was intended to panic sunbed providers and their staff, particularly receptionists, who may have been watching or later heard about this programme. This may have fulfilled the anti-sunbed groups' motive to make sunbed providers and their staff more aware about the health warnings in place and to educate the public with these skin cancer prevention measures. During the mid-1990s, the media – unsurprisingly, mainly in the *Daily Mail* - publicised countless examples of negative consumer experiences, both in terms of horrifying sunbed-related incidents and the worryingly blasé and uncaringly provision of sunbeds, aiming to deter public consumption. Nonetheless, the accompanying content still demonstrated the public's approval of tanning culture and sunbed use.⁷⁶ The sunbed industry had also found a way to

⁷⁶ Suzanne O'Shea, 'Tragedy of secretary who wanted a sunbed tan', *Daily Mail*, 8 August 1996, p.3; Liz Gill, 'My warning to anyone who is tempted to use a sunlamp', *Daily Mail*, 1 April 1997, p.40; Anon., 'Burnt to a crisp' in just three minutes on sunbed', *Daily Mail*, 25 June 1997, p.21; Shirley Conran, 'The operation for skin cancer left me in so much pain I couldn't care how I looked', *Daily Mail*, 15 April 1997, pp.46-47.

encourage unabated public demand through other means outside mainstream advertising.

The Resilient Commercial Power of the Sunbed Industry

During the mid-1990s, sunbed advertising in Britain was extremely rare in national media outlets, possibly the result of the growing amount of anti-sunbed groups and campaigns.⁷⁷ In national newspapers during this period, only one household sunbed advert featured in the *Daily Mail* in July 1996.⁷⁸ Yet the images that accompanied mid-1990s anti-sunbed newspaper articles sometimes included 1980s sunbed adverts of sexualised women (**Figure 6.3**).⁷⁹ The media were no longer publishing the sunbed industry's adverts directly to the public, yet visuals selling the desirability of a sunbed tan continued to circulate in the media, still influencing the public. Tanning culture and bronzed bodies remained deeply engrained in both physical and ephemeral 'spaces' of fitness, fashion and popular culture.⁸⁰ Moreover, some of the largest and commercially influential leisure groups provided sunbed facilities, and these

⁷⁷ I searched the digital archives of the *Daily Mail*, *Guardian*, *Observer*, *The Times*, *Independent* and the *Financial Times*. Using the advanced search tool, I used an array of 'sunbed'-related terms (see methodology section) between 1980 to 2000 to trace the changing volume of sunbed adverts.

⁷⁸ Anon., 'ABOVE GROUND SWIMMING POOLS', *Daily Mail*, 27 July 1996, p.52.

⁷⁹ Helen Reilly, 'How you can add years to your life', *Daily Mail*, 31 December 1996, p.34; History of Advertising Trust, CDP collection, '2 WEEKS IN THE SUN. ONLY £20', Radio rentals, 1980s.

⁸⁰ When women's magazines were blamed for unhealthy body practices, Nancy Roberts (*Marie Claire's* health and beauty magazine editor), defended that although their models remained 'stick thin' they were no longer unhealthily tanned. She asserted that most women's magazines were taking a "responsible attitude to tanning these days" as they wanted to make readers aware of the dangers and ageing effects of the sun on skin. As a result, editors had begun a trend of "only using lightly tanned models" which was a contradiction in itself, Eleanor Bailey, 'Burning ambitious: Why the sun is going down on tanning', *Guardian*, 27 January 1995, p.9.

groups were successfully attracting prospective clients. Consequently, sunbeds remained widely accessible and popular with the public.

Figure 6.3 The same photograph of a woman using a sunbed in a 1980s sunbed advert and an anti-sunbed *Daily Mail* article (December 1993).

2 WEEKS IN THE SUN. ONLY £20.

HOME SOLARIUMS. ONLY £10 A WEEK. **Radio Rentals** A NEW RANGE FOR A NEW STORE. 49 Southgate, Bath.

WE ASSUME FOR THE PURPOSE OF AVAILABILITY WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE ALTERATIONS WITHOUT NOTICE. A DEPOSIT MAY BE REQUIRED SUBJECT TO TERMS. RADIO RENTALS, 49 SOUTHGATE, BATH.

How you can add years to your life

Bad habits: Using sunbeds and (inset) smoking can seriously shorten your life

Source: *History of Advertising Trust, CDP collection, radio rentals offering '2 WEEKS IN THE SUN. ONLY £20', 1980s; Helen Reilly, 'How you can add years to your life', Daily Mail, 31 December 1996, p.34.*

During this period, largely silenced in the media, the sunbed industry became both the independent creator and distributor of their own advertising. During the mid-1990s, for example, an internationally renowned sunbed

provider, Philips, continued to advertise their sunbeds in their catalogues. In their 1997 'domestic appliances and personal care products' catalogue, Philips advertised five tanning devices on a double-page spread dedicated to home tanning (**Figure 6.4**). Two of these devices were full-body sunbeds, providing 'safe tanning'. Opening with a holiday resort scenario that naturalised tanning culture, the advert increased the pressure on readers to tan before their holiday; they no longer needed to 'stand out from the crowd [with their] ... Lily-white skin'. Reportedly, tanned skin made people 'look better and more naturally attractive', allowing people to feel 'self-confident and relaxed'. Moreover, the advert presented tanning outdoors as unreliable and unsafe, which contrasted to Philips' 'reliable [and] artificial source of UV solaria'. Regular and controlled UV, from Philips' sunbeds, apparently prevented burning. Philip's advert demonstrated that providers continued to emphasise sunbed 'health' and 'safety' claims, and that sunbed technologies continued to be marketed for both private and public spaces. The lamp provided an 'even tan for 750 hours', which allowed persistent use for purchasers.⁸¹ Indeed, dedicated rooms, featuring domestic sunbeds like Philips, remained a 'must-have' luxury when buying new houses during the mid-1990s.⁸²

Nonetheless, during the mid-1990s, sunbeds were more commonly used in public venues, such as health farms, spas, and gyms.⁸³ In the *Guardian*, free sunbed sessions were used to entice readers to join gyms.⁸⁴ In the *Financial Times*, a suggested luxurious Christmas gift for women was an 'indulgent' day at Covent Garden's *The Sanctuary*. The full-day membership included unlimited use of saunas, steam rooms, whirlpools, swimming pools and crucially, a

⁸¹ Anon., 'Domestic Appliances and personal care products', Philips English Catalogue, February 1997.

⁸² Amanda Loose, 'Sellers bow to the power of youth', *The Times*, 5 February 1997, p.2.

⁸³ Anon., 'Win a break at Henlow Grange Health Farm', *The Times*, 19 December 1995, p.34.

⁸⁴ Anon., 'Offers. Courtney's gyms', *Guardian*, 16 March 1996, p.14.

sunbed session.⁸⁵ At universities, sunbed services, hidden within the sports facilities, continued to attract students.⁸⁶ Sunbeds also remained popular with

Figure 6.4 Household tanning technologies advertised in a Philips' catalogue (February 1997).

THE SUN IN YOUR HOME

Safe tanning with Philips

Every year large numbers of people flock to the holiday resorts in search of sun and sandy beaches. We start our holidays trying to tan as quickly as possible because we don't want to stand out from the crowd. Although we know it's not sensible to rush things, we don't like the idea of being a 'Spide-sha' too. A tanned skin makes us look better and more naturally attractive. That's why we feel self-confident and relaxed. The problem with tanning outdoors is that the sun is unavailable. The intensity of UV radiation can vary enormously and since the sun has no time switch, people can easily get too much UV radiation.

Luckily, our skin also tans extremely well using red-light-critical doses of UV. Science provides regular and controlled UV, which is just what's needed to tan effectively without burning.

Tanning with a Philips tanning system is particularly relaxing. tanning lamps emit a pleasant infrared heat so that you have the sensation of lying on the beach on a sunny day. The high output means that the maximum distance between the lamps and your body is 80 cm, which allows you plenty of freedom to move. What's more, these lamps give a continuous, even tan for 750 hours.

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Sun Model 188 811

Highly compact tanning system with 4 HFN Cleo lamps (180 W) and two lamps which for easy transport. Extra large tanning area, 170x175 cm. Large water can be included on request so it can also be used as a full body tanner. Water sprays between tanning lamps for pleasant light. Infrared gives extra warmth. Electronic remote control with push buttons and 70-minute timer with sound signal, automatic switch-off and memory stop. Daily tanning for 4 people. Comes with 2 pairs of protective goggles.

24

Hard Body Solutions 187 406

Compact, full-body tanner with 1 HFN lamp. Tanning area, 160x120 cm. With special infrared lamps to provide pleasant light. With practical mounting system. Mount can be adjusted to 3 different positions. Equipped with film. Low noise 60-minute timer with automatic switch-off. Comes with 2 pairs of protective goggles.

Full-Body Sun Studio 188 127

Professional full-body sun studio with large tanning area (2.13 m). In one with the large provides perfect tanning, even on the sides of your body. Equipped with 34 cm CLEO effect tubes which use 10% less energy and also reduce the tanning time by up to 30%. The Sun Studio has a built-in HFN 400 high-pressure tanning sensor, 2 gas springs for easy lifting, 3 fans and a design remote control.

TANNING WITH CLEO UVA FLUORESCENT LAMPS

Philips also supplies tanning appliances with so-called Cleo UVA fluorescent lamps. Cleo is a high-quality product, emitting a precisely controlled amount of UV. In addition, these appliances give a continuous, even tan for 500 hours.

PHILIPS SOLARIA ARE SAFE

Every Philips tanning appliance complies with the international CENELEC standards for a good reason: it is the mark of safety!

Tanning with a Philips solarium is comfortable and safe. It gives you a natural-looking tan, in the privacy of your own home. It not only helps you to look great all year round, but it makes you feel better too.

Full-Body Solarium complete 188 546

Professional full-body solarium with 30 Cleo tubes. Tanning area, 170x170 cm. With specially rounded energy fan for even tanning of the sides of your body. Tanning area approx. 70x180 cm. Adjustable in height between 60 and 90 cm. The 188 546 comes with three built-in fans and a sensor.

CENELEC Philips tanning appliances comply with CENELEC safety requirements

27

Full-Body Solarium complete 188 546

Professional full-body solarium with 30 Cleo tubes. Tanning area, 170x170 cm. With specially rounded energy fan for even tanning of the sides of your body. Tanning area approx. 70x180 cm. Adjustable in height between 60 and 90 cm. The 188 546 comes with three built-in fans and a sensor.

CENELEC Philips tanning appliances comply with CENELEC safety requirements

27

Source: Anon., 'Domestic Appliances and personal care products', Philips English Catalogue, February 1997. (Philips International Company Archive, Eindhoven, The Netherlands).

⁸⁵ Anon., 'Essential Christmas Luxuries', *Financial Times*, 14 October 1995, p.XVI.

men.⁸⁷ In 1996, *The Times* revealed that at Tantalise in Knightsbridge, forty per cent of their members were men, although in a cultural climate that both stigmatised and feminised sunbed use, to justify this statistic, it was added that ‘most’ of these men were “male models who need[ed] to look tanned for their work”.⁸⁸

Some celebrities attempted to keep their sunbed use hidden because of the growing stigma, yet others confidently broadcasted their sunbed use in the media. Famous presenters, such as Zoe Ball, a Channel 4 *The Big Breakfast* presenter, proudly disclosed her sunbed use.⁸⁹ Football players also continued to use sunbeds.⁹⁰ Sunbed use persisted despite the layers of anti-sunbed groups using the media to weaken the sunbed industry and discourage sunbed users. Yet under the media’s critical spotlight, sunbed providers and their employees concurred that sunbed services were now best sold discreetly. The sunbed industry began to go to greater lengths to protect the privacy of their clients.⁹¹

Many journalists, medical experts and the sunbed industry constantly undermined the medical evidence, and weakened the united medical consensus that sunbeds were hazardous and life-threatening. Also, UV-exposure from the sun, which was thought to be as damaging as sunbeds and

⁸⁶ Tom Whitwell, ‘you have to learn how to survive. Tom Whitwell on cash, cooking and cheesy discos’, *Observer*, 25 August 1996, p.3.

⁸⁷ For men, an abundance of sunbed salons continued to be found on the waterfront at Canary Wharf and sessions were even included as a luxury for men’s ‘Disco Damaged Rescue [Hangover] Package’, Ian Kerr, ‘A week in the markets’, *Euroweek* (Trade Journal Euromoney Institutional Investor PLC), Issue 525, 24 October 1997, p.63; Lucinda Alford, ‘Sweetest hangover’, *Guardian*, 1 October 1995, p.46.

⁸⁸ Anon., ‘Vanity fair’, *The Times*, 27 September 1996, p.16.

⁸⁹ Sarah Marshall, ‘CASE NOTES. Zoe Ball’, *Guardian*, 23 July 1996, p.13.

⁹⁰ Anon., ‘Chelsea stage volte-face over fans’, *The Times*, 13 December 1997, p.35.

⁹¹ Cal McCrystal, ‘Shall one retire to our House of Lords’, *Observer*, 21 January 1996, p.10.

caused the same health detriments, was unavoidable and ever-present.⁹² Consequently, the government did not yet restrict, regulate or ban the sunbed industry, but instead focused on changing the habits of sunbed consumers. Justifying this public health approach, the media also asserted that ‘beauty addicts’ fuelled the sunbed industry. A reporter in the *Guardian* asserted that the sunbeds themselves was ‘not always’ the problem, instead it was the public’s enthusiasm for them – spending either too much time on them or using them too often.⁹³ The media now provided a limelight for psychologists, as dermatologists did not elaborately explain why consumers continued to use sunbeds despite the global confirmation that they caused skin cancer. Psychologists provided the government, other medical groups and the public with reasons why consumers continued to use sunbeds. This led to some psychologists and the media pathologising sunbed users, presenting them in a repellent and shameful manner, aiming to decrease both the desirability of sunbeds and the overall public use of sunbeds.

The Medical-Media Attack on the Pathologised ‘Sunbed Addicts’

By the mid-1990s, a new group of experts weighed in on sunbed use. These medics, mainly psychologists, confidently confirmed that regular sunbed users were ‘sunbed addicts’, which reporters translated into ‘tanorexics’ in the media. Psychologists created, legitimated and reportedly ‘cured’ ‘sunbed addiction’, which reflected the popular use of addiction theory by medical officials.⁹⁴ Some psychologists did acknowledge that the relentless advertising of the 1980s had encouraged ‘everyday’ sunbed use. Yet the concept of individual ‘sunbed addiction’ provided the media, medical experts and the public with a more

⁹² The June 1995, Consumer Association magazine *Which?* told readers that sunbeds were as damaging as the sun. The *Guardian* echoed this statement, Stephen Moss, ‘Slip, slap, slop, every trip’, *Guardian*, 8 June 1995, p.18.

⁹³ Moss, ‘Slip, slap, slop, every trip’, p.18.

⁹⁴ Keane, *What's wrong with addiction?*; Kopelson, ‘Radical Indulgence: Excess, Addiction, and Female Desire’.

favourable scapegoat. The sunbed consumer, or rather 'addict', could be both blamed and criticised in public. The judgement appeared to focus less on the individual and more on their 'addiction' – aiming to discourage other 'sunbed addicts'. This approach disguised the cultural bias of class-based and gendered expectations. This allowed the 'sunbed addict', rather than the individual woman, to be framed in the media as narcissistically and senselessly ruining her life by irresponsibly draining societal resources (i.e., the doctors' time both checking and removing skin cancer) and ruining the lives of others in the community, particularly the women's children. Such condemnations of 'irrational' behaviour reflects a historically renowned socio-cultural bias regarding women's' (particularly working-class mothers) or homosexual men's consumption. Society expected 'moral' women to both provide and raise children, which was often presented as a women's main contribution to wider society. Therefore, women were more shamefully framed as selfish for 'indulging' in self-destructive behaviour than equally self-indulgent men. Yet this cultural expectation overlooked the greater bodily pressures placed on women in the media to be aesthetically desirable, when compared to men. This prompted women to be more open than men about their beauty routines and consumptions. Their culturally accepted openness about beauty routines and tanning habits during the 1990s, unlike men, may have contributed to young, white and lower-to-middle class women being more open about their sunbed use, and therefore more easily framed as an 'insecure', self-destructive and vain 'sunbed addicts'.⁹⁵

A Psychologists' Explanation: Why Do Young Women Use Sunbeds?

A 1997 study published in the *BMJD*, titled 'Why do young women use sunbeds? A comparative psychological study', provided one example of how psychologists endorsed a gendered 'Tanorexic' stereotype. The *BMJD*

⁹⁵ Forth-Finegan, 'Sugar and Spice and Everything Nice', pp.19-48; Skelly, *Addiction and British Visual Culture*; Skelly, *The Uses of Excess in Visual and Material Culture*; Long, Marland, 'From Danger and Motherhood to Health and Beauty'.

accepted the study in July 1997. Austrian researchers conducted this research but their perspective of ‘sunbed addiction’ was representative of 1990s’ western psychologists. The *BMJD* published the article rather than an Austrian or British psychology journal, demonstrating that British dermatologists wanted to share this study to shed light on why women continued to use sunbeds. Again, this emergence of ‘sunbed addiction’ reflected other gendered psychology histories, including the stereotypes of hysteria and eating disorder sufferers (see Chapter Five).⁹⁶

In the introduction, Fiala, Kopp and Gunther asserted that ‘psychological factors play[ed] a very important part’ in explaining why people were ‘keen to get a tan despite warnings of health hazards’. This statement was repeated three times and the article emphasised that sunbed use was caused by ‘deep psychological factors’. To change sunbed users’ behaviour, the researchers asserted that governments needed to create ‘a skilful public relations campaign projected by dermatologists as well as psychologists’. The psychologists did not mention other factors contributing to sunbed use, such as commercial pressures, the environment and the lack of scientific consensus. They did not encourage research from other disciplines either. The dominant use of psychology to both explain and resolve the sunbed ‘epidemic’ had begun.⁹⁷

The study included only sixty-four women, thirty sunbed users and thirty-four ‘non-sunbed users’.⁹⁸ The researchers’ findings were entirely based on a

⁹⁶ Andrew Scull, *Hysteria: The Biography* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Gordon, *Disorders Anatomy of a Social Epidemic*.

⁹⁷ Fiala, Kopp, Gunther, ‘Why do young women use sunbeds?’, p.950, p.954.

⁹⁸ Their small sample group of ‘sunbed users’ consisted of ‘only women between 20 and 35 years of age who reported using sunbeds ‘at least once a month’. The frequency of their consumption was not discussed. Moreover, the European Standard advised a maximum of 60 sessions per annum, Fiala, Kopp, Gunther, ‘Why do young women use sunbeds?’, p.951; Anon., ‘Frequently asked questions: How many times a week can I sensibly use a sunbed’, *The Sunbed Association*. Accessed 25 June 2016: http://www.sunbedassociation.org.uk/UV_Tanning/FAQs.aspx

'standardised psychological questionnaire', filled in by the participants. An interpretation of these women's lifestyle decisions and personality traits framed sunbed users as both self-destructive and narcissistic women. The researchers remarked that 'sunbed users showed no particular restraint in smoking and drinking'. The psychologists were reinforcing the associated stigma of tobacco and alcohol addiction, and 'risk' and 'compulsion' behaviours, with sunbed users. The psychologists concluded that their research 'supported the hypothesis that a tanned skin, by helping sunbed users to achieve their ideal of beauty, enable[d] them to devalue other people'. They remarked that sunbed users perceived other individuals as not 'worthy of affection'. This aimed to 'possibly protect themselves from close relationships' as sunbed users were said to 'display greater anxiety in their feelings and relationships with others'. The term 'narcissist' was frequently mentioned.⁹⁹ This language framed the sunbed user as neurotic and self-absorbed, which strongly linked to substance addiction stereotypes.¹⁰⁰ A disorder can often be framed as a 'sanction for cultural values'.¹⁰¹ Therefore, this study demonstrates how psychologists were framing 'Tanorexics' as an unethical stereotype. Psychologists were presenting mid-1990s and prospective sunbed users as egotistical and self-destructive for desiring a sunbed tan.

⁹⁹ Between 2000 and 2010, this article was well-cited by medical researchers in several different journals. These included *Psychology & Marketing*, *Cancer Causes & Control*, the *BMJD*, *Photodermatology*, *Photoimmunology & Photomedicine*, *Health Education Research* and *Health Promotion International*. The researchers did not critique Fiala's findings, instead they cited the article to justify that women, more so than men, used sunbeds to achieve their aesthetic goals, as they perceived a tan as 'healthy' and attractive'. One dermatologist even reiterated that young women tan to 'possibly to protect themselves from the fear of close relationships', Fiala, Kopp, Gunther, 'Why do young women use sunbeds?', p.950; Brian Diffey, 'Sunbeds, beauty and melanoma', *British Journal of Dermatology*, 157, 2, (2007), p.215.

¹⁰⁰ Skelly, *Addiction and British Visual Culture*, pp.6-7.

¹⁰¹ Rosenberg, 'Illness, Society, and History', p.xiii.

At the end of the 1990s, the British Imperial Cancer Research Fund reinforced sunbed addiction as a women's condition. They claimed that '1 in 4 women suffer[ed] from 'Tanorexia'. The media finally defined that an "addicted" consumer used sunbeds 'more than once a week'.¹⁰² Tanorexia became a legitimate psychological addiction that primarily affected females. To this day, medical experts continuously reinforced 'sunbed addiction' as a women's condition.¹⁰³ As a result, when researchers selected participants for future sunbed studies, often they only chose white adolescent women.¹⁰⁴

'Tanorexics' and Psychologists in Newspapers and Magazines

The legitimization of 'Tanorexia' and 'sunbed addiction' as a psychological condition allowed the media, and both health and government officials, to 'constrict, imply, constrain, and legitimise individual behaviour and public policy' in relation to sunbed use.¹⁰⁵ As we will see below, the 'tanorexic' regularly appeared in newspapers (mainly the *Daily Mail* and *Guardian*)¹⁰⁶, magazines

¹⁰² Jill Palmer, 'Perils of sunbed addiction', *Mirror*, 22 April 1997; Beezy Marsh, 'Are you a tanorexic?', *Northern Echo*, 24 April 1997; Julia Newton Bishop, a consultant dermatologist for the British Imperial Cancer Research Fund at St James's Hospital in Leeds, had also stated that cancer tended to be 'found in higher social economic groups who had "short sharp bursts of exposure"', Liz Gill, 'My warning to anyone who is tempted to use a sunlamp', *Daily Mail*, 1 April 1997, p.40.

¹⁰³ R. Homung, S. Poorsattar, 'Tanning Addiction: The New Form of Substance Abuse', *Skin Cancer Foundation*, (2013).

¹⁰⁴ In most medical studies, researchers predominantly selected white participants or excluded individuals who reported having a darker skin type, Heckman, Manne, *Shedding the Light on Indoor Tanning*, p.58.

¹⁰⁵ Rosenberg, 'Illness, Society, and History', p.xiv.

¹⁰⁶ From the mid-1990s, British newspapers began to regularly circulate articles on 'Tanorexia', which often included a psychologist's expert opinion. In 1996, two 'Tanorexic' examples emerged in the *Daily Mail*. Both women were 27 years old and working-class (shop assistant and widow, and a 'single' sales executive). The *Guardian* also fixated on 'tanorexia', demonstrating that it was a topic of interest for middle-class

and more significantly on television, often accompanied by both an authoritative psychologist and dermatologist, who confirmed both the short-term torment and long-term fatality caused by the 'condition'. This allowed the media to both stigmatise and condemn the use of sunbeds, while also shaming the public if they considered sunbed use in the future.

In April 1996, the concept of 'Tanorexia', which psychologists both explained and treated, had spread from national newspapers and now reached established women's magazines, such as *Cosmopolitan*. An in-depth article 'investigat[ed] the latest addiction, tanorexia'.¹⁰⁷ Shortly after its publication, a *Guardian* newspaper reporter wrote about Karen's - a former 'tanorexic' - reaction to this *Cosmopolitan* article. Although months of psychotherapy reportedly cured Karen, the *Cosmopolitan* article prompted memories of 'obsession' and 'compulsion' as she remembered the 'withdrawal symptoms'.¹⁰⁸ This *Guardian* article demonstrated a new rise in consumer's voices within the print press to both warn about sunbed 'addiction' and to support other 'addicts' by showing that recovery was possible. The nature of print press coverage lessened this former 'addict's' agency, as it was easier for journalists to emphasise or leave out interview content (see Chapter Five). Yet on television talk shows, the 'tanorexic's' self-autonomy was meant to be empowered - supposedly safeguarded from condemning medical experts through the support of the television presenter.

readers as well as working-class women. Dr Halla Beloff, a social psychologist who specialised in appearance, explained that these 'addicts' used sunbeds because they believed that a glowing tan reflected a healthy outdoors lifestyle, Tooze, 'Tanorexia', pp.44-45; Bailey, 'Burning ambitious, p.9; Dan Glaister, 'Tanorexics', *Guardian*, 12 April 1996, p.15.

¹⁰⁷ During the mid-1990s, *Cosmopolitan* was an internationally widespread and well-read magazine, typically targeting young women. *Cosmopolitan's* remit was to sell and encourage representations of 'independence, power and fun' to its readers, David Machin, Joanna Thornborrow, 'Branding and Discourse: The Case of *Cosmopolitan*', *Discourse & Society*, 14, 4, (2003), p.454.

¹⁰⁸ Glaister, 'Tanorexics', p.15

The Grilling of 'Tanorexic' Mothers on Television Talk Shows

In 1996 and 1997 respectively, first on ITV and then BBC2, two different talk shows aired an episode on 'tanorexia'. Both interview programmes shared with the public the first-hand experience (and the representation of) a 'sunbed addict', aiming to entertain, inform and 'educate' the public. On ITV's *The Vanessa Show* (*Vanessa*), the first talk show titled its episode 'addicted to sunbeds', hosted by Vanessa Feltz. On the 13th October 1996, this 30-minute episode aired at 2.20pm on a Sunday afternoon.¹⁰⁹ The following year, the other episode, 'Tanorexia', featured on BBC2's talk show *Esther*, hosted by Esther Rantzen. This 30-minute episode aired at 4.55pm on Wednesday the 18 June 1997.¹¹⁰ In comparison to print press, television was a much wider-

¹⁰⁹ Anon., 'ITV Carlton', *Observer*, 13 October 1996, p.75.

¹¹⁰ The talk show and 'interview programme', *Esther*, named after its host, originally began in October 1994, and continued until 2002; over 600 episodes aired in total. In 1994, three episodes featured each week. Demonstrating the shows rising popularity, this increased to five on each weekday by 1997. The *Radio Times* described *Esther* as a 'British interpretation of *The Oprah Winfrey Show*'. Rantzen, described as a 'key player' on television, was already famous from her 21-year stint on *That's Life!* Rantzen remarked that she was considerably experienced at "meeting people, listening to people and also working in very emotional areas". Rantzen wanted *Esther* to be lively, unpredictable and suspenseful. BBC2, as a mixed-genre channel, had to appeal to a broad adult audience with programmes of depth and substance. *Esther* usually featured at 5pm and had millions of viewers. After two nominated BAFTA awards, in 1997 the show was then nominated for the 'Most Popular Talk Show', and by 1999 had secured two medical awards. *Esther* was one of the rare talk shows to have had no allegations made for fake stories and productions. By 1999, *Esther* had received the highest ratings of any British-made talk-show, BFI Reubin Library, Anon., 'Chat's Life! Rantzen and Greer Return', *Radio Times*, v.282, no.3693, 22 October 1994, pp.6-7; Anon., 'That's' the accusation of her critics. As her new series begins, Esther Rantzen hits back', *Radio Times*, v.292, no.3806, 1 January 1997, p.27; Esther Rantzen (BBC

reaching medium. During the mid-1990s, millions of Britons watched these two mainstream channels (ITV and BBC2). Consequently, these television talk shows on 'tanorexia' legitimated the affliction and added weight to the 'epidemic'. This section will touch on *Vanessa* but will mainly focus on *Esther*, which was better known, watched and respected by the public.¹¹¹ Moreover, as *Vanessa* was a sub-genre of the talk show - more representative of the therapy genre - there were no experts on the show, as the studio audience, and by implication the viewers, were the 'experts'.¹¹²

On talk shows, particularly on *Esther*, the host interviewed guests about their first-hand experience of a 'subject' within popular culture. These 'subjects' ranged from 'accents and Vigilantes to near-death experiences', aiming to entertain, surprise, inform and 'educate' the 'ordinary' public (including both the studio audience and television watchers).¹¹³ These talk shows, assisted by the host, presented 'balanced' and 'democratic' discussions to viewers.¹¹⁴

Television scholars have previously argued that the invention of talk shows

Production), 'Esther takes the talk-show high ground (Letters)', *Broadcast*, 5 March 1999, p.17.

¹¹¹ During the mid-1990s, allegedly, *Vanessa* (BBC1) was under ratings pressure from its ITV rival *Trisha*. In 1999, Feltz was under attack because two producers and a researcher for *Vanessa* had recruited fake guests through entertainment agencies, aiming to increase entertainment ratings. This breached trust with viewers and the press described Feltz as 'greedy and arrogant'. The BBC quietly retired *Vanessa*, Johnson, Turnock, *ITV Cultures*, pp.163-164; Alan Rosenthal, John Corner, (eds), *New challenges for documentary* (Manchester University Press, 2005), p.353.

¹¹² For more on the 'Evolution of Talk on Vanessa', see Helen Wood, *Talking with Television: Women, Talk Shows, and Modern Self-reflexivity* (University of Illinois Press, 2009), pp.77-80.

¹¹³ Anon., 'Chat's Life! Rantzen and Greer Return', pp.6-7; Anon., 'That's' the accusation of her critics', p.27; Rantzen, 'Esther takes the talk-show high ground', p.17.

¹¹⁴ Helen Wood, "No, YOU Rioted!": The pursuit of conflict in the management of expert and lay discourses on Kilroy', in A. Tolson (ed), *Television talk shows: Discourse, performance, spectacle* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2001), pp.65-87.

allowed both lay and expert voices to undermine the traditional view that only medical or official experts' knowledge was valuable and reliable, in contrast to the knowledge based on 'everyday' life experience.¹¹⁵ Treatments of 'tanorexia' offer some support for this claim. The melanoma survivors on the talk show, and the male 'Tanorexic[s]', did appear to have the media's support to challenge medical experts, especially when compared to the print press. Yet, at least in the case of 'tanorexic' women, I demonstrate that this 'democratic' balance was an illusion, as the socio-cultural stigma against women (in this case a working-class mother), and the stereotyping of 'tanorexics' and their 'immoral' and 'selfish' lifestyles, were too ingrained within media-medical discourse and everyday discussions. In the case of 'tanorexic' women, the talk show outcome was different to most other 'victims' interviewed on *Esther*: the studio audience and television viewers were discouraged from empathising with women who used sunbeds. I argue that the media belittled and disempowered these women, mainly young or working-class mothers, and their reasons for sunbed use, especially in comparison to men, because these women challenged traditional gendered expectations and social roles (particularly motherhood). An evaluation of the host, sunbed-related stakeholder representatives, and finally the framing of both 'tanorexic' women and men, will illustrate how the talk show tried to present a balanced discussion to the public. Yet a deeper analysis will demonstrate that this frame of equality was actually skewed both from the outset and throughout the show. In comparison to the print press, *Esther* instead encouraged even more socio-cultural bias against women and both their lifestyle and consumption choices.

¹¹⁵ Anne-Marie Simon-Vandenberg's article evaluates the status of lay and expert voices in public participation programmes. Talk shows, in which ordinary people are given the floor and encouraged to tell their stories, may have changed the epistemology that only official expert knowledge is valuable, Anne-Marie Simon-Vandenberg, 'Lay and expert voices in public participation programmes: A case of generic heterogeneity', *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39, 8, (2007), pp.1420-1435.

The Experienced and Authoritative Talk Show Host

Rantzen argued that the purpose of her talk show, *Esther*, was to give the public a platform to either help themselves or others, yet she was not exempt from the socio-cultural judgements and condemning of 'tanorexics' and their lifestyle choices – particularly of mothers. Rantzen presented her show as a service for the public, she wanted 'everyday' people to support 'ordinary' audiences. In an interview for *Radio Times*, Rantzen stated that most guests contacted Rantzen to go on the show for two main reasons. They wanted to 'find a solution for themselves' and 'protect others'. As these guests were 'determined to bring about change', they wanted to broadcast their authentic voice of first-hand experience to the public.¹¹⁶ Rantzen described the survivors as sometimes 'angry', and 'deeply moving, strong, determined and courageous'.

Rantzen wanted the programme to be testing, challenging, amusing, yet sometimes she sought to arouse "disagreement and controversy" from the guests. Nonetheless, the show had to conclude with the guests feeling fond of each other - glad that they met and shared their experiences on the show.¹¹⁷ In the past, however, the show had concluded disharmoniously. An argument between one doctor and patients about the causes and treatments of ME (chronic fatigue syndrome) led to a columnist describing Rantzen's show as "victim television". In a *Radio Times* interview article, Rantzen challenged this statement.¹¹⁸ Notably, in this example of a disharmonious conclusion, Rantzen was both supporting and defending the public by challenging the medical expert. For the years running, the print press and the public praised the show

¹¹⁶ She explained one particular story in which a mother had single-handedly transformed public opinion, allowing her two-year old son to receive a liver transplant. Reportedly, through the talk show, the mother had more influence than medical doctors or consultants. The snow-ball effect of this mother's story through the media led to hundreds of other children receiving transplants and living for longer, Anon., 'Chat's Life! Rantzen and Greer Return', pp.6-7.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Anon., 'That's' the accusation of her critics', p.27

for the 'positive good' that it had achieved.¹¹⁹

Yet Rantzen was also formidable. Rantzen was in her mid-50s and performed as a tough-love mother figure. She was extremely articulate, with an upper-class accent, and had a long-standing history of media related accomplishments. Immaculately dressed, in expensive jewellery, and shoulder-padded power-suits, she confidently embodied and controlled the spaces with her physical presence and opinions. Both the media and public perceived Rantzen as a 'strong-minded, outspoken, [and] charismatic doyenne of TV'.¹²⁰ This intimidating power dynamic prevented all guests, medical experts, industry representatives and the audiences (studio and television) from challenging her. Consequently, although Rantzen may have protected the 'tanorexics' from the disapproval of medical experts, Rantzen herself judged and condemned the female tanorexics, evidenced by her sharp tone, control of the conversation, and dismissive body language. Thus, reinforcing stigma and encouraging the audience to condemn these women themselves.

A Fair and Balanced Representation of Sunbed-savvy Stakeholders?

Esther's carefully selected representatives also created the impression that there would be a democratic and non-discriminatory discussion. A representative from each stakeholder linked to 'tanorexia' featured on the talk show. Yet Rantzen's management of the conversation between these stakeholders (i.e., how long they spoke for) and where they were sat in the studio demonstrated a hierarchy. This imbalance of support pitted the vast majority of people against the tanorexic. The main guests were positioned centrally within the panopticon semi-circle shaped stage; these participants could be seen by everyone in the studio. These three guests included Dawn Harley, a young to middle-aged working-to-middle class mother; Diana, a skin cancer sufferer, two decades older than Harley; and Paul Gordon, a male

¹¹⁹ Rantzen, 'Esther takes the talk-show high ground', p.17.

¹²⁰ Anon., 'Chat's Life! Rantzen and Greer Return', pp.6-7.

sportswear model in his early twenties. The media-renowned medical experts were seated on the front row of the audience, including the dermatologist Dr Margaret Price and the addiction psychologist, Dr Mark Griffiths. An Australian woman who educated the audiences about Australian health campaigns and Australian anti-UV-exposure attitudes sat near the medical experts. Kathy Banks, a representative from The Sunbed Association (TSA), sat on the opposite side of the front row. The 'public' (i.e., studio audience) curved around the main stage, facing the guests. Asking questions and controlling the microphone, Rantzen walked around the studio. This, combined with some of the studio audiences' opinions and questions, suggested a democratic discussion.

Yet, on the show, the main guests performed their stakeholder standpoints on sunbed use, which influenced a socially biased hierarchy of respect, and further encouraged the stigmatisation of female 'tanorexics'. The representatives from each stakeholder group were extremely different in terms of their personality and appearances; each 'character' reflected the stereotype of their faction. For the media, this made them suitably representative, manageable and memorable, therefore suited to the medium's need for drama to entertain viewers. On *Esther*, the skin cancer 'survivor' (Diana) was much older, dressed conservatively and respectably, in beige, exposing no skin. She spoke seriously about sunbeds and skin cancer. As an 'expert', she used her horrifying experience of being a sunbed user and then melanoma patient to advise Harley - and the watching audiences - against sunbed use. During the mid-1990s, Harley was the only female 'sunbed addict' interviewed in-depth on television. She was the 'tanorexic' on *3-D*, *Vanessa* and *Esther*. Harley had become a popular television presence, perhaps because of her 'everyday' yet 'tanorexic'-stereotype appearance and media-presentable personality. All television coverage presented Harley as an ordinary lower-middle-class mother, twice-married. Harley began tanning when she temporarily moved to Arizona during the 1980s and was the mother of two boys. Dressed in brightly coloured outfits, she always had bright blonde hair and wore make-up and jewellery. On *Esther*, the credits showed the make-up artists heavily applying make-up (especially bronzer) on her face. Her outfits usually exposed her tanned arms

and bare legs. She also spoke clearly, confidently and passionately about why she used sunbeds, which was engaging to listen to. Her polite demeanour meant that even if she became agitated, the host could easily diffuse the conversation. Harley's comparison with a more conservative melanoma survivor hinted at a more irresponsible talk show guest – she was a mother yet her purportedly 'self-destructive' tanning habits contradicted her expected social role of prioritising her children. In terms of the 'tanorexic' men on the talk shows, Gordon was a young 'metrosexual' sportswear model, who had a northern accent. *Esther* feminised his beauty routines. Similarly, on *Vanessa*, Mike had a working-class accent and was also ridiculed for his femininity. On *Esther*, the medical experts also dressed conservatively. Speaking with upper-class accents, they provided histories and theories to educate the audience. When the producers of *Esther* selected melanoma 'survivors' and sunbed users, they would have picked the sunbed stereotypes that the public could resonate with. The contrast of both the 'respectable' melanoma survivors and medical experts, with flamboyant Harley, further reinforced the 'tanorexic' stereotype.¹²¹

The claim of editorial balance - that the audience would see both sides and could make a varied and fair judgement about the sunbed addicts - was deceptive. The medical experts, who were strongly against sunbeds, spoke the most. Banks, TSA's secretary, was invited to balance the discussion. Yet Rantzen called Banks to speak once, and after one-minute Rantzen interrupted Banks and moved the microphone away. Moreover, Rantzen challenged Banks and supported the comments made by the medical experts. The voice of the industry was no longer a respected or an accepted 'expert' in contrast to the early 1980s (see Chapter One and Two).

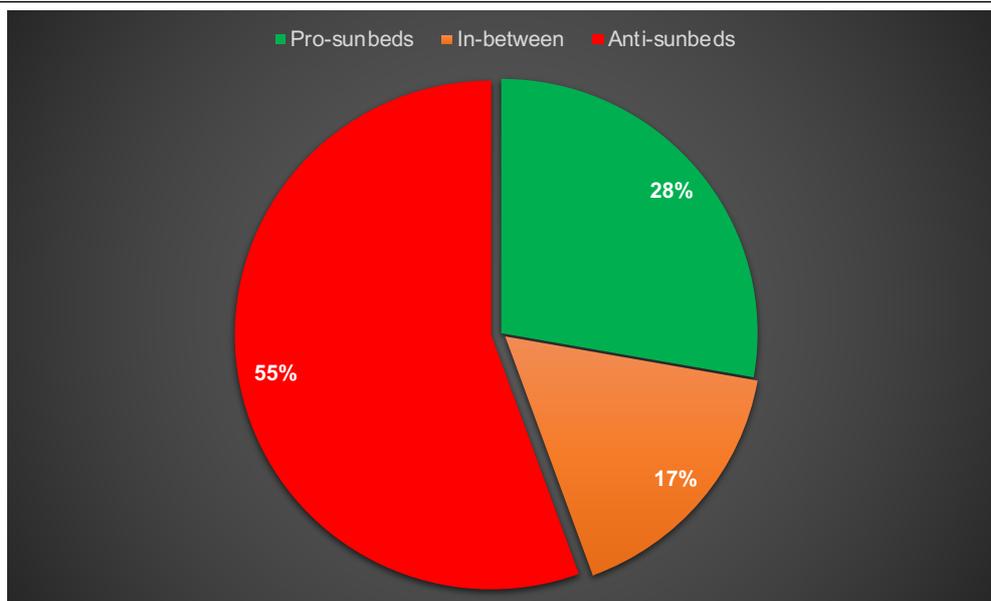
Additionally, in comparison to the volume of 'anti-sunbed' individuals, Rantzen selected very few pro-sunbed audience members to speak (**Table 6.5** and **Pie Chart 6.6**). Rantzen used her quick witted and calculated questions to

¹²¹ *The Vanessa Show; Esther, 'Tanorexia'; 3-D, BURNING ISSUE - HEALTHY CHOICE?*.

Table 6.5 The guests who spoke on *Esther* (June 1997).

| Order of Speaking | Name | Role on Esther | Standpoint on Sunbeds | Approximate uninterrupted speaking (30 minute show) |
|-------------------|----------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|
| 1 | Esther Rantzen | HOST | 'Neutral' | Spoke the overall most |
| 2 | Dawn Harley | MAIN GUEST 'Sunbed addict'/mother | Pro | Spoke the overall second most as most of the questions were directed at her |
| 3 | Dr Margaret Price | Dermatologist at Brighton Hospital | Anti | Invited to speak 10x (4 minutes 40 seconds) |
| 4 | Two young boys | Dawn's sons | Pro to anti | |
| 5 | Diana Evans | MAIN GUEST Skin Cancer Survivor | Anti | Invited to speak 2x (3 minutes) |
| 6 | Australian Woman | Provides comparisons between British and Australian health campaigns and attitudes to UV exposure | Anti | (3 minutes 50 seconds) |
| 7 | Miriam (and her boyfriend) | A model who argues that sunbed use would damage her skin and ruin her career | Anti | (50 seconds) |
| 8 | Paul Gordon | MAIN GUEST 'Sunbed addict'/model | Pro | (4 minutes 20 seconds) |
| 9 | Dr Mark Griffiths | Psychologist and expert on addiction | Anti | Invited to speak 1x (2 minutes 15 seconds) |
| 10 | AMNo.1 | <i>Blonde, tanned and heavily made up 'sunbed addict' mother who was framed as unintelligent</i> | Pro | |
| 11 | AMNo.2 (John) | <i>Former gym instructor and melanoma/facial rodent ulcer survivor</i> | Anti | |
| 12 | Kathy Banks | Secretary for the TSA | Pro | Invited to speak 1x (1 minute 30 seconds) |
| 13 | AMNo.3 (Jenny) | <i>Developed skin condition from sunbed use</i> | In-between | |
| 14 | AMNo.4 | <i>Mother</i> | Anti | |
| 15 | AMNo.5 | <i>Blonde, tanned and heavily made up 'sunbed addict' who had 'relapsed'</i> | Pro | |
| 16 | AMNo.6 | <i>Daughter of AMNo.15</i> | Anti | |
| 17 | AMNNo.7 | | Anti | |

Pie Chart 6.6 The standpoints on sunbeds of the individuals that Rantzen invites to speak on *Esther* (June 1997).



Source: *Esther*, 'Tanorexia', (BBC2, 4.55pm, 18 June 1997). (British Film Institute, Stephen Street Archive).

frame 'sunbed addicts' as unintelligent, vain and reckless, undermining any defence. Yet Rantzen's back and forth movement, between pro- and anti-sunbed supporters, hid this imbalance.

Moreover, Rantzen gave the anti-sunbed speakers significantly more time to speak as she controlled the microphone. On the thirty-two-minute show Rantzen unsurprisingly spoke the most, but the two medical experts and the expert on Australian health campaigns spoke for at least one third of the show. Although Dr Price spoke for approximately five minutes in total, Price's verbal dominance was not as noticeable because Rantzen invited her to speak on ten separate occasions. Although the audience members spoke for the least amount of time, they were sat at the highest level in the studio, which elevated their authority when they spoke down to the guests on the main stage.

'Tanorexia' – Only a Women's Condition?

After confirming 'tanorexia' as a genuine condition, both *Esther* and *Vanessa* presented the public with both a female and male 'tanorexic'. Rantzen suggested 'tanorexia' affected all genders, creating an illusion of equality. Nonetheless, like the print press, the talk shows presented 'tanorexia' as mainly a women's condition. Women's 'tanorexic' tendencies, framed by television hosts, were less acceptable, more immoral and significantly worse than men's'. Both hosts regularly interrogated Harley but were kinder to the men. Despite Harley's perpetual politeness, in both talk shows, the hosts, medical experts, other main guests, and the audiences demonstrated a much harsher attitude towards Harley. Most of the talk show participants called Harley selfish, irresponsible and vain, asserting that she neglected her duties as a mother. The mere presence of Dr Griffiths, the 'addiction expert' psychologist, endorsed the drug-associated fear of sunbed use, thus encouraging moral panic. Moreover, if any of the talk show's participants began to empathise with Harley, Rantzen changed the discussion. Harley, for example, stated that she was a nurse who paid her NHS taxes. She did not drink, smoke or use drugs, and sunbed use made her feel happy. Rantzen immediately invited confident and forceful audience members, mainly former sunbed users, to pressurise Harley to

change her habits. At the end of the show, most of the studio participants and Rantzen had aggressively condemned Harley for her sunbed use, but not her male counterparts. Yet wealthy men were more at risk from dying from melanoma.

Instead, on both talk shows, the male 'sunbed addicts' (Mike and Gordon) were stigmatised in a trivial and light-hearted manner. On *Vanessa*, Feltz even flirted and laughed with Mike. On *Esther*, Rantzen only asked Gordon four questions: how many hours he spent on sunbeds; why did he use them; was he a model, and finally, did his photographers and clients want him to look suntanned? Gordon explained that male models felt more pressure to be tanned, especially for 'sportswear and body shots'. Satisfied with his explanations, both Rantzen and the audience responded sympathetically. Clearly, Rantzen overlooked the aesthetic pressures that were also felt by mothers, such as Harley. Thus, stigma towards 'tanorexics' was misogynistic.

The television talk shows further consolidated the irrationality of sunbed addicts' tendencies to the public. The framing of the 'tanorexic', through the visuals and rhetoric, guided the public to both stigmatise and condemn the women who used sunbeds. The 'judge' (Rantzen), the 'witnesses and jurors' (the talk show's guest and audiences), and the 'medical experts' presented a credible verdict that women's sunbed use was immoral - Harley's behaviour and actions needed to change for the greater good of society. *Esther* was also addressing a personal matter, watched by the public in their private homes. This blurred the boundaries of private and public choices further, just as real and talk show life merged. *Esther*, like other talk shows, encouraged the informed public (i.e., the new 'experts') to not only judge and comment, but to also act on trying to change the decision-making of an individual.¹²² This fulfilled *Esther's* objective, as Rantzen disagreed that 'exposing one's feelings in private [was] different from doing so in front of a studio audience and millions of viewers'.¹²³

¹²² Wood, *Talking with television*, p.95.

¹²³ Anon., 'Chat's Life! Rantzen and Greer Return', pp.6-7.

This exemplified late 1990s' new social medical trends, in which the public could become 'experts' by accessing the experiences of patients, the relatives of patients, and healthcare professionals through the media.¹²⁴

Conclusion

The growing factions who opposed the sunbed industry achieved some success as the sunbed industry and their users were less visible by the end of the mid-1990s. After July 1997, the sunbed industry had lost support within the elite leisure marketplace as upmarket venues had removed their sunbeds.¹²⁵ Additionally, the media had strongly established the undesirable 'Tanorexic' stereotype – commonly depicted as a young and working-class woman (especially mothers) or a 'metrosexual' (and increasingly homosexual) man – , a representation that would persist for the following decades. Working-class men were also stigmatised, but not as severely as women. Medical experts and media producers were aiming to decrease skin cancer rates and improve the long-term health of the British public by reducing sunbed use. Yet their highly biased immoral depiction of sunbed users – now on television, especially talk shows - would instead encourage the public to develop more secretive behaviours towards sunbed use. Unsurprisingly, in 1999, both the HEA and *The Times* worryingly confirmed that over three million people continued to use sunbeds every year.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Stacey, *Teratologies*, pp.1-7.

¹²⁵ Luisa Dillner, 'Treatment of the weeks: Luisa Dillner in the massage chair at the Sanctuary', *Guardian*, 29 July 1997, p15.

¹²⁶ Ian Murray (Medical Correspondent), 'Sunbed clients may be paying with their lives', *The Times*, 3 March 1999, p.6.

Conclusion

This thesis has provided a chronological overview of how diverse historical actors and movements shaped the changing representations of the sunbed industry, its consumers, and the act of consumption from the 1970s to 1990s in England. Each chapter identified a distinct transition period, introducing new and sometimes ambivalently pro- and anti-sunbed stakeholders. These agents included growing public health networks, 'experts' and consumers, contributing to both sunbed-related media-medical feedback loops and an array of influential historical events within public life - all of which further complicated and entangled the controversial overlapping layers of sunbed narratives. A history of sunbeds also provided a cultural lens to study key political, economic, medical and social-cultural transformations in public life from the 1970s to 1990s in England.

The first part of this thesis focused on the positive introduction of sunbeds to the public. Between the late 1970s to late 1980s, the sunbed industry had gained nation-wide approval across most demographic groups within England. Sunbeds became embedded within popular everyday 'spaces' of health, fitness, beauty and leisure. Chapter One provided a microhistory of Jean Graham's sunbed services as an extension of her upmarket beauty and health establishments in Liverpool during the 1970s and early 1980s. The expansion of Graham's sunbed services from a local to regional level, and her success as an individual entrepreneur, demonstrated that sunbeds were originally a site for 'self-improvement', both for their providers and customers. This was reflective of the entrepreneurial Thatcherite spirit, when the media encouraged consumer freedom by supporting new markets to prosper, like the sunbed industry.¹ Although sunbed consumers were varied in gender, age and race, Graham's clients were largely affluent. They had disposable incomes and cared about

¹ Rollings, 'Cracks in the Post-War Keynesian Settlement?', pp.637–659; p.193; Bingham, Conboy, *Tabloid Century*, p.90; Anon., 'Turnover brisk in sunbeds', p.3.

developing, maintaining, or at least reflecting a 'healthy', 'beautiful' and wealthy body. Sunbeds were introduced as a 'new revolutionary' part of a luxurious, aspirational and relaxing health routine.²

This chapter revealed that some of the original sunbed providers felt responsible and cared for their communities; they wanted to support both the 'over-stretched' NHS and their customers.³ Moreover, typical of when most new technologies enter the public marketplace, the original sunbed 'experts' were the providers themselves, supported through the media. Graham's enterprise as a case study demonstrated that these 'commercial' providers were perceived as 'health experts' with highly regarded credentials and reputable salons, endorsed by medical experts.⁴ Focusing on Liverpool also unveiled why Liverpool continues to demonstrate a controversial relationship with the sunbed phenomenon.⁵

Chapter Two demonstrated the early 1980s' interlinked 'boom' of the health, fitness and sunbed industries, visible in both advertising and physical spaces. The sunbed industry became a national and international success. Sunbeds became ubiquitous within health clubs, health farms, both household and public swimming pools, and leisure centres. These sunbeds, advertised as domesticated and tranquil machines, both absorbed and radiated warmth. Their health-giving rays uplifted and energised their surrounding environments, including the 'fit' bodies associated with them. Even material culture within these sunbed settings reflected luxury and cleanliness. Sunbed consumers were depicted as white, rational and hegemonic members of the public, typically

² Anon., 'Jean Graham. Brown but not burned with SONTEGRA', p.3

³ Anon., 'Relief from Psoriasis at Jean Graham salons', p.5; Goodwin, 'Skin-deep joy for Brenda', p.8.

⁴ Anon., 'That rosy glow no woman wants. The Echo Chat Show in Print', p.10; *Reports Politics*.

⁵ Walsh, Harris, et al., 'Sunbed outlets and area deprivation in the UK', p.21; Kit Hesketh-Harvey, 'Pale skin might be hot, but Liverpool is still dying for a tan', *Telegraph*, 4 August 2013.

middle-to-upper class. These men and women were portrayed as exhibiting self-discipline, motivation, competence and resourcefulness for sensibly 'investing' their time and money to regularly use sunbeds. Sunbed consumption became part of a moral routine of bodily transformation as it was introduced as a re-invigorating activity for privileged consumers.⁶

An evaluation of national newspapers (notably the *Financial Times*), television programmes, photographs, trade directories, commercial catalogues, and even a 'Keep Fit' Sindy doll, illustrated that, commercial outlets and the media wanted to be associated with both public health and the public, by providing consumers with new technologies to improve their overall wellbeing. Private businesses, through the media, claimed to educate the public about 'healthier' everyday lifestyles, habits and behaviours. This health education approach encouraged consumers to develop a greater responsibility for their individual wellbeing. Consequently, the owners and employees of health and fitness businesses, many of whom had healthcare and fitness qualifications, were now also sunbed experts. Again, they were supported by journalists in the print press and on television. Although some medical experts were concerned about the hazards of sunbeds, their voices were drowned out in the deluge of positive sunbed publicity, which included the support of other dermatologists on television reports. Some of these dermatologists inadvertently supported sunbed providers and the media's claims that 'UVA' sunbeds were a healthier and safer alternative to sunbathing.⁷ Sunbed consumers were also driving this 'new cult [of the sunbed] industry'.⁸ The interlinked network of commercial health and fitness providers, the media and medical experts (particularly in their health education approaches), demonstrates how popular culture was embedded within public health, just as sunbeds were embedded within mainstream health spaces. Nonetheless, the rocketing popularity of public sunbeds was unsustainable in England and economic turbulence was

⁶ *Mersey Yellow Pages*, 1982; *The Olympian Way*; 'Keeping Fit' Sindy doll, 1981.

⁷ *Reports Politics*.

⁸ *Ibid*.

underway.

Chapter Three drew attention to the *household* sunbed market and demonstrated that the market for *public* sunbeds had saturated by the end of 1982. The representation of household sunbed providers had also changed. Between 1983 to 1987, new working-to-lower-middle class ‘entrepreneurs’ were now the main types of sunbed providers. Influential groups, such as other commercial industries, the media, government, medical communities and the public, portrayed these (working-class) providers as reckless, precarious and distasteful.⁹ To open up the domestic sunbed market, these entrepreneurs began to advertise and sell their ‘economy’ sunbeds to ‘everyone’. By 1986, sunbeds became a more mundane ‘everyday’ technology and were strongly associated as a banal consumption of the aspiring white working-to-lower middle-class masses. Unsurprisingly, working-class sunbed consumers were stigmatised as irresponsible, and their ‘indulgence’ of sunbeds was now satirised as off-putting and ‘excessive’.¹⁰

In this third chapter, set against the early 1980s recession, I demonstrated how a growing range of entrepreneurs made the most of the domestic sunbed industry’s prominence.¹¹ To make sunbeds accessible for all, these sellers heavily utilised mass media until their businesses failed beyond repair by the mid-to-late 1980s. This chapter extended the traditional historical narrative in which public health and the media often become anxious when working-class groups begin to consume recreational technologies and substances.¹² Predictably, the government became concerned about the general public’s understandings of cancer, notably skin cancer for the first time.

⁹ *Enterprize*; BBC Motion Gallery, ‘Breakfast time, Dr Richard Smith, linking sunbeds and sun lamps with skin cancer’, BBC, Aired 15 March 1983.

¹⁰ *Only Fools and Horses*, Season 5, Episode 4.

¹¹ Porter, “Though Not an Historian Myself ...”, p.249

¹² Graham, ‘Smoking, Stigma and Social Class’, pp.83-99.

Unsurprisingly, scientific investigations on sunbeds and skin cancer were finally funded.¹³

The second part of this thesis demonstrated how negative representations of the sunbed industry, its consumers, and the use of sunbeds intensified from the late 1980s to late 1990s. The most influential sunbed 'expert(s)' were no longer the varied range of sunbed providers. These former information providers were replaced by medical professionals (mainly dermatologists) and anti-sunbed organisations – all of whom now shaped the sunbed industry's representation through the media. Chapter Four explored how the fruits of medical research created an upsurge of published medical articles warning against sunbed use. Parts of these medical findings were transmitted to the public through *Tomorrow's World*. In turn, the sunbed industry and its advertising became less visible. Nonetheless, sunbed consumers were still largely unresponsive to the occasional public health warning. Perhaps in an attempt to discourage the general public, the media began to satirise a morally distasteful sunbed user stereotype. In the media, these ungrateful, unkind, lazy and narcissistic women had acquired wealth through wicked means to pay for their beauty routines. The act of using sunbeds was further stigmatised as frivolous; only the "immoral" and emotionally disconnected members of society used sunbeds.¹⁴

During the late 1980s, the public distrusted medical experts and were more likely to believe health information if it was transmitted through television.¹⁵ Although government and medical officials refrained from creating moral panic or deploying stigmatised stereotypes, the media's communicating of health warnings arrived with gender, class, race, age and later sexuality-

¹³ Swerdlow, English, et al., 'Flourescent lights, ultraviolet lamps, and risk of cutaneous melanoma', p.22.

¹⁴ Hands, 'Everything a judge should know about bimbettes and their pouting older sisters', p.12; Williams, "Silicone of course ...".

¹⁵ BBC Broadcasting Research, Laking, Understanding Cancer, p.8, p.18.

bound judgement. The misogynistic emergence of “immoral” sunbed stereotypes aimed to discourage the ‘frivolous’ lifestyles of these consumers.¹⁶ I argue that these undesirable representations of sunbed consumers illustrated the blurring of public health research and popular culture in media-based health messages. Moreover, these stereotypes then influenced which participants were chosen in future medical studies on sunbed use.¹⁷ As sunbed use was no longer a ‘moral’ activity, consumers began to use sunbeds more discreetly.

Chapter Five showed that the fake tan industry, journalists, medical experts and scientists inadvertently revived tanned skin as desirable in their attempts to both promote ‘safer’ tanning technologies and discourage sunbed use.¹⁸ Medical experts confidently asserted that sunbed providers were misleading consumers as sunbeds were ‘life-threatening’.¹⁹ Yet, as tanning culture had been revived and new sunbed franchises were providing improved sunbed technologies, sunbed use continued.²⁰ From 1992 onwards, the term ‘tanorexia’ became popular in newspapers and, endorsed by healthcare experts, was typically portrayed as a white young woman’s affliction. Newspaper journalists stigmatised these ‘tanorexics’ as addicts, in trend with the rise of addiction theories in medical settings to explain ‘irrational’ consumptions.²¹ In contrast to the early 1980s sunbed using stereotype, media agents conveyed these ‘self-destructive’ sunbed consumers as insecure and lacking self-discipline.²²

The rise of the ‘fake tan’ industry and research for ‘safer’ tanning technologies demonstrates that when new technologies emerge in the public

¹⁶ Chappell, ‘Loadsamoney making fun: Third Person’, p.16.

¹⁷ Fiala, Kopp, Gunther, ‘Why do young women use sunbeds?’.

¹⁸ Hands, ‘FEMAIL bodytalk. Tanning without the tears’.

¹⁹ Shuttleworth, ‘Sunbeds and the pursuit of the year round tan should be discouraged’, pp.1508-9.

²⁰ Sills, ‘The Six Minute Chamber’, p.36; The Bronz Factory leaflet.

²¹ Keane, *What's wrong with addiction?*.

²² Westcott, ‘I’d rather be wrinkled and brown than white and smooth’, pp.24-5.

marketplace, again, the original 'expert' is typically the provider, supported by the media. The varying types of new tanning technologies were both introduced and mostly supported by healthcare providers, NGOs, medical experts and scientists, as these tanning methods reportedly offered a 'safer' alternative to sunbed tanning. These new tanning serums imitated the introduction of 1980s' 'UVA sunbeds' to discourage more harmful 'UVB-sunbathing exposure', yet these early 1990s' tanning methods were riddled in contradictions as they often encouraged UV-exposure.²³ In national newspapers, the experiences of sunbed consumers began to emerge. At first, some of these white young women satirised their own 'addictive' tendencies, while others were using the print press to tell readers that they used sunbeds responsibly. Nonetheless, journalists used their testimonies to emphasise that these women's 'tanorexic' habits were senseless and hazardous. This print press coverage transferred the positive association of a 'sunbed tan' with 'fit' and 'healthy' bodies onto 'irrational' and 'addicted' female consumers. These newspapers scare tactics, supported by medical authorities, dramatised 'tanorexia'.²⁴ Chapter Four ended with the sensationalised deaths of two 'young' women to warn against the fatal consequences of sunbed use.²⁵ The media and medical profession's attacks on the sunbed industry and their 'sunbed addicts' were now noteworthy of national television coverage.

²³ These histories of tanning technologies, and their media, medical and NGO 'expert' support, are similar to the histories of tobacco technologies - more recently, the rise and medicalisation of e-cigarettes during the early twenty-first century. For a history of tobacco substitutes, including e-cigarettes, see Berridge, Starns, 'Chapter 7: The 'invisible industrialist' and public health: the rise and fall of 'safer smoking' in the 1970s' in Berridge, Loughlin, *Medicine, the market and mass media*, pp.8-9, pp.172-191; Virginia Berridge, 'Electronic cigarettes and history', *Lancet*, 383, 9936, (2014), pp.2204-2205; Virginia Berridge, 'History and the future: Looking back to look forward?', *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 37, (2016), pp.119-120; K. Morphet, A. Carter, W. Hall, C. Gartner, 'Medicalisation, smoking and e-cigarettes: evidence and implications', *Tobacco control*, 26, e2, (2017), pp.e134-9.

²⁴ Westcott, 'I'd rather be wrinkled and brown than white and smooth', pp.24-5.

²⁵ Duce, 'Sunbed users ignore danger', p.7.

As sunbed use was a 'carcinogenic' consumer choice, and seemingly more susceptible to influence than other environmental factors (i.e., the depletion of the ozone layer), this 'war' triggered even more confident attacks against the sunbed industry and its consumers on television. Medical experts, alternative tanning industries, media agents and now legal authorities claimed that sunbed providers were financially exploiting the public and did not care about their consumers' health. Aside from the legal authorities, most attempts to restrain the sunbed industry were weakened by the lack of consensus within each group and the contradictions within most anti-sunbed multi-media coverage.²⁶ From 1995 to 1997, medical experts, media agents and now the general public more forcefully discouraged tanning habits through the media. On television, 'sunbed addiction', endorsed by dermatologists and now psychologists, appeared to effect only white lower-to-middle-lower class women (especially mothers) and 'feminine' men. Without hesitation, sunbed consumers were aggressively condemned as 'self-destructive' and 'selfish' for risking 'everything' – including the wellbeing of their children. Sunbed use was reinforced as 'costly' – a burden on the NHS, the taxpayer and the public for wasting resources. On talk shows, mothers were framed as unforgivably immoral, particularly when they defended their consumer right to use sunbeds.²⁷

Chapter Six illustrated two main public health approaches to reduce the health risks of sunbeds. The first was an attempt to change the social 'environment' causing the global rise in skin cancer.²⁸ Healthcare experts in Britain perceived the sunbed industry as one of these 'environmental' causes. Yet disagreements within medical expert groups and the government's reluctance to implement greater restrictions on businesses led to the failure in

²⁶ Anon., 'Sunbed warning', p.5; *Beauty Consumer Watchdog*; Anon., 'Closure hit Hawtin', p.20.

²⁷ *Esther, Vanessa*.

²⁸ Berridge, Loughlin, *Medicine, the market and mass media*, p.xv.

reducing sunbed access. As a result, the other public health approach focused on changing the individual behaviours of the public and sunbed consumers.²⁹ This health education and risk awareness approach relied heavily on the mass media, perhaps explaining why healthcare professionals tolerated and even supported obvious scare tactics and moral sanctions. These effects to reduce overall sunbed use were infused with gender, class and sexuality bias.

In turn, an even larger expansion of 'sunbed' experts emerged through the media. Despite healthcare professionals appearing as most authoritative, media agents were the dominant influencers on television. Moreover, as media platforms had become more accessible, more 'experts by experience' emerged through sunbed-related media coverage. These included a growing variety of former and current sunbed consumers, and 'patient experts' (i.e., melanoma 'survivors' and recovered 'sunbed addicts').³⁰ Thus, the last two chapters also demonstrate the rise of everyday consumer voices and the backlash against 1980s' consumerism. During the 1990s, a consumer attitude of 'self-denial' was praised - particularly from industries offering bodily 'improvement' for women.³¹ Nonetheless, the invitation of healthcare authorities on talk shows - a platform of both popular culture and public spectatorship and participation - further legitimated the blurring of private and public spaces. This merging of 'experts' and 'consumers' invited public scrutiny on previously private health concerns. With the aim to improve overall societal wellbeing, the communal pressure on individuals to reduce their own health risks and improve their consumption habits had intensified.³² Yet, with these public health concerns came the stigmatisation, condemnation and stereotyping of marginalised groups.

²⁹ Ibid., p.3.

³⁰ *Esther*.

³¹ Moseley, 'Slimming One's Way to a Better Self?', p.9.

³² *Esther, Vanessa*.

Contemporary Representations of Sunbeds

This thesis brings us full circle to the representations of the sunbed industry, its consumers and the act of consumption on *Tantastic*. In twenty-first century mass media, the influential stakeholders – such as the ‘experts’ and ‘consumers’ – are almost the same as the late 1990s. In the 2000s, NGOs, such as CRUK and Melanoma UK, drove most of the anti-sunbed lobbying.³³ Moreover, voices of the sunbed industry are still excluded, as both the media and public generally agree that sunbeds are unhealthy carcinogenic technologies.³⁴ Nonetheless, the industry continues to relentlessly advertise the health effects of sunbeds, such as ‘Vitamin D’ enhancement, directly to the public through digital marketing.³⁵ White, working-class women (particularly young women and mothers), and homosexual men, continue to be stereotyped, stigmatised and condemned as ‘vain’, ‘self-destructive’ and ‘stupid’ consumers. These cultural and moral sanctions through horror films, soaps and

³³ Cancer Research UK, ‘Deadly skin cancer now threatens women in their twenties’, Cancer Research UK, 8 April 2009. Accessed March 2020:

https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/cancer-news/press-release/2009-04-08-deadly-skin-cancer-now-threatens-women-in-their-twenties?_ga=2.164956607.1202058458.1584612186-540438915.1584445847;

Melanoma UK, ‘SUNBED BAN’, Melanoma UK, January 2019. Accessed March 2020:

<https://www.melanomauk.org.uk/sunbed-ban>

³⁴ Anne-Marie Solowiji, ‘Shock Tactics on the Sunbed’, *Financial Times*, 1 May 2020.

Accessed March 2020: [https://www.ft.com/content/3c6c4bf0-532d-11df-813e-](https://www.ft.com/content/3c6c4bf0-532d-11df-813e-00144feab49a)

[00144feab49a](https://www.ft.com/content/3c6c4bf0-532d-11df-813e-00144feab49a)

³⁵ The Tanning Shop, ‘BRITONS NEED MORE VITAMIN D! BOOST YOURS AT THE TANNING SHOP!’, The Tanning Shop, 22 July 2017. Accessed March 2020:

<https://thetanningshop.co.uk/britons-need-more-vitamin-d-boost-yours-at-the-tanning-shop/>

documentaries, again, reflect gender, class, race, age and sexuality bias.³⁶ Finally, the act of sunbed use is still framed as irrational, shocking and distasteful, which still encourages discreet consumption.

The 'global war' against the rise of melanoma also persisted into the 2000s. In 2003, the *World Health Organisation* recommended new sunbed restrictions, and the volume of medical investigations and campaigns against sunbeds increased.³⁷ Again, these campaigns mainly focused on discouraging young women from using sunbeds.³⁸ During the early 2000s, the concept of 'sunbed addiction' was taken a step further; medical research on the 'physiological' and 'biological' dependence of sunbeds legitimised 'tanorexia' as a women's condition.³⁹ Yet this highly publicised vision of sunbeds as a social 'epidemic' and communal threat, again, only effected young women.⁴⁰ Nonetheless, throughout the twenty-first century, the highest mortality rates are

³⁶ *Z Nation*, Season 4, Episode 10; Anon., 'Television and Radio. EastEnders', *Financial Times*, 29 October 2001, p.21; *Tantastic*.

³⁷ The WHO recommended that legislations should be implemented to 'provide better information for consumers', prohibit sunbed use for those under the age of 18, and reduce the quantity of tanning parlours 'working without the surveillance of an operator', World Health Organisation, 'Artificial tanning sunbeds: risk and guidance', *World Health Organisation*, (2003), p.7.

³⁸ Wellcome Trust Collection, Box 628, Sunbathing ephemera Box 1, Boots, Cancer Research UK and SunSmart skin cancer leaflets, June 2005.

³⁹ In 2013, 'Tanning addiction' was observed as both a psychological and physical addiction to the ultraviolet radiation of sunbeds. From the outset of 'Tanorexia', the addiction sunbed was increasingly analogised to tobacco and alcohol addiction, as the addict was said to experience severe withdrawal symptoms if they reduce or terminate their sunbed consumption, Homung, Poorsattar, 'Tanning Addiction'; Fabiola Creed, 'THE TANOREXIA TIMEBOMB': The History of Sunbed Addiction and The Sunbed Industry in England, 1978-2015', unpublished dissertation for MA in the History of Medicine, University of Warwick (2016), pp.39-56.

⁴⁰ Nicola Gill, 'Despite all the warnings about tanning, new research predicts an epidemic of skin cancer in young women who refuse to listen. These three attractive girls insist on a year-round tan. Why do they do it?', *Daily Mail*, 22 July 2002, p.42.

of wealthy men. From 2007 to 2017, women's melanoma incidence rates increased by thirty per cent, whereas in men incidences almost doubled. In terms of deaths, the rates in women stabilised and the rates in men increased by fourteen percent.⁴¹ Each year, approximately four hundred more men than women die from melanoma.⁴² Moreover, men living in the most deprived areas are least likely to die compared to other demographic groups.⁴³ Nonetheless, although NGOs, such as CRUK, confirm that sunbeds cause melanoma, the health risks of sunbeds are still contentiously debated.⁴⁴ Some medical experts argue that other environmental causes are more influential in their contribution to skin cancer, such as climate change and the depleting ozone layer.⁴⁵ Even if sunbeds are 'addictive' and contribute to skin cancer risk, both the moral panic and the class and gender-based stigmatisation around 'tanorexia' will not

⁴¹ National Cancer Intelligence Network and Cancer Research UK, 'Cancer by Deprivation in England 1996 – 2011', 3 June 2014. Accessed March 2020: http://www.ncin.org.uk/about_ncin/cancer_by_deprivation_in_england

⁴² Cancer Research UK, 'Skin cancer death rates 70 per cent higher in men', Cancer Research UK, 21 August 2013. Accessed March 2020: https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-us/cancer-news/press-release/2013-08-21-skin-cancer-death-rates-70-per-cent-higher-in-men?_ga=2.152608176.889692697.1584445847-540438915.1584445847

⁴³ Cancer Research UK, 'Melanoma Skin Cancer Statistics', Cancer Research UK, 2015-2017, Accessed March 2020: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/statistics-by-cancer-type/melanoma-skin-cancer#heading-Zero>

⁴⁴ Claire Knight, 'Sunbeds cause skin cancer – the evidence is clear', *Cancer Research UK Science Blog*, 27 July 2012, Accessed March 2020: <https://scienceblog.cancerresearchuk.org/2012/07/27/sunbeds-cause-skin-cancer-the-evidence-is-clear/>; J. Moan, Z. Lagunova, et al., 'Sunbeds as Vitamin D Sources', *Photochemistry and Photobiology*, (2009).

⁴⁵ Thomas B. Fitzpatrick, 'The Skin Cancer Cascade: From Ozone Depletion to Melanoma', *The Journal of Dermatology*, 23, (1996), pp.816-820; M. Lin, R. Torbeck, D. Dubin, C. Lin and H. Khorasani, 'Climate change and skin cancer', *Journal of the European Academy for Dermatology and Venereology*, 33, (2019), pp.e324-e325.

encourage consumers to seek help from healthcare professionals.

The Market, Public Health and the Media: Future Implications

This thesis on the history of sunbeds extended the historiography of late twentieth century changes in public health responsibilities and approaches in Britain. These included the increasing use of the media by healthcare professionals to broadcast health messages, which in turn, shifted the responsibility onto the media to provide health warnings and influence 'healthier' public and consumer behaviours.⁴⁶ The 1980s and 1990s reflected the public health assertion that it was mostly the individual's responsibility to reduce their own health risk and change their lifestyles and consumer behaviours.⁴⁷ Yet, similar to alcohol consumption in the 1970s, during the 1990s, an individual's sunbed use and health gradually became a communal concern, as it was depicted as affecting other people's wellbeing and reducing the health resources available to others.⁴⁸ The media played a powerful role by first encouraging consumers to share their private health matters within the mass media, and then inviting wider audiences and 'experts' to scrutinise these everyday consumer habits. These unique health warnings were fuelled with gender and class-based prejudice and moral panic. Moreover, typical of when new technologies first enter and remain popular in the medical and commercial marketplace, new 'experts' gradually emerged and diversified. In the case of sunbeds, this began with the diverse range of sunbed providers informing the public through the media. Soon scientists, healthcare professionals, competing anti-sunbed commercial industries, NGOs, and eventually public health, government and print press medical correspondents became 'experts'. This growth of 'expert' information and accessible media outlets soon led to new 'experts by experience'. These included recovered and current 'tanorexics', skin cancer patients, and viewpoints from 'effected' pro- and anti-sunbed members

⁴⁶ Hand, 'Marketing health education', pp.477–500.

⁴⁷ Berridge, Loughlin, *Medicine, the market and mass media*, p.1.

⁴⁸ Mold, "Everybody Likes a Drink", pp.1-2, p.8

of the public, first through the print press and then on television.⁴⁹ This demonstrated the 1990s' rise of the 'everyday' (patient-)consumer through the media.⁵⁰ Members of the public, including consumers, more confidently used the media to broadcast their own opinions, advice and demands. To prompt change or defend their consumer right, they challenged or supported other influential stakeholders. All of these groups, in growing numbers, did sometimes overlap; all were presented to the public within a wide variety of mixed media.⁵¹ Yet, by the mid-1990s, the absence of the sunbed industry and the amplified voices of more radical anti-sunbed groups, through the media, demonstrated the power that media agents had in shaping information for the public.

This thesis portrays the increasing control that the media had on defining and promoting public health responsibilities and approaches, and their influence on both the growth of experts and rise of (patient-)consumers. The media played an instrumental and consistent role in interpreting, and then either prioritising, supporting, disregarding, quietening, weakening, negotiating and sometimes even manipulating the voices of different sunbed stakeholders. In turn, this influenced the representations of the sunbed industry, its consumers, and act of consumption, and thus the publics' understandings of sunbeds. Yet producers, editors and reporters writing for national newspapers and television reports were also members of the public, writing for the public. As a result, since the late twentieth century, the national media has typically reflected the mainstream narratives of the time to both attract and please their readers - especially as media agents were receptive consumers of the media themselves. Although reporters can produce paradoxical messages, usually the material produced does not go against the grain. As print press and television broadcasting were accepted channels to link private individuals to an increasingly corporate, public and national process, these media were in close

⁴⁹ *Esther*.

⁵⁰ Stacey, *Teratologies*, pp.1-7.

⁵¹ Mold, Clark, Millward, Payling, *Placing the Public in Public Health in Post-War Britain*.

association 'with the centres of political, economic and cultural power and authority'. Consequently, they both defined and reflected the 'institutions of power and authority'.⁵² A cross-reference of both textual and (audio-)visual sources also illustrate the perpetual feedback loops between media-medical circles, and the clashing cultures and expectations of science and media communication, which influenced the transmission of health warnings to the public. Yet, the opinions of journalists, like healthcare providers, were reflective of broader social-cultural perceptions in terms of the traditional public opinions and expectations of gender, class, race, age, and sexuality-based social roles. As a result, the original sunbed promotions, and later the anti-sunbed discouragements, transmitted through national media were unsurprisingly entangled with socio-cultural bias, stigma, and moral sanctions.

A history of sunbeds demonstrates how both popular culture and discourse reciprocally influences and shapes public health research and scientific discussions in a constant cycle – their representations and understandings of sunbeds, like other 'health' technologies and products, cannot be separated. The media-medical bias not only stigmatised, condemned and ignited a moral panic based on demographic differences, but also authorised who were deemed 'rational', 'moral' and 'healthy' consumers, or 'irrational', 'immoral', and 'addicted' consumers. Even if the duration and intensity of sunbed use was the same, the representation of the individual consumer depended on the time period, the location, the sunbed design, and the social identity of the individual consuming the technology. As Mold and Berridge have previously argued, the framings of when, where, how and who has consumed are often more influential than the actual consumption of a technology, product or substance itself – sunbed use could quickly transition from a luxurious, glamorous and energising past time only accessible to affluent

⁵² David Cardiff, Paddy Scannell, 'Broadcasting and national unity', in James Curran, Anthony Smith, Pauline Wingate (eds), *Impacts and Influences: Essays on Media Power in the Twentieth Century* (London and New York: Methuen 1987), pp.157-173, p.162.

and responsible women and men to an ‘excessive’ and common low-class activity for the masses.⁵³

Moreover, expectations linked to different demographic groups also influenced the medical and media beliefs surrounding somatic illnesses. These were often triggered by overlooked environmental factors (i.e., commercial pressures) and socio-cultural contradictions, such as the expectations of both traditional and modern ‘feminine’ social roles. For instance, during the 1990s, women were expected to appear ‘healthy-looking’, respectable and desirable, while obediently prioritising family values and motherhood. Yet women also had to exhibit “post-feminist” confidence, financial independence, and strength through their bodies. Similar to the history of eating disorders, the historically complex and intertwined positive and negative representations of bronzed complexions (transmitted to the public through national print press and television broadcasts) would have created emotional tensions towards maintaining an (un)tanned body; tensions that could easily be labelled as a sign of an ‘addiction’. These narratives map historical trends related to gender, class, race, age and sexuality stereotyping – drawn clearly from the history of sunbed representation. My thesis extends the histories of women (and homosexual and metrosexual men) being criticised for ‘vain’ and ‘feminine’ consumptions. The use of sunbeds by heterosexual white men was either invisible or feminised.⁵⁴ In a complex web of communication, I argue that the media can negotiate the ‘experts’, the ‘consumers’, and in turn the representations and understandings of most beauty, health and fitness industries, and its technologies and users.

This thesis has demonstrated how ‘medical’ and ‘commercial’ consumerism of ‘health’ technologies continued to be bound together during late twentieth century Britain.⁵⁵ For instance, scientific research and medical

⁵³ Mold, ‘DYNAMIC DUALITIES’, p.28; Berridge, *Opium and the People*, p.97.

⁵⁴ Gordon, *Disorders Anatomy of a Social Epidemic*; Rosenberg, ‘Illness, Society, and History’.

⁵⁵ Woloshyn, *Soaking Up the Rays*.

press influenced commercial and popular culture. In turn, commercial industries could pick, choose and re-interpret medical information from the popular press, which could then feature in new advertising to attract more consumers (i.e., the discontinuation of 'old UVB' sunbeds for 'healthier' and 'safer UVA' machines). Moreover, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, healthcare professionals still endorsed medical UV-therapy, and some medical experts even supported the 'commercial' provision of UV-therapies to cure skin conditions, mental health issues and improve overall health. Sunbed use was an iatrogenic issue.⁵⁶

Frameworks to Historicise the Representations of an Industry

The novel framework of this thesis, in terms of its analysis of a diverse range of mixed media sources, can be applied by scholars who are interested in the changing representations of beauty, health and/or fitness technologies. My historicising of sunbeds extended Serlin's theory that the '*where[abouts]*' of information can be more significant than the content itself.⁵⁷ Each chapter demonstrated entangled layers of representations that showed transitioning 'spaces' of sunbed use and sunbed-related information. These ranged from the changing mediums and framings within these, the geographic locations, physical spaces, material cultures, and even the bodies shown to be using sunbeds – all communicating and educating both health and moral messages to the public.

The changing mediums over time, transmitting sunbed-related content to a growing amount of interested stakeholders, reflected the transitioning prominence of and sentiments towards the sunbed industry. The spread of sunbed content through local, national and then international print press, alongside regional to national trade directories and magazines, and finally

⁵⁶ Seau Cheung, 'Skin cancer: prevention is better than cure', *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 106, (2013), p.40.

⁵⁷ Serlin, *Imagining Illness*, p.xxviii; McCarthy, *Ambient Television*.

regional to national television broadcasts, shows how the birth of an industry upscales from local to international prominence, and how a technology becomes a part of everyday spaces and consumption. The changing locations of content, actually within these mediums, also reflects these trends of industry prominence. For instance, in the case of sunbeds, a few small original sunbed adverts disappeared from the back pages of local newspapers and much larger versions gradually appeared in abundance at the front of more widely read national newspapers. Similar changes occurred through magazines over time, until the sunbed industry's prominence peaked through the first sunbed advert on regional and then national television (see chapters One, Two and Three). Moreover, in the same order, the changing tones and sentiments of new technologies and products, first of encouragements that are soon mixed in with discouragements and warnings, often imitate this movement through media platforms (see chapters Four, Five and Six). I argue that, as an increasing proportion of content on media platforms is crowdsourced from wider publics' (including more 'experts by experience'), working under significant pressures of cost and time, the public health messages within print press through to broadcast media are more likely to be interlinked with moral sanctions and everyday stereotyping and stigma.

The periods in which medical journals published or did not publish sunbed-related content (articles and letters), and even the changing types of journals in which these articles features, can also provide important contextual information. For example, before sunbeds were a national success, sunbed concerns and articles only occasionally appeared in the more specialist *BMJD*, yet as health problems emerged and persisted, letters of concerns increasingly emerged within the mainstream *BMJ*, often triggered by a watershed of print press coverage or a television report. Yet for specialist information, in-depth medical investigations first emerged in the *BMJD*, before being cited in the *BMJ* to reach wider medical groups. These medical warnings then likely contributed to the removal of sunbed adverts in national media. Nonetheless, in the form of trade catalogues and other ephemera, the sunbed industry increased their own advertising directly to the public. The industry also continued to advertise their original health claims of sunbeds, which had been endorsed by some medical

experts in the past.

In mixed media, the changing bodies and physical spaces used to frame their sunbed tans also influenced a change in the broader representations, which further complicated the publics' understandings of sunbeds. In Chapter One, in upmarket beauty salons and at home, a tan from a 'revolutionary' new sunbed marked expense and luxury, personified by glamorous celebrities, such as Audrey fforbes-Hamilton (*To the Manor Born*, 1979). In the second chapter, white, middle-class and sunbed using bodybuilders, such as 'Hulk Hogan', and a 'Keep Fit' Sindy Doll, glorified the use of sunbeds in gyms. Spectators were inspired by the glistening bronzed bodies that maintained their 'rational' and 'moral' health and fitness routines (*The Olympian Way*, 1981). Yet in Chapter Three, both Uncle Albert and Rodney portrayed an off-putting use of an economy sunbed within their council flat (*Only Fools and Horses*, 1986). The use of sunbeds had quickly become an accessible, banal and reckless technology for the working-class masses. By Chapter Four, increasing depictions of amoral sunbed using 'bimbo(s)' had started to emerge in cartoons, triggering moral panic in the media. Transitioning into the early 1990s in Chapter Five, 'tanorexics' were typically white, young and working-class women. They were pathologised as self-destructive narcissists through the print press. And finally, in the last chapter, unforgivable and immoral 'sunbed addicted' mothers, accompanied by more excusable 'feminine' men, were framed as 'selfish' and 'irrational' consumers on talk shows.

These transitioning sites of sunbeds – from media spaces, physical locations, material cultures, bodies and even toys – demonstrate the interlinked and influential layers of historical actors and movements. These 'sites' conveyed the changing representations and understandings of the sunbed industry, its consumers, the act of consumption, and often the machines

themselves. Thus, illustrating the perpetual entanglement of feedback loops between public health, commercial industries, and the media.⁵⁸

Future Research

Finally, my thesis both extends and encourages further study for the history of tanning, sunlight therapy, and changing technologies and visual cultures through, not least, close examination of commercial and public health advertising.⁵⁹ More access to the manufacturers' commercial archives or hospital archives could clarify the genuine motivations behind the misleading health claims within the advertising ephemeras or better contextualise and compare healthcare professionals use of their own 'medical' UV-machines. Moreover, Bivins, Marland and Tomes remark that unlike medical institutions 'domestic practices ... leave behind relatively few documentary traces'.⁶⁰ As a result, oral history interviews with influential stakeholders, particularly long-term sunbed providers and consumers, would improve the qualitative element of this thesis. Interviews could better explore the original and changing sentiments to sunbeds; the clearer developments of their technologies over time (the ultraviolet radiation strengths); who in the household used them; and finally, more practical matters such as matters of storage, and ultimately, how often were they actually used. An evaluation of early twenty-first-century sunbed visual culture would extend the history of policy, public health campaigns and NGOs; the new digital 'whereabouts' of sunbeds in both private (the internet) and public spaces (bus shelters), and finally, the growing tensions between parliament, legal authorities, the sunbed industry and the media.⁶¹ Moreover, an

⁵⁸ Hand, 'Marketing health education', pp.477–500; Hand, 'Visualising Food as a Modern Medicine'.

⁵⁹ Woloshyn, *Soaking Up the Rays*.

⁶⁰ Roberta Bivins, Hilary Marland, Nancy Tomes, 'Histories of Medicine in the Household: Recovering Practice and 'Reception'', *Social History of Medicine*, 29, 4, (2016) p.672.

⁶¹ James Tozer, 'Outrage as sunbed firms threaten to sue skin cancer charity for linking the disease to their devices', *Daily Mail*, 6 April 2019. Accessed 6 April 2019:

evaluation of tanning technologies and its commercial and/or medical industry across Australia, the United States and/or Canada would provide an exceptional comparative case study to compare approaches within different healthcare systems, commercial industries and the media.

Nonetheless, the novel methodological approach of this thesis, combining in-depth analysis on rhetorical and (audio-)visual content from a large array of medical, government and mixed media sources, could also be applied to other overlapping or more distinct technologies and products of medical and commercial health, fitness and beauty industries. These could include histories of tanning serums, pills and injections, or exercise machines – all of which can extend the history of iatrogenic consumptions.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6892583/Outrage-sunbed-firms-threaten-sue-skin-cancer-charity-linking-disease-devices.html>

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