

29, 1 (2018) – Wissen schaffen

Hg. von Claudia Opitz-Belakhal und Sophie Ruppel

Edited by Claudia Opitz-Belakhal and Sophie Ruppel

178 Seiten/pages, ISBN: 978-3-8471-0824-5, ISSN: 1016-362X

Abstracts

Mineke Bosch, Looking at Laboratory Life, Writing a Scientific Persona: Marianne van Herwerden's Travel Letters from the United States, 1920

This article analyses the travel letters of the Dutch medical researcher and early geneticist Marianne van Herwerden (1872–1933) written during a scientific journey to the United States in 1920, and published in the Dutch Journal of Medicine. Aim of the analysis is to trace whether and in what way she changed her scientific identity performance or persona in the wake of the cultural encounter with American science. The construction of a scientific persona implies three related aspects: 1) impressing the (academic) audience with the reliability, credibility or trustworthiness of the scientist (m/f) while 2) making use of a bricolage of old and new repertoires of identity performance that 3) are related to the world of science and to social categories of identity. It means that at any time old repertoires of scientific being can be invoked or discarded, and twisted according to the gender of the protagonist in constituting a convincing scientific persona. In her early career Marianne van Herwerden fashioned herself as the ascetic disembodied scientist, who with small means and a weak body pursued her scientific aims, or even as the aristocratic learned woman, who combined laboratory research with creativity and artistic genius. In contrast to that, her travel letters suggest that she had converted to the standard of American scientific practice and its concomitant ethos of full time dedication, programmatic research and social or practical orientation.

Elke Kleinau, The Beginnings of Empirical Women and Gender Studies in Social Work during the Weimar Republic

Research by female pioneers of social work has only partly found its way into the scientific discourse of its time. Even recent compendiums and surveys on social pedagogy mention it only in passing. This article focuses on the family sociological research series “Bestand und Erschütterung der Familie der Gegenwart” (Research on durability and instability of the family in the present) published by Alice Salomon in the late 1920s, early 1930s. The paper presents the occupational biographies of some selected female researchers and their academic education that was often characterised by indirect and unusual routes. It also examines their key research questions and their methodological and theoretical approach.

Sophie Ruppel, “Flora’s Treasures”. Botanical Textbooks for Women and Botanical Knowledge around 1800

Women have been involved in botanical science throughout early modern times either as part of a scholarly household, as noble women or through their enlightenment networks. They participated in debates on botany and contributed to the circulation of botanical knowledge, although they rarely published botanical manuals themselves. In line with the growing enthusiasm for botany around the turn of the nineteenth century, bourgeois women – as well as their male counterparts – became the target audience of botanical textbooks, the so-called “Frauenzimmerbotaniken”, which promoted the supposedly high educational value of nature knowledge. Whereas botanical textbooks for women in the eighteenth century thereby do not really indicate role differences between the sexes, those published in the nineteenth century mirror the increasing polarisation of gender stereotypes. These publications often implied that women – by nature – were not fit for science and that only special aspects of botanical knowledge were useful for women – those related to household tasks.

Sarah-Maria Schober, *Penis Muliebris?* Collecting and Systematising Early Modern Knowledge on the Clitoris in the Works of the Basel Anatomist Caspar Bauhin

In the second half of the sixteenth century, the knowledge on a small part of the female body mushroomed: the clitoris. Early modern European anatomists rediscovered the organ and included it in their textbooks and anatomical volumes attributing to it various notions, concepts and meanings. As the discourse on the clitoris moved from Italy and France via Basel to the Northern centres of anatomy in the seventeenth century, the publications of the Basel anatomist Caspar Bauhin (1560–1624) played a key role in the dissemination and systematisation of this knowledge. Bauhin collected the complex early modern knowledge on the clitoris and presented it in his encyclopaedic work “Theatrum anatomicum“. Here, he assembled a broad range of ideas and notions related to the organ, and organised it, for example by revaluating and emphasising the function of the organ, which he deemed necessary for procreation. The article explains the local context of Bauhin’s knowledge formation in Basel around 1600 as well as the role of his writings within the broader European discourse.

Patricia Fara, *Fighting on Three Fronts: British Scientific Women in Europe during World War One*

This paper focuses on three British scientific women who temporarily enjoyed independence and responsibility by playing unconventional roles in war-torn Europe: Helena Gleichen, an aristocratic artist who trained as a radiographer and served on the Italian Front; Helen Gwynne-Vaughan, a university botanist who led the Women’s Auxiliary Army Corps in France; and Dr Isabel Emslie Hutton, a doctor and medical researcher who battled against appalling conditions in Serbia and Salonika. These three women also exemplify British post-War experiences: despite the enfranchisement of women over 30 in 1918, conventional hierarchies were rapidly re-established during peacetime.

Dietlind Hüchtker, Female Tractor Drivers, Rock Stars and the Polish James Dean. The Performativity of Pop Culture Gender Images in the People's Republic of Poland

This essay proposes narrating a history of the People's Republic of Poland with the aid of gender images and hence considers the relevance of imagery to contemporary history. Citing research into gender and pop culture, iconic depictions of masculinity and femininity are interpreted as performative signs of society and its changes. While heroes of Stalinism embodied reconstruction and the creation of a new order, post-Stalinist gender images reflected the political shifts of the 1960s. On the other hand, male stars of cultures of opposition and subcultures contradicted communism's slogans of equality and promulgated alternatives to existing society. Masculinity and femininity thus appear to be factors of not just continuity and respectability but also subversion and transnationality.