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PARTAGEONS NOTRE REGARD SUR LE MONDE

WHAT GENDER DOES

TO THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

OUR GUEST EDITORS

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PANTHÉON SORBONNE

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Our guest editors

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Gender: a tool for interpreting current events and analysing social relations

Translated by
Alexandrine
Guyard-Nedelec

The coronavirus crisis has cast an unforgiving light on what our societies owe to women's work. At the same time, it has refocused attention on the fact that little recognition is given to the highly feminised professions of care[1], including hospital work, cleaning, education, etc., work that has often been described as "front-line" during the pandemic[2]. Lockdown has also prompted a reassessment of the unequal sharing of domestic labour, triggering an awareness of how strong the mechanisms generating this still are. Finally, it has reminded us of the prevalence of the violence that women continue to face in contemporary societies, particularly, but not exclusively, in their homes[3]; a reality that the #MeToo movement brought to the forefront two years ago, by denouncing gender-based violence affecting women and girls of all socio-economic backgrounds.

This points to the fact that contemporary Western democratic societies, which claim to further a culture of equal rights, are in fact marked by structural inequalities between men and women, inequalities of opportunity, power and prestige which cut across society and are rooted in the way masculinity and femininity are both defined and unequally valued. The concept of gender allows us to identify, understand and critique this situation. As the above examples suggest, it is an indispensable tool for interpreting current events. But it is also, at the same time, a critical weapon for feminist movements and a conceptual and methodological tool for the humanities and social sciences.

Gender as a methodological concept, known in France as *'le genre'*, first appeared in the United States in the 1960s, in the work of psychoanalysts and sexologists, as Elsa Dorlin reminded her French readers in 2008. Gender was initially understood as a 'social sex', as opposed to biological sex. At that time gender was either masculine or feminine, by analogy with the male and female sexes. The concept was soon taken up by sociologists and given a critical dimension, the aim being to emphasise that (biological) sex does not determine (social) gender, in other words, that the attributes and roles traditionally assigned to men and women are not innate and inevitable but are socially constructed and so can be criticised and transformed. Since the 1970s, the concept has been explored, redefined and debated relentlessly, in connection with other concepts that also aim to describe and analyse unjust inequalities resulting from power relations between different social groups – such as the concepts of *"rapports sociaux de sexe"* in France (Christine Delphy, 2009; Danièle Kergoat, 2012), or intersectionality in the USA (Kimberlé Crenshaw, 1989). Today, in France, we speak more readily of gender in the singular (*le genre*) than in the plural (*les genres*). As defined by the authors of the first Gender Studies manual published in French, the term captures "a system of hierarchical bicategorisation between the sexes (men/women) and between the values and representations associated with them (masculine/feminine)" (Laure Béréni, Sébastien Chauvin, Alexandre Jaunait and Anne Revillard, 2008). In 2014, a controversy flared up in France over school equality guidelines ("ABC de l'égalité"), with opponents to gender perspectives branding gender a threatening 'theory'. But as the definition above indicates, gender is much less a 'theory' than a tool for uncovering and analysing a set of power relations that create unjust and complex inequalities between certain social groups: men and women, of course, but also heterosexuals and homosexuals or cisgender and transgender people. Such inequalities had long remained under the radar in the humanities and social sciences. They started to be conceptualised through the lens of gender, under the impetus of researchers advocating a feminist perspective. Far from encouraging a monolithic approach, a gender-aware perspective leads to a more complex way of thinking about social relations and invites academics to consider multiple perspectives, thus promoting interdisciplinary dialogue.

"This points to the fact that contemporary Western democratic societies, which claim to further a culture of equal rights, are in fact marked by structural inequalities between men and women."

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Gender-proofing the humanities and social sciences: shifting and deepening the perspective

In France, the concept of gender and its correlated approaches have given and continue to give rise to much resistance, both in the public sphere and in the academic arena, as evidenced by the difficulty encountered in attempts to put Gender Studies on the curricula in French universities (Christine Bard, 2003), despite the interest shown by both male and female students. The preceding remarks make it easy to understand why. Indeed, the concept of gender was first used by feminist researchers whose work aimed to analyse and understand the persistence of male domination and who sought to further equality through the production of knowledge. By closely linking knowledge and emancipation, their work challenged the traditional division between knowledge and politics, science and activism. They questioned the conventional representation of science as a disinterested activity detached from the social world which is reliable precisely on account of its neutrality and distance from its objects of study.

Rather than breaking free from normativity in the humanities and social sciences, this research has, on the contrary, led to the reconsideration and redefinition of such normativity. The texts gathered in this thematic dossier demonstrate that research that integrates gender in order to question social relations leads to a renewed, more accurate and more balanced understanding of our ways of producing knowledge and invites us to engage in greater reflexivity.

These texts show that using the concept of gender makes it possible to reveal the blind spots present in our usual ways of constructing scientific objects. The articles by Julie Verlaine and Sandra Laugier are representative of gender approaches applied to history and philosophy. They show that adopting a gender perspective leads researchers to take an interest in what women have done, said or written, which in turn points out that the subject of history and philosophy, generally as well as implicitly, has always been and still is a male subject.

1 As no adequate translation of the term "care", as conceptualised by Joan Tronto in 1993, exists in French, the English term has been borrowed in order to capture its wide-ranging characteristics. Episode 26 of the podcast produced by French feminist journalist Charlotte Bienaimé, Un Podcast à soi (A Podcast of One's Own) is dedicated to care issues and the pandemic. "Prendre soin, penser en féministes le monde d'après", avalaible on Arte Radio (www.arteradio.com/son/61664127/prendre_soin_penser_en_feministes_le_monde_d_apres_26).

2 French newspapers, notably the daily *Le Monde*, similarly to the English-speaking world press, dedicated numerous articles to this issue during lockdown. For instance this piece by Marie Charrel, "'Je tombe d'épuisement pendant qu'il regarde des séries': le confinement a aggravé les inégalités hommes-femmes", 11 May 2020 (www.lemonde.fr/economie/article/2020/05/11/la-crise-liee-au-coronavirus-accelerateur-desinegalites-hommes-femmes_6039268_3234.html).

3 This is a global trend, as underlined by *The Guardian* on 28 March 2020 https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/mar/28/lockdowns-world-rise-domestic-violence (*Courrier international* published a translated version of it, "Confinement: l'augmentation des violences domestiques s'observe partout dans le monde").

Similarly, the geography studies that Marianne Blidon presents here question the uses of space from a gender perspective and lay bare the assumptions underpinning the traditional way of doing geography and the existence of an unquestioned male bias, by starting from the hypothesis that men and women relate to space differently on account of the way they have been socialized and the way space is constructed.

The uncovering of such unconscious biases in works that often consider neutrality a condition of objectivity illustrates the critical scope of the concept of gender. Its analytical power goes even further and produces constructive effects on at least three levels. It opens up a renewed and more operative understanding of objectivity in the humanities and social sciences, according to which objectivity derives from the multiplicity of points of view, rather than the (illusory?) attempt to eradicate all points of view. Marina Maestrutti makes this point powerfully in her contribution. She shows that understanding what a prosthesis is involves looking not only at existing technologies, but also at representations of the fitted body. Such representations differ according to gender, as do the experiences of men and women who live with prostheses. Adopting a gender perspective can then lead to a transformation of academic methodology by giving a voice to those whose voices are not usually heard in the production of knowledge – those who are the object of that knowledge being recognized as having expertise; and by changing our relationship with the field and adopting an interdisciplinary approach, as Aurore Koechlin highlights in her article on contemporary struggles around medical gynaecology.

“The adoption of a gender approach allows for new questions and problems to emerge, which in turn can enrich our understanding of the social world.”

Finally, the adoption of a gender approach allows for new questions and problems to emerge, which in turn can enrich our understanding of the social world. This is particularly emphasised by Diane Roman in her article on Gender Studies and the law, in which she analyses the questions posed to the rule of law – a supposedly universal principle – by the existence of sexed subjects in the context of unequal gender relations.

Gender Studies are often considered marginal and secondary, or even bigoted and therefore unscientific, doubtless on account of the dominant conceptions of scientific activity and the republican universalism that permeates French teaching and research institutions. By highlighting how varied, rich and significant research incorporating a gender approach at Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University is, this dossier hopes to show that the above characterisation is based on misunderstanding and confusion, namely on equating the scientific value of a research perspective with its social value and prestige. Regardless of the discipline in which it is carried out, academic work that examines the construction of inequalities between men and women as well as the representations of femininity and masculinity that prevail in our societies is anything but anecdotal. It questions the ordering of our societies in depth and, in so doing, the meaning of scientific activity, as well as the methods and concepts of the humanities and social sciences.

Marie GARRAU and Alexandrine GUYARD-NEDELEC

No Room of One’s Own

As pointed out by the French Committee of Equality and Diversity Officers in Higher Education (Conférence des chargé·e·s de mission Égalité-Diversité), several studies indicate that the Spring 2020 Covid-19 lockdown had a disproportionate impact on the publications of female academics: the number of articles submitted to scientific journals, across the disciplines[1], shows a very sharp drop for women[2], while submissions show an increase of up to 50% among men[3]. Let us observe a page of silence.

1 As no adequate translation of the term “care”, as conceptualised by Joan Tronto in 1993, exists in French, the English term has been borrowed in order to capture its wide-ranging characteristics.

2 Episode 26 of the podcast produced by French feminist journalist Charlotte Bienaimé, Un Podcast à soi (A Podcast of One’s Own) is dedicated to care issues and the pandemic. “Prendre soin, penser en féministes le monde d’après”, available on Arte Radio (www.arteradio.com/son/61664127/prendre_soin_penser_en_feministes_le_monde_d_apres_26).

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Mapping a Radical Break-In

What gender does to geography is, above all, break in, in the sense of breaking and entering, shattering, breaching the discipline, the conditions of knowledge production, and the use of categories.

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Translated by
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The introduction of gender as an analytical category in geography had the effect of a breaking and entering that raised necessary and redeeming questions. That does not mean that this break in happened without resistance. It happened at the expense of disqualification, disregard, or erasure, as can attest the little space afforded, in France, to this major branch of international geography, reflected in recruitments, manuals, teaching and research programs, and competitive exams. However, traces of social geography can be found, as early as the post-war period, that deal with the work of women in rural areas, the environment and living conditions of women in the suburbs, and the mobility of women as part of the urban sprawl... In all the wealth of these forerunning studies, only one name remains today, that of Jacqueline Coutras, an exceptional figure and pioneer. Though gender has been fully integrated into human geography in English speaking or Scandinavian countries to the extent that it is no long in fact a distinctive thematic, renowned geographers like Guy Di Méo continue to instill the idea that gender as an analytical category is no longer pertinent, preferring queer or intersectionality which are considered less binary and more heuristic. Yet what gender brings to geography is undeniable in terms of understanding, as well as in terms of critical groundwork on the conditions of the production of knowledge and the use of categories.

Three Approaches to Gender in Geography

We can distinguish three approaches to gender in geography. The first consists in showing to what extent gender produces spatial differentiation: what spaces do men and women frequent? What representations are tied to these spaces? Does the theoretical diversity of public space actually exist, or do we observe differentiated uses of it in function of places and temporalities? This approach maps out the inequalities between men and women, between cisgender people and non-binary people. It allows for the spatialization of socio-sexual relationships by shedding light on differentiated, or even segregated, uses of space at different levels. Such is the case for example in school yards, parks, and sports complexes (Maruéjouls, 2011). It sheds light on the tropisms of construction policies and urban-planning decisions. Football stadiums, skate-parks and body-building equipment in the open air are not intended for an undifferentiated group, without age, class, or sex.

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Entrance to Room Goullencourt, center Panthéon of the university.

The second approach consists in analyzing to what extent space produces differentiation according to gender. Spatial apparatuses contribute to the production of gender differences. Locker-rooms or public restrooms, through the distinction that they enact, contribute to the daily reaffirmation of difference between the sexes, and in the case of the youngest, socialize them within it (Hancock, 2014).

The final approach does not take gender as an object of study or a variable, but as an analytical category. It therefore resembles feminist geography, of which one of the main contributions has been to remind us that science is not independent of the material and symbolic conditions of its production. These historical, sociological or epistemological works question the arrival of women as well as their role in the discipline. Mary Douglas Leakey who went to discover the populations living in the Olduvai gorges in Africa, Marguerite Harrison, Blair Niles, Gertrude Shelby and Gertrude Emerson Sen who founded the Society of Woman Geographers in Washington in 1925 – whose motto is For Women Who Know No Boundaries – Ellen Semple, Martha Krug-Genthe and Millicent Todd Brigham, are a few

> **That science is not independent of the material and symbolic conditions of its production.**

of the figures who have been redeemed. In addition to this assessment which highlights heroic pioneers who can be seen as exceptions, feminist geographers have also highlighted, thanks to the slow but steady feminization of the profession, the unequal access to positions of power granted to women, delays in the careers, lack of recognition given to their work, as well as the difficulties that women have had to surmount in order to make a career for themselves, rise above the role of subaltern, and make a place for themselves within institutions. The statement "*entrée réservée à messieurs les professeurs* » ("Entry reserved for male professors) inscribed on the first floor of the Panthéon center is a significant remnant of the exclusion of women. And finally, these feminist research projects, which blur the lines between disciplines and contest hegemony, question the androcentric blind spots of the field of geography.

The Androcentric Blind Spots of Geography

Feminist geography has therefore built itself in opposition to the knowledge consecrated by academic environments, which have excluded women both as subjects and as objects of study. It is attentive to the way in which research is produced and to the role accorded to women, in particular in its theoretical framework, its means of producing data and setting up methodological protocols, and to what it overlooks conceptually, as well as to its gender-related assumptions and analytical categories.

Feminist geography has therefore built itself in opposition to the knowledge consecrated by academic environments, which have excluded women.

It is the case in the description of a landscape as having "round forms and soft waves of the dark and woody hindquarters of the Morvan that contrast so sharply with the harsh and marked profiles of the limestone plateaus" by Emmanuel de Martonne, one of the masters of the discipline, or the description of the city of Algiers which was born, according to Armand Frémont, "in a stone shelter, at the end of a long beach, the foam of the Mediterranean and of the hot African earth, like a woman lying down, half-offered up, half-undressed" (Séchet, 2012). The fascination of the geographer with hillocks (*mamelons*, in French, which also means nipples) and the recurrent turn to an organicist reading is coupled here with the colonial subconscious. As a distant ancestor of the explorer, the geographer is above all he who surveys the world and describes it in his writings as well as in his bodily hexis (hardly ever new walking shoes, a backpack, the choice of the tweed jacket over the flannel one – replaced today by the clothing known as "outdoor" or by the tagelmust for those who look more to the South). Up to the 1970s, the geographer was above all a man – and sometimes a woman – of the field; this last distinction generally being eluded since women who want to be taken seriously and to have a career in physical or regional geography must affirm having done field work like their male colleagues, without distinction of any kind (Jégou *et al.*, 2012). In the Sahara or at the summit of Mont Blanc, the geographer's body is erased despite the fact that the act of seeing has long been the basis for the production of geographical knowledge (Volvey, 2014).

While they have denounced this androcentrism and these masculine biases present in the sciences, feminist geographers are aware of the deadlock that the replacement of male vision with female vision would constitute – as is often the case in radical forms of feminism or ecofeminism for example. It is therefore not a matter of subsuming or differentiating two types of sex-related knowledge: one masculine and produced by men, and the other feminine and produced by women. This error merely reinforces an essentialist vision and the idea of an eternal feminine, both of which are called into question by the trajectories of geographers themselves and by what they produce. This feminist critique of the way science is done centers mainly around two points: first, the metanarratives inherited from modernity; and second, the artefact of the omniscient subject that is the researcher, seen as a disembodied, neutral and objective figure, the translation of which, as taught to students, is in fact an erroneous approximation of the Weberian concept of "axiological neutrality." With regard to what English-speaking feminists call "Western metaphysics," they denounce, in the footsteps of Jacques Derrida, the use of binary thought pattens, which offer a vision of the world and a conceptual approach to it by way of dichotomy (nature and culture, mind and matter, reason and emotion, dry and wet, man and woman). Indeed, these dyads are not equivalent; they are hierarchical and differently connotated. It is in fact often the role of the first term to structure the second one through negativity, default, or absence.

Gender's breaking and entering into geography has generated an unveiling of disciplinary blind spots.

In favor of reflexive, embodied science

This observation invites us to move toward a more reflexive practice. The starting point for the reflexive process is the idea that the researcher is an integral part of society and of the space that he or she is studying, which invalidates any claim to neutrality. This therefore presupposes that objectivity, which does not exist per se, not be worshipped, that the uncomplete nature of the research be recognized, and that the researcher confront the limits of a study and what it may lack. The evaluation of evidence must result from its exposure and from the rigorous application of a process that borrows several techniques; it must result from the analytical use of investigative techniques, and from the analysis of the social conditions in which the study is conducted. This last point requires that particular attention be paid to the positioning of the researcher, which makes the study both self-oriented (introspective) and outward looking (analysis of academic space).

Gender's breaking and entering into geography has generated an unveiling of disciplinary blind spots. Thinking it was neutral, geography discovered that it is in fact gendered, all the way up to its bodily metaphors. Feminist geography leads us to greater reflexivity, which takes into account the material and symbolic conditions of scientific output, in particular the modes of elaboration of regimes of scientificity that purport to be neutral and impermeable to any prenotions or forms of involvement. And finally, it invites women to build a space for themselves within the institution and to challenge their allocation to any one place.

Gender in Law Schools: Kitchens and Outbuildings

Law and feminism have an ambivalent relationship. Feminism, as a political doctrine and social movement for women's emancipation and equal rights, seems to integrating its activities into the field of law. Yet, for a long time, French academic lawyers have not been interested in feminist social movements.

Diane Roman
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Translated by
Nicholas Sowels

To put it bluntly, lawyers and feminists in France have long ignored each other, in contrast to the United States, where feminist claims have fitted in with the law and legal actions. The issue of equality between women and men has been relegated to the kitchens of law schools, if not hidden in their outbuildings. To be sure, this indifference has been mutual: cause lawyering has not been historically the preferred type of action used by French feminists movements.

Feminist critiques of society, especially from a materialist perspective, do not view the legal system as a vehicle for women's empowerment and the recognition of their autonomy. Instead, it is seen more as a set of mechanisms for consolidating the social and cultural inequalities between women and men. As the instrument of patriarchy and a tool of social transformation, the law is seen as being both a constraint and a resource for feminists.[1] They have often preferred the political arena to the judiciary, with a few exceptions (notably the actions of Gisèle Halimi during the famous trials in Aix-en-Provence or Bobigny in the early 1970s, which brought radical change concerning rape and abortion).

The long silence of law schools

At the same time, academic lawyers for long paid little attention to the social and political claims of feminist demands, when they were not actually opposing them head-on. While gender studies in different social sciences did develop during the 1980s, most French law schools remained on the margins of these phenomena.[2]

This "splendid isolation" of French lawyers contrasts singularly with the dynamism of legal studies conducted in foreign universities and *law schools*. Not only has scientific work been developing there, but so have courses in the curricula of lawyers' training and education. How can these differences be explained? Are they due to the strong positivist inclinations of law faculties, which do not welcome critical approaches? Or do they stem from political conservatism? Could it be the well-known French reticence to accept what looks like an Anglo-American influence? Possible hypotheses are varied but all are partial. Yet the facts are clear. With the exception of a few pioneers who, as of the late 1970, focused their work on social law and the professional equality between women and men, the field remained empty until 2001, when Marie-Claire Belleau – a Professor at the Faculty of Law of Laval (Canada) on the other side of the Atlantic – published an article on "feminist theories, law and sexual differences" in the prestigious *Revue trimestrielle de droit civil*. It was thus only as of the 2010s that French lawyers began to fill a twofold void, both with respect to their colleagues in social sciences and to their foreign counterparts. The work carried out by the programme of Research and Studies on Gender and Inequalities in Norms in Europe (*Recherches et Études sur le Genre et les Inégalités dans les Normes en Europe* or REGINE) has clearly demonstrated the relevance of gender as a legal tool of analysis.[3] This programme was funded by the ANR and the *Mission de recherche Droit et Justice* between 2011 and 2016, and headed by Stéphanie Hennette-Vauchez, Marc Pichard and myself.

Portrait of Olympe de Gouges attributed to Alexander Kucharski, circa 1788.

Since then, many books, articles, and chronicles have followed, especially the annual review "Genre et droit", published by Dalloz (Paris). These concern studies on sexuality and reproductive rights, couples and families, parental authority and domestic violence, equal pay for equal work, equal access to elective offices and social responsibilities. Their wealth and great diversity make any summary impossible. But if clear lines need to be drawn, two would stand out.

> **The issue of equality between women and men has been relegated to the kitchens of law schools, if not hidden in their outbuildings.**

Sex, gender and universality of the rule of law

On the one hand, most of these studies tend to highlight how hidden power issues and mechanisms exist, behind the assumption of the universality of the rule of law. These permit, or even consolidate, inequalities between women and men. Based on the concept of gender as it is used in social sciences, the legal studies make it possible to clarify and illustrate its dual meaning. Gender may be seen as be-

1 Laure Bereni, Alice Debauche, Emmanuelle Latour, "Entre contrainte et ressource : les mouvements féministes face au droit", Nouvelles questions féministes, 29/1, 2010, p. 6-15.

2 Coline Cardi, Anne-Marie Devreux, "Le genre et le droit : une coproduction. Introduction", Cahiers du Genre, 57, 2014, p. 5-18.

3 See in particular Stéphanie Hennette-Vauchez, Marc Pichard, Diane Roman (dir.), La Loi & le Genre. *Études critiques de droit* français, Paris, CNRS Éditions, 2014.

ing defined socially and not biologically, or as Simone de Beauvoir's memorably declared, "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman". But gender also follows social and cultural processes that classify and "sexualise" bodies, by shaping people's status and social roles. While the French Constitution has emphasised gender equality since 1946, intertwining legal arrangements have led to the different situations for women and men. The historical example of the right to vote is well known. Although "universal" suffrage in France dates back to 1848, it took nearly a century for women to be included in this universality by gaining the right to vote, and even longer when they try to break the glass ceiling that has kept them out of elective office. But other contemporary examples are equally revealing: although equality between spouses and parents is proclaimed in the family sphere, domestic work – including caring for children – still weighs largely on women, to the point of slowing their professional development and leading to impoverishment in the event of a couple's separation. On this point again, "universalist" measures in social law or family law have allowed these inequalities to persist. Thus, for example, parental leave is theoretically open to both parents, but is almost exclusively granted to mothers. Moreover, it must be noted that the neutrality of legal statements conceals, or even reinforces, inequalities. Should we, therefore, partly give up on the universality of norms and accept gender-specific arrangements, such as parity in electoral matters, the criminalisation of femicide, or compulsory paternity leave, in order to encourage fathers' domestic investment? Conversely, should we forego making gender a vital part of our civil status or move towards more inclusive legal statements such as the notion of human rights?

Although "universal" suffrage in France dates back to 1848, it took nearly a century for women to be included in this universality.

Gender stereotypes, discrimination and equal rights

These multiple questions touch on another central guideline in much contemporary legal research, namely that which focusses on the link between gender stereotypes and discrimination. Should we, without misunderstanding the principle of non-discrimination, provide a different prison regime for women delinquents, on the grounds that they are less likely to be violent or escape than men? How can we assess and calculate the amount of damages that specifically – or even exclusively – concern women in civil liability law? How can we ensure a fair and equal welfare system, given that the life trajectories of men and women differ, and that women are the primary care-givers, in other words they are most solicitated to carry out domestic tasks. How and on what basis should forms of advertising in public spaces that turn women's bodies into erotic objects be supervised? How should the restrictions on fundamental freedoms that women specifically suffer be addressed? These freedoms concern especially freedom in dressing, as shown clearly by the debates about the wearing of ostensibly religious clothing, or (more marginally) the prosecution of naked Femen protesters. Should these freedoms also include the right to safe movement and without harassment in public spaces, and the right to contraception and abortion?

There are many questions for lawyers to think about! They reveal the great diversity of answers that are henceforth given to them in many writings. Some issues, such as prostitution, pornography, or surrogacy, generate deep cleavages in opinion, with some calling for outright banning, and others arguing for permissiveness. But, more importantly, these questions highlight the vast wealth of gender-based legal studies. On these points, legal studies still have much to contribute to understanding social transformations, even if the notion of "gender" is always divisive in the French public debate. And, while research in French university law schools now recognises this widely, one can only regret the persistent lack in curricula. When courses do indeed exist, they are much appreciated by students. But too few are provided, especially for Masters in Law. France's situation contrasts again with the existing educational opportunities abroad, where there are extensive educational programmes on feminist analysis of law and gender equality. This certainly constitutes a new challenge for French law schools: a challenge to train generations of students in the issues of equality and non-discrimination, by including these fields in critical analyses.

Legal studies still have much to contribute to understanding social transformations.

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#P1PS week for Women's Rights 2018. Conference organized by the Legal Clinic of Paris about the notion of consent.

What Gender Does to Sociology: the Practice of Interdisciplinarity and Engagement in the Field

Gender is not only a subject of sociology, but it is also a category of real-world analysis. When we "look through the lens of gender", then everything changes, and in particular our method.[1] To illustrate this, I draw on my ongoing PhD research into the professional and political struggles around medical gynaecology, a specialty centred on contraception and screening.

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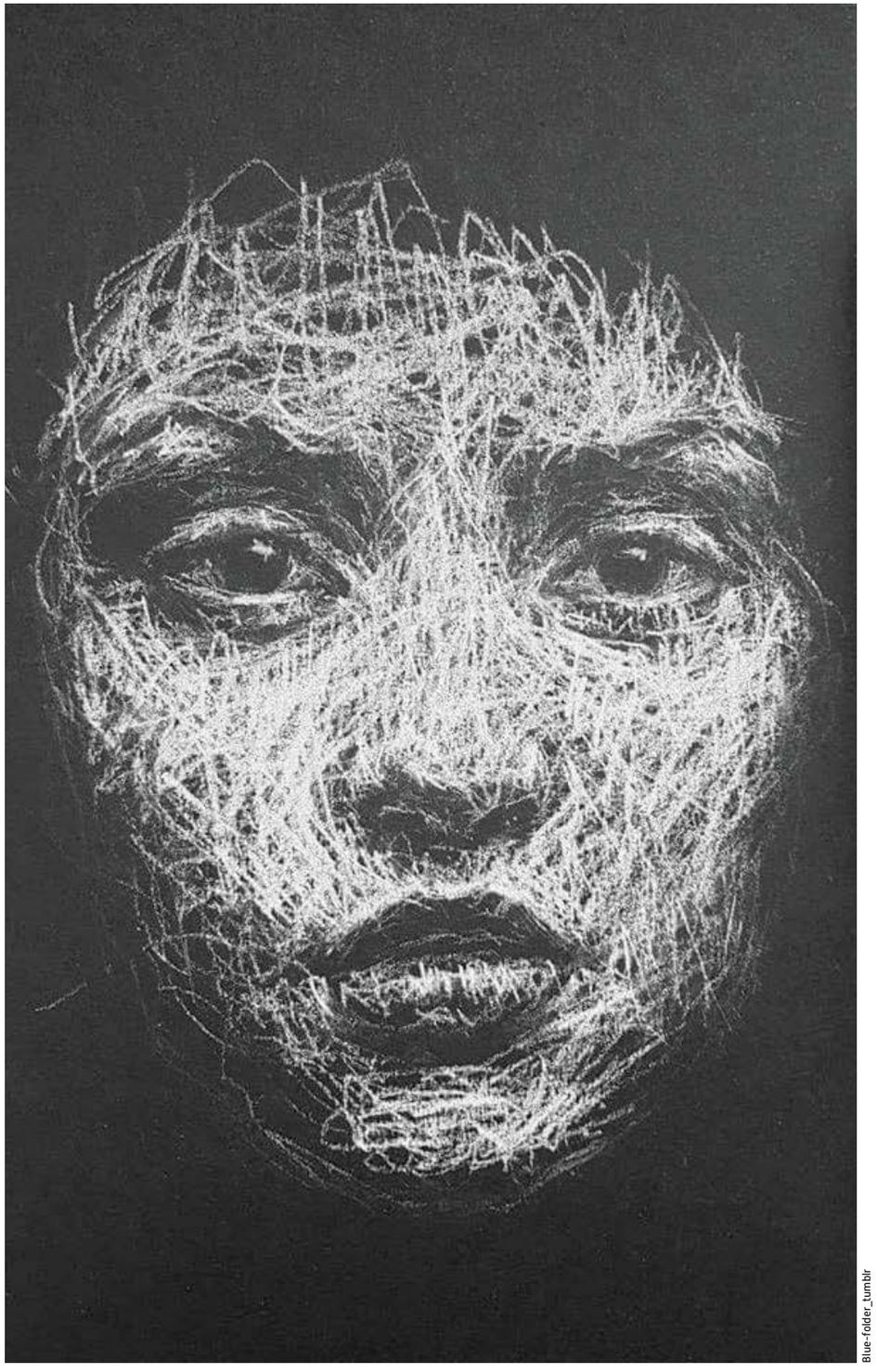
Translated by
Nicholas Sowels

The first area in which gender has an impact on the methodology of sociology is that gender pushes sociology towards interdisciplinarity, *in contrast* to the contemporary trend in sociology with its predominance of empirical studies. Indeed, historically speaking, the sociology of gender developed in France in the 1980s, within the broader field of feminist studies, and then gender studies. The unity of the subject of study then promoted unseen reconciliations between different disciplines, which has allowed gender to be analysed in all its dimensions. Moreover, extensive English-speaking research on gender has surely influenced French practices, since universities can bring together disciplines based more on subject matter than on traditional disciplinary affiliation (especially in the United States). The use of gender in sociology has thus allowed the latter to free itself from analyses that are sometimes too limited to fieldwork, at a particular time, within in a given configuration, in order to push sociology to be more general but also to allow itself to adopt greater and more-accepted historical depth.

Medical gynaecology as the primary dimension of study

As part of my research, it seemed impossible for me to deal with the practices of medical gynaecology without looking first at history and theory. The existence of medical gynaecology must be viewed as the culmination of a historical process whose issues of importance can only be understood by re-situating them in the history of the specialty, and within the professional and political struggles that have surrounded it.

1 For a more developed examination of the subject, see GenERe, *Épistémologies du genre. Croisements des disciplines, intersections des rapports de domination*, Lyon, ENS Éditions (Sociétés, Espaces, Temps), 2018.



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To the right, *The face*, Dp, pencil, 2019.

In fact, medical gynaecology attained institutional recognition as of the 1950s. It thus experienced considerable development, achieving real institutional autonomy in obstetrics and gynaecological surgery. Moreover, gynaecology has been exercised under its own specific conditions. Patients consult doctors, and their care is based on follow-up consultations, while emergency treatment is rare. This allows doctors time to manage their personal lives, and medical gynaecology very quickly became a highly feminised specialty. At the time of the struggle for contraception and abortion rights from the 1950s to 1970s, gynaecology was thus seen as a feminist specialty, and medical gynaecologists were seen as allies of women in France, unlike in the United States, where gynaecologists were mostly men, as Ilana Löwy has pointed out. Yet this specialty has experienced two major crises since the 1980s. Indeed, following the reforms of doctors' internships in 1984, gynaecology was dropped from university curricula and included within obstetrics-gynaecology training. It was only after intense professional mobilisation that gynaecology as such was re-created as a discipline in 2003, which did not prevent the profession from experiencing demographic crisis. But it was in this context that the main instrument of medical gynaecology – the administration of hormones – entered into a period of crisis, especially with the release of an American study entitled *Women's Health Initiative* (WHI) in 2002, which highlighted the higher risks of breast cancer and cardiovascular disease following the development of hormone replacement therapy (HRT). This hormone crisis was reinforced in the winter of 2012-2013 by the "pill crisis". Medical gynaecology thus no longer stood out as a feminist specialty among a new generation of feminists in the 2000 years. On the contrary, they tended to denounce it, in a complete reversal of the situation in the 1970s. This evolution needs to be studied in order to understand better contemporary practices in medical gynaecology.

“Extensive English-speaking research on gender has surely influenced French practices.”

Similarly, adopting a deeper theoretical perspective helps to understand the role of medical gynaecology. Indeed, the particularity of medical gynaecology lies in the fact that it is ideally based on the continuous patient follow-up, from when they enter puberty until death. This compares to other medical specialties focused on dealing with women's bodies, such as obstetrics or gynaecological surgery, for example, which provide care at specific moments (birth or surgery for gynaecological diseases). Gynaecology is therefore, first and foremost, a central component of the medicalisation of women's bodies and in the dissemination of gender norms, as Laurence Guyard has demonstrated.[2] Following Didier Fassin, the term medicalisation is used here to describe a phenomenon that "*involves giving a medical expression to representations and practices that were not socially understood in these terms*" beforehand.[3]

2 Laurence Guyard, La médicalisation contemporaine du corps de la femme : le cas de la consultation gynécologique, PhD supervised by Martine Segalen, Université Paris X Nanterre, 2008.

3 Didier Fassin, "Avant-propos. Les politiques de la médicalisation", in Pierre Aïach, Daniel Delanoë (dir.), L'ère de la médicalisation. Ecce homo sanitas, Paris, Anthropos, 1998, p. 5.

Medical gynaecology is a specialty that, as it acquires new skills and jurisdictions, also increases the medicalisation of phenomena that were previously not thought of as requiring care: women's periods, contraception, check-ups of sexual organs and menopause, to name only a few examples. Henceforth, social reproduction theory (SRT) makes it possible both to bring an explanatory dimension to the social framework of women's bodies and to go beyond a purely biological view of reproduction, although this was the dominant view in French sociology.[4] Social reproduction theory places the material basis of women's oppression in the fact that they perform the reproductive work – the work of producing and reproducing human beings. Within this theoretical framework, medical gynaecology is one of the central bodies for such work. This requires not just the analytical distancing of doctors from the state, but also the distancing of the state from the *overall* social and economic system. Medical issues are thus linked to economic and social issues.

The sociology of gender in fieldwork

The relationship to fieldwork is the second dimension in which gender has an effect on the methodology of sociology. Gender sociology questions the ideal of neutrality on the ground, and has long been questioned by sociology itself. It is more a matter of controlling the influence of our presence as researchers in the field by objectifying important biases than thinking we can prevent any bias. Gender sociology has contributed two factors to this idea. On the one hand, while the sociologist's presence skews the situation to be observed, this bias is nevertheless situated. In particular, the gender of the researcher as well as the persons being observed and obviously the survey undertaken all affect the results obtained. On the other hand, gender sociology often assumes – if not systematically – a feminist perspective in fieldwork. What then does it mean to be engaged on the ground – in the field?

“Social reproduction theory places the material basis of women's.”

Due to the length and extent of my fieldwork – four different locations, and over several months, in hospitals and doctor's surgeries (in inner Paris and its Seine-Saint-Denis suburb) – I gradually moved away from being a layperson, albeit without becoming a qualified health professional. Clearly, I had no institutional recognition, in adopting an intermediate position as a "lay expert", to draw on Maud Gelly and Bibia Pavard's expression.[5] This intermediate status as an assigned mediator between patients and physicians largely led to my involvement in the field. And indeed, this position in turn led me to taking a position in the field. First, given my status as a "lay ex-

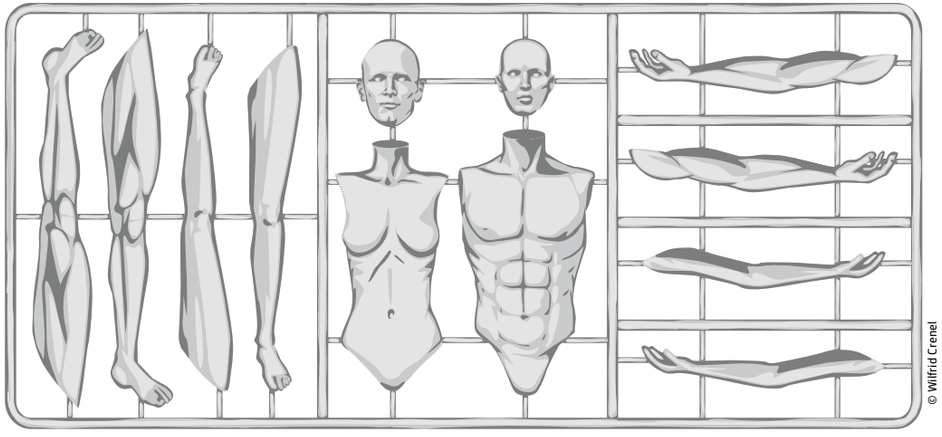
4 Social reproduction theory (SRT) has developed over 60 years, within the English-speaking political and academic context. It seeks to link the oppression of women to a Marxist framework of analysis. Its most well-known current representatives in France are Silvia Federici and Tithi Bhattacharya, to name just a few figures.

5 Maud Gelly, Bibia Pavard, "De la fabrique des militant·e·s à la fabrique des patient·e·s. Deux mobilisations des profanes : l'avortement (1972-1975) et le dépistage du sida (2007-2011)", Genèses, 1/102, 2016, p. 47-66.

pert", patients often identified me as a resource person to turn to, and asked me numerous questions about my research, and about health care. It was impossible not to answer them. In addition, I made a number of methodological choices that ran counter to traditional ethnographic procedures. So, at the outset, I announced that I was not interested in gynaecological examinations as such. While choosing this ethnographic approach caused me to lose some ethnographic data, it seemed essential for ethical reasons, but also to allow me to build a relationship with patients that did not merely a replicate the patient-doctor relationship. Finally, on rare occasions, I did intervene during consultations themselves. I thus left my external position based on reserve, by taking a position, and so became an actor in the field. I took risks in doing so, of making things worse, of going too far in terms of doctors' authority, and so restricting the field of research. I found myself in some particularly acute moments of being torn between my various social positions, as a sociologist, as a student and as a feminist. Moreover, I was faced with the contradiction of my own status in the field, that of being a lay expert, who had the possibility of facilitating exchanges between patients and their doctors, due to my intermediate position. Finally, this limited example shows how often the sociologist's methodology is made up as you go along. That said, intervening in the field does not prevent the production of scientific knowledge. Participation is one of the two components of "participatory observation". Here, this is essentially a matter of emotional participation. Empathy in the field also allows access to patients' emotional economy, and thus plays a revealing role.

Adopting a gender perspective is therefore not simply a change of purpose: it is a matter of questioning our methods, and so how we construct the subjects and issues we seek to research. Sociology is a relatively young discipline in the humanities, and thus lends itself all the more to questioning and innovation.

I took risks in doing so, of making things worse, of going too far in terms of doctors' authority, and so restricting the field of research.



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How an Essential Portion of Reality has Escaped Ethics and Philosophy

Ethics has been defined as the critical and reflexive distance taken from ordinary life, from the situation in which we find ourselves, from our needs and desires. This is the starting point, once appearing to be incontestable, that has in fact been questioned through feminist ethics.

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Translated by
Amanda Murphy

If we believe the "Que sais-je ?" ("What do I know?") on Moral Philosophy, ethics can be defined in the following way:

"*Individuals constantly wonder about things, from the most trivial to the most serious; they wonder: what should I do? What should I have done? Would it not have been better to…? […] When we act, when we deliberate over our actions, when we make decisions, we are seeking justifications, we are looking to show that it was the best thing to do, or in any case, the least bad. […]*

When the results of our actions as well as the means that we have to accomplish them become objects of this questioning, when deliberation requires the psychological capacity to take a certain distance from the situation in which we find ourselves, to adopt a certain critical gaze with respect to our most pressing needs and desires, this questioning becomes ethical."[1]

Ethics according to "Que-sais-je?" establishes a hierarchy between "trivial questions" and "serious" ones and delineates the field of ethics by linking it to that of action and deliberation. In this approach, ethics focuses on choice, and presents itself primarily as a dilemma. It requires distance and allows not only for deliberation, but also for justification: "Yes, I did well in doing this or that."

We might wonder about the restrictive nature of such a conception of ethics. Should we not, for example, take context into account when making ethical decisions? We can also observe the little consideration given to decisions in real life, in our ethical conversations, in our appreciation of people; or the awkwardness of people who openly display the justified nature of their actions and declare themselves to be "good people." To better understand this, let us look to the transformation of this model of ethics conducted by Carol Gilligan. In *In a Different Voice*, Gilligan allows us to hear Amy, 11 years old, in the context of conversations oriented around moral psychology. She and a boy of the same age Jake are presented with the Heinz dilemma, which consists in the following: Heinz's wife is very ill; he must choose between stealing medication for his wife that the pharmacist refuses to give to him, or

When we act, when we deliberate over our actions, when we make decisions, we are seeking justifications.

1 Monique Canto-Sperber, Ruwen Ogien, *La philosophie morale* (Paris : PUF (Que sais-je?), 2017), 3.

letting his wife die. Jake, the 11-year-old boy, considers that Heinz *has to* steal the medication. The priority is to save his wife and that gives him the right to steal. If he is caught, the judge will understand – since he is in his right. Amy's response is more realistic:
"*Well, I don't think so*, she says. *I think there might be other ways besides stealing it, like if he could borrow the money, or make a loan or something, but he really shouldn't steal the drug – but his wife shouldn't die either.*"
Amy points out that if Heinz goes to prison for this theft, his wife will be just as deprived if she falls ill again. She suggests that they should talk about it, find the means to secure the necessary funds, and rally to convince the pharmacist, the primary culprit in the situation. Jake's response fits into the context of the Kohlberg system, which places deductive reasoning at the summit of intellectual and moral maturity. Amy's judgment, on the other hand, is based on the attention paid to all the facts of the situation. It falls under the scope of perfectionism and carefulness. Amy identifies the origin of the problem as the pharmacist's iniquitous refusal to respond to the needs of others; it has nothing to do with rights.
She sees the world as "*a world comprised of human relationships rather than of people standing alone, a world that coheres through human connection rather than through systems of rules.*"[2]
In the Kohlberg system and in the vision of ethics presented in "Que sais-je?," Amy's idea is less ethical than Jake's – or even not ethical at all.
She is not interested in actions as such, but in the context and in the preservation of life and relationships. For her, morality is not a matter of establishing a division between good actions and bad ones, but of knowing "what is more important." "You've just got to decide in that situation which is more important, yourself or that person."[3]
Before wondering if, in differentiating between the respective voices of Amy and Jake, we are about to establish a problematic distinction between feminine ethics and masculine ethics, we must consider why Amy's version of morality is the minority and is labeled straight away as vague: why do we consider that crossing the Rubicon is an action more philosophically pertinent than picking up socks or taking care of one's parents in the best possible way. The ethics of care is a revolution in moral philosophy in that it obliges us to integrate ordinary questions like these into morality, and even to place them at the heart of it.

We consider that crossing the Rubicon is an action more philosophically pertinent than picking up socks.

Care During the Crisis

The Covid-19 crisis has allowed for unprecedented visibility of care, whether it be in terms of moral attitudes attesting to concern for others, or the practice of caring for others, basic domestic *services*.

2 Carol Gilligan, "In a Different Voice. Psychological Theory and Women's Development," (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, Jan. 1982), 24-39.

3 Gilligan, "In a Different Voice", 65.

Care has turned out to be essential to society and to life. But we might not yet have assimilated the main point of Gilligan's work, which began with *In a Different Voice* and continues up to today with *Why does Patriarchy Exist?*[4]
The idea of "feminine morality" is indeed so provocative and so obvious that we forget that it is above all *feminist*, and that it is a means for promoting another kind of ethics that exists inside each of us but that is neglected *because* it is above all, *empirically*, that of women, and can be defined by activities historically attributed to women.
The ethics of care produces analyses of the historical conditions that have encouraged the division of moral tasks, a division according to which activities involving care have been socially devalued. The allocation of women to the sphere of the home has reinforced the rejection of these activities and of what happens outside the public sphere, reducing them to the ranks of private feelings devoid of moral or political consequences. The perspectives of care therefore put forth the little recognized moral dimension and question this reduction. They constitute a questioning of the liberal ethics coming out of the Rawls's theory of justice, which contrasts a form of morality focused on fairness, impartiality and autonomy with a form of morality anchored in experience and the work of women. The ethics of care can be inscribed in the particularistic turn of moral philosophy. When we listen to *different voices*, ethics is no longer based on abstract principles, but builds on experiences linked to daily activities and to actual personal problems arising in daily life. For this reason, it cannot be articulated as a theory, but rather as an activity: care as action (*taking* care, caring *for*) and as a task, as much as as a perception and as an attention to (caring about) details, caring about what is unseen or lays before our eyes and, *precisely for that reason,* is invisible.
As a common thread ensuring the preservation of a more human world, care is indissociably ethical and political, and promotes the analysis of social relationships organized around dependence. Care, which includes both quite practical activities and feeling, a certain sensitivity, and a sense of responsibility, breaks with a certain conception of justice that denies the affective texture of our commitments.

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Conference about the book Pourquoi le patriarcat? in the presence of Carol Gilligan, October 2019.

When we listen to *different voices*, ethics is no longer based on abstract principles, but builds on experiences linked to daily activities and to actual personal problems arising in daily life.

4 Carol Gilligan and Naomi Snider, Why Does Patriarchy Exist? (London: Polity, 2018).

The Task of Care as a Moral Resource

It is quite ironic that Gilligan's approach has been called essentialist. Gilligan has shown how general her approach is: she treats justice and care as two rivaling tones or voices, existing within us all, the voice of care being less quickly stifled in girls than in boys. But Gilligan's point of view is radical: it shows that mainstream ethics imposes an extraordinary discontinuity with "ordinary" experiences – those of women, but not exclusively; she focuses on the voices of all those, including the most disadvantaged, who, *because* they serve others, have no voice in the definition of justice or the common good. The language of the liberal ethics of justice is inadequate to grasp the experiences and the points of view of an entire segment of humanity, the portion that *allows others to live*, in particular the privileged, just as our caretakers have done everywhere over the past months.

Taking care into account means giving moral value to a field that has been consistently scorned by philosophy. The challenge of the ethics of care is to create a moral status in the domain of the private, the domestic, and for activities that imply caring for people. Care therefore transforms politics and calls for a revolution in the way value is attributed to human activities. It is a matter of finding sources of the political in ordinary life, understood by way of the link[5] and of interdependence among vulnerable human beings, contrary to liberalism, which expels from ethics all neighborly and servile relationships through which common vulnerability is managed. The fragmentation of care in various fields (from hospitals to food services to teaching) makes it impossible to see that the basis for the autonomy of some lies in the work of others.

Contempt for care has led to incompleteness in the liberal conception of morality.

The next step in this reasoning is the realization that the mere definition of ethics comes to fruition, in philosophy, through the exclusion of an entire field, an entire segment of people, whose contribution is nonetheless essential for life to go on; and through the denial of the work force mobilized in order to guarantee a functioning world. The philosopher Annette Baier has shown how contempt for care has led to incompleteness in the liberal conception of morality, destined to impose a problematic distinction between society in its moral dimension and what makes it run. Forgetting about care in moral and political theory has led society to disregard the source of its own survival as a moral society. For this reason, care is, in the end, a matter of democracy, and incites us to consider how we might finally include the agents of care in the definition of what matters.

And how an essential portion of reality has escaped ethics and philosophy.

5 See Marie Garrau, *Politiques de la vulnérabilité* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2018).

Towards a New Kind of Finance ?

Since 2018, the "Fearless Girl" statue by Kristen Visbal has looked defiantly at the iconic "Charging Bull" by Arturo Di Modica, which has symbolised Wall Street and New York's financial district since 1989. Is she a sign of the times?

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Antoine Reberioux
Professor of Economics and member of Ladyss

Translated by
Nicholas Sowels

Have women made their place in finance? Do they have different financial preferences and attitudes to men? If there are differences, are these biological or social? Do they suffer in terms of savings, investment, and access to credit? What about their careers in the financial sector? What do women who break the "glass ceiling" actually do? Do they lead differently?

To answer these questions, we reviewed the results of some 200 academic studies that test gender impacts in household finance, banking, funds management, and corporate governance. Our article appeared in the *Revue de la régulation*, which devoted a special issue to the question of gender in political economy.

Gender and behaviour in finance

More cautious, less daring, less maths-oriented, less aggressive, and so forth, women would not be "made" for the universe of bold, virile, rigorous, competitive, and successful bankers and traders, etc. These gender clichés are being increasingly examined and debated. But they have not yet been deconstructed.

Survey data, such as the PATER survey by Insee in France suggest some (small) differences in preferences and behaviours between men and women. Women declare themselves to be more risk averse than men. They say they are less optimistic, more generous, less ambitious; less confident, more respectful of rules, and more altruistic. Women's financial culture is even weaker than men's. They choose safer investments, and manage their money more carefully, and so on. The mistake, however, would be to see such statements merely as a revelation of preferences, whereas respondents tend to conform to what society expects of them – or believe it does. The more pervasive the stereotypes are, the more entrenched they become, whether it is in responding to a survey or making effective financial decisions.

The more pervasive the stereotypes are, the more entrenched they become, whether it is in responding to a survey or making effective financial decisions.

The growing number of academic studies that test the impact of gender on finance also tend to confirm these stereotypes. This is particularly the case for studies that cross neuroscience and finance (neurofinance), which are booming, and which point to explanations based on biological differences (for example, testosterone levels). In doing so, they reflect the eternal debate between what nature and nurture, which neurofinance tends to resolve grossly when it rules out so-

cial-cultural phenomena (identification, learning). The latter appear to be as marked, if not more so.

As soon as one considers context, past experience, and education, particularly financial literacy, then gender studies in finance tell us not only about differences observed, but also about how to reduce them. The vast array of surveys of financial literacy indicate that its level is low everywhere and for everyone, but even more so for women. Yet financial literacy has a strong impact on financial behaviour: for example, women plan their retirement less and participate less in stock markets, which reduces their share of the financial incomes that follow. The good news, however, is that a little financial literacy not only increases the general level of knowledge, but also helps close the gender gap. ●●●

Fearless Girl, Kristen Visbal.

When women participate in financial markets by managing security portfolios, their prudence is not necessarily a disadvantage. To be sure, it limits their gains, but because they exhibit less excess confidence, women also suffer less extreme losses and transaction costs. In the end, the net returns on their portfolios are not necessarily lower. But this caution, be it proven or supposed, does not always benefit them in credit markets. According to available studies, women face greater difficulties in obtaining traditional credit than men do. In part, this is because bank client managers they tend to reserve better credit terms for other men. This situation is a little different concerning microcredit or crowdfunding. Women are, indeed, the main beneficiaries of microcredit. But gender bias is reflected here more subtly, by "glass ceilings" on the size of loans granted. When it comes to crowdfunding, especially on crowdlending platforms, the use of photos appears to benefit women in particular.

Parity is still largely ignored

When women work in the banking and financial sector, they are most often employed in human resources and administrative management, or in back-office tasks, where they are in a majority. In the customer-related trades, which constitute banks' core retail activity, women also make up a majority of staff, but their share falls as customers are wealthier. In general, their proportion decreases with qualification levels, prestige and salary, according to a pyramid structure. They are thus in a minority in the best-paid jobs related to financial markets, and are still relatively very few in trading rooms. To be sure, finance is a sector that pays better than others… but above all for women as secretaries and men as traders! On Wall Street, in the City, or in La Défense, in the higher banking spheres, women earn between 25% and 60% less than men. They are promoted less often, kept away from the best clients, and have far smaller bonuses. When a promotion comes along, they need to ensure that it is for real, as their presence is sometimes instrumentalised as a display of superficial diversity (tokenism). Some will also confide that once in charge, it is better to avoid the coffee machine, for fear of being taken for an assistant serving a boss and so risk losing credibility!

On Wall Street, in the City, or in La Défense, in the higher banking spheres, women earn between 25% and 60% less than men.

In short, finance remains a macho and sexist universe, in which formal and informal barriers exist. To enter this hostile environment, women often must adopt male codes and cannot break through all barriers at once. Those who manage to benefit from social and legislative progress in favour of greater parity, or women co-opted by women's networks are overwhelmingly "white", from privileged social classes, and "straight". Forcing the gender barrier seems to imply respecting the established order.

And this is probably also because they have to adopt male codes and become more conservative when they accede to positions of responsibility, so that women do not apply very different management styles than men do. At least, this is what the mixed results of gender studies suggest, when they look at whether women direct business towards more environmentally or socially friendly practices, whether women govern banks more prudently. whether they are more attentive to financial stability when they hold executive positions, or are more focused on growth than on inflation when they sit on central bank steering committees. Yet it remains true that women are still very few in number, and that the samples tested are therefore often narrow.

Women in teaching and research

Is the situation different when women teach or do research in finance, where their under-representation stands out? A little, but not much. But if there is one area in which women invest far more than men, it is indeed gender studies! In 70% of the studies that we gathered for our article, there is at least one woman among the authors, even though women account for just a quarter of researchers in economics. Perhaps it is better to see women to take hold of this topic rather than to let men mansplain. That said, if women are entering this field which is less-valued by publishers, it is also because men have willingly left it to them.

Perhaps someday, the financial sector, business leadership, and financial teaching and research will attain full parity. Women, who would then be less obliged to comply with male behavioural codes, could express their differences more broadly and pursue a different approach to financial investment, management or research. Unless such differences are merely an expression of stereotypes in which they have been locked into and which will be swept aside by parity. It is therefore not so easy to predict the impact of greater parity on gender differences: some gaps in wages, compensation and considerations will narrow. But differences in behaviour, preferences, management styles, and so on could increase as well as decrease. If women succeed in breaking stereotypes through their greater presence, there will be as many differences between women as there are between women and men in finance, and in other areas. And it is indeed through such a greater diversity of women and men that finance could function better. Differences of all sorts are better than just gender differences.

Differences of all sorts are better than just gender differences.

Art Collections through the Lens of Gender: Reallocations and Changes in Perspective

Why has the historical role of women art collectors been denied, neglected or deformed by prejudice? The historiographical traditions that have founded the disciplines of history and art history, those of the positivist school and later of the Annals, have completely disregarded it, and have written a history of collecting that focuses exclusively on men, thereby attesting to the common belief in the historical marginality of women, who are associated with the domestic sphere and with the family, and are treated as absent from Society, and therefore from history.

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Translated by
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In the history of artistic taste, tenacious forms of representation have reinforced a gender divide associating women with consumption and decoration, and men with creation and collection. A masculine reference, Don Juan, has inspired a great number of studies on psychology of art collecting that insist in particular on the displacement of sexual conquest to the possession of beautiful objects; and with the collector's passion being one of the variants on masculine appetite for conquest, it is difficult to universalize the paradigm. When it is applied to women, these connotations are inversed and become negative: they then serve to denigrate the man-eater or the trinket fanatic.

Reallocations: Collections under X

It seemed not only possible, but judicious and enriching, to write a history of private art collections in the feminine. One of the issues, and not the least, concerns the need for the reallocation – as we might say of a paining after an appraisal – of certain collections to their legitimate owners, when collective memory has forgotten that behind a man's name, a couple, or a wife, or a widow, or a daughter has in fact played a hand. In the last two centuries, which are the ones that I study, several striking examples can be found, beginning with the French painter and collector from the end of the 19th century Nélie Jacquement, who was long relegated to the shadow of her husband, the banker and collector Édouard André : the scrutiny of the archives including travel logs, accounting books, and inventories of works shows that the couple collected together, though their tastes differed (concerning Renaissance art, Nélie preferred Florence, while Édouard preferred Venice); Nélie was also the one who, during her widowhood from 1894 to 1912, was responsible for the expansion of the collection to include exotic objects, and for the initial changes that would convert the private mansion into a museum, as well as for the donation of all their possessions to the Institut de France provided that the residence become a museum open to all. Even more radical still was the initiative taken by Helene Kröller-Müller, a Dutch collector who, during her lifetime, hid her gender by associating the modern art pieces chosen and purchased anonymously (including around a hundred paintings by a certain Vincent Van Gogh, unknown at the time) with a double last name composed of her father's name (Wilhelm Müller) and her husband's (Anton Kröller), and hiding her first name – a practice that was also common among American collectors of the same period who aimed to protect themselves from any accusation of immorality or of leading a wasteful life. The historian must therefore sometimes unweave a tangle of dissimulations and secrets in order to accurately restore the historical importance of these women.

Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André – Institut de France © Studio Sébert Photographes

Autoportrait, Nélie Jacquemart, 1880.

Decenterings: Ways of Doing, Ways of Being

Another significant issue lies in a better understanding of the practices of collectors: decentering the gaze on women allows us to enrich the scope of possibilities, and to refine our typologies, in differentiating or reconciling behaviors and representations. We can, for example, observe a greater attachment on the part of women collectors to the transmission of their collections, either to family members, or more often to an institution, be it public (a museum, an institute, a university) or private (a foundation, an art center). Concern for the conservation *post mortem* of the collection in its integr(al)ity stands out among North American women and evolved over several generations: the Bostonian Isabelle Stewart Gardner established her "Palazzo" on Fenway Court during the first two decades of the 20th century and laid out in her will the conditions preventing future trustees from exposing other works or from changing the layout she had decided upon for her museum-home. Positioning herself against impersonal places where avant-garde pictorial art was usually exposed, the New Yorker Gertrude Whitney turned her workshop-club into an ideal museum, in the 1930s, setting it up in the manner of a modern home bedecked with some 600 works of American art. Later, the Venetian by adoption Peggy Guggenheim would also refuse to let her collection

"A masculine reference, Don Juan, has inspired a great number of studies on psychology of art collecting."

of Surrealist and abstract art dissolve into the prestige of the family: in the Palazzo Venier dei Leoni, with its ornate façade featuring 18 lion heads, she would install exposition rooms, through which the public could meander three afternoons a week as early as 1951, sometimes welcomed by the eccentric owner accompanied by her dogs, Lhassa Apsos, the guardians of Tibetan temples. On the contrary, the itineraries of other women – for example, Alexandra of Denmark, Gertrude Stein or Helen Rubinstein – invite us to question any statement linking sexual identity to conservative practices: they demonstrate the extreme diversity of situations and biases.

> **The history of women collectors therefore contributes to the history of gender, understood as the social construction of femininity and masculinity.**

Deconstructions: Gendered Norms, Cultural Roles

Far from excluding men, my study places the male-female relationship at the heart of its subject, as it is essential to understanding family ties and places of sociability, as well as the construction of norms and the attribution of social and cultural roles. The history of women collectors therefore contributes to the history of gender, understood as the social construction of femininity and masculinity, a dynamic ensemble of practices and representations, with activities and roles, psychological traits and a belief system. It is particularly interesting to contrast what has been said about women collectors with the reality of their actions, in order to highlight stereotypes, prejudice and the evolution of beliefs. Marie-Laure De Noailles, a French collector and benefactor from the interwar period, for example, was first violently rejected, as was her husband, from her original social background: she would live up to her reputation of being whimsical and strange, wiping away the harsh criticism of her aesthetic tastes and of the financial support given to the Surrealists Man Ray and Luis Buñuel. This steadfastness would in the end guarantee her recognition as a major figure among the new patrons of the middle of the 19th century. We find the same ambivalence, on a very different level, in the public image of feminist collectors of the 1970s-1990s, such as the Italian Patrizia Re Rebaudengo who boasted of collecting (almost) exclusively artwork by women artists in order to compensate for their lack of visibility and of recognition in contemporary museum institutions.

Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice.

Rewriting: Domination and Emancipation

From this perspective, the history of women art collectors offers an unprecedented angle on the evolution of the female condition within the aristocratic and upper-class elites of the last two centuries: it confirms the crucial influence of the legal, economic, and later political emancipation, which marks the time period. It is obviously not by chance that the great feminine collections of the contemporary period have been established by young, single women, who have inherited family fortune, or by widows who, upon the death of their husbands, gain not only economic independence, but also cultural independence. It is in questioning material conditions – constraints and opportunities, as well as power relations – that we gain understanding of the slow, but relentless (in terms of quantity) development of art collections assembled by women; it is also in paying attention to what they say and to their tastes that we can grasp to what extent the specific practice of constituting an art collection has been an instrument for self-affirmation and the assertion of self-sufficiency. Ultimately, another story has been written: one that tells of the growing participation of women in the artistic life of their time.

> **In paying attention to what they say and to their tastes that we can grasp to what extent the specific practice of constituting an art collection has been an instrument for self affirmation and the assertion of self-sufficiency.**

All her students and colleagues pay tribute to the memory of professor **Marina Maestrutti** who passed away shortly after the publication of this issue.

Prostheses and Cyborgs at the Heart of Gender and Disability Representations

***From Captain Hook to Iron Man* was the title of an exhibition held on the occasion of the first Cybathlon in Zurich in 2016. It reconstructed the evolution of assistance technologies from Antiquity to the most recent developments. The title eloquently summarised the rapid progress of technologies to facilitate the functioning of "disabled" bodies.**

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Translated by
Nicholas Sowels

By exclusively showing men, the exhibition suggested the representations of disability and bodies themselves are destined to change as a result of increasingly effective body-machine hybridisation. Moreover, these are clearly gendered bodies. Gender analysis is therefore a way of questioning these phenomena in-depth.

Prostheses may be regarded as a "total social objects". They represent material objects on which the ideologies of the ideals of the body and its policies clearly converge. They reflect the close relationships between technological changes and the "civilisational process" of modernity. Histological-anthropological studies on disability thus show how the treatment of disease and disability is indicative of a culture as a whole. "Disabled bodies" (*corps infirmes*), to cite Henri-Jacques Stiker's important work, have been increasingly placed at the centre of policies for rehabilitation and engineering, based on medical sciences and technological competencies.[1] Interest in the role of technologies for disabilities has grown since the emergence of *disability studies* in 1970s.[2] While disability is clearly viewed as an eminently social and political problem, it may be asked what importance exactly should be attributed to technology in the march to emancipating individuals from the stigma and exclusion of disability. Can technology help the move towards a more "inclusive" and "enabling" society, or will it reinforce the prevailing conceptions of normalcy and gender?

"Prostheses [...] represent material objects on which the ideologies of the ideals of the body and its policies clearly converge."

In fact, it was precisely around the notions of *normality* and *abilism* that a cultural critique of disability developed around the year 2000; abilism being a principle governing organised societies, without taking into account the psychological or physical diversity of its members, and which is based on a standard of normality that excludes entire classes of people.[3] *Feminist disability studies* have contributed significantly to this critique, by showing how disability cannot exist as an analytical category without its intersection with gender, race, and class considerations. In particular, the gender approach has allowed the body to be recognised – experienced in its pain, limits, but also potentialities – as the locus of consciousness, of agency, intentionality, senses, emotions, as well as of political and cultural resistances to the imperatives of *normality* and *autonomy*.

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The prosthetic body as a gendered body

Amputation and artificial limbs concern both women and men. But their history mainly provides masculine images. The American Civil War in the middle of the 19th century and World War I were key moments in developing medical knowledge of antisepsis, anaesthesia, and surgical amputation techniques. Gradually, these advances increased survival rates following amputation, the development of prosthetic equipment, and the emergence of rehabilitation medicine that took off after World War II. War wounds, loss of limbs, and phantom limb pain have all undermined the image of military virility and the social role of persons maimed by war. Excluded from the productive world, deprived of their role as *pater familias*, weakened psychologically by war traumas, amputees have lacked physical integrity, productive potential, and male vitality.

"Until very recently, representations in images of military or worker heroism, and then sportsmanship, all staged the male but not the female body."

Until very recently, representations in images of military or worker heroism, and then sportsmanship, all staged the male but not the female body. This was surely because men worked more often than women in heavy industry, fought as soldiers, and so suffered more crippling injuries. Yet, while amputated female bodies did appear occasionally in medical textbooks, pictures of women showing the capacities of prosthetic equipment have been rare. As the American historian Katherine Ott has pointed out, conventions of female modesty, as well as public ignorance and the reluctance to discuss women's anatomy, partly explain this historical gap.[4]

Representations of bodies equipped with prostheses have gradually changed with the modification of these "tools". Beginning in 1960, US research in space conquest generated popular images of cyber-or-

1 Henri-Jacques Stiker, Corps infirmes et sociétés, Paris, Dunod, 2013.

2 Alan Roulstone, Disability and Technology. An Interdisciplinary and International Approach, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

3 Fiona Campbell, Contours of Ableism. The Production of Disability and Abledness, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

4 Katherine Ott, David Serlin, Stephen Mihm (dir.), Artificial Parts, Practical Lives. Modern Histories of Prosthetics, New York/London, New York University Press, 2002.

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ganisms (of cyborgs) as hybrids of humans and machines. These representations of the body with prostheses inaugurated a new aesthetics, that of the augmented human being, a hybrid of the natural and artificial figure of the body, extended by devices ensuring improved and unprecedented functions. This brought to life other identities, at the frontier of new conceptions of human beings. This human – this man – is now more sexy, attractive, and the choice of making his body bionic had become desirable. This was the shift from *Captain Hook* to *Iron Man* or to *The Six Million Dollar Man* in the famous TV series of the 1970s.

This development in the image of the "prosthetic body" projects another light on disability – one that values and promotes such a body. The prosthesis thus became a metaphor for our relationship to technology: we depend on technologies that complement us, that some-

how improve our capabilities, that broaden our possibilities. These prospects for emancipation are projected at the same time onto gender and disability: disability was perhaps the condition that allowed the most intense experience of hybridisation with communication technologies, as Donna Haraway suggested in her essay *A Cyborg Manifesto,* in 1985. The cyborg is the reference figure of this convergence: although of military origin, the cyborg opens up to other areas of performance, particularly in sport, in which exceptional amputated bodies appear.

This transformation of representation, however, contributed to the creation of new normative notions of success and performance that were gendered and racialised, as Lucie Dalibert has shown. Prostheses always seem to increase the capacity of the cyborg, because they only show the "clean" and effective aspects of improvement. Media figures who have become "ideal-types" like Oscar Pistorius and Aimée Mullins (to whom similar paths may be applied) are representative of such images of perfection, beauty, of "*heteronormativity, whiteness, and capacitysm*".[5] In reality, the idea of limits must be erased; in this sense, the cyborg is always more than human, and never only human, never "incapable".

The cyborg must also avoid generating "gender disorder", and must therefore reinforce stereotypes that enhance gender roles by standardising bodies. Lesley Sharp has analysed the aesthetics proposed by the institutional communication of the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago in the United States, centred around the high-tech equipment of Claudia Mitchell and Jesse Sullivan in the 2000s.[6] Sharp shows how the relationship between technology and gender in the field of disability is still based on the assumptions of the early 20th century. The prosthesis "naturally" increases the virility of men and the military in a sort of continuity, and maximises its these persons' ability to intervene in the world (in work, do-it-yourself or leisure). By contrast, a prothesis seems to "domesticate" the female body, with the aim of hiding the damage caused by surgery and amputation. In short, if men may be more virile *thanks* to a high-tech prosthesis, women remain feminine and beautiful *despite* them.

The prosthesis thus became a metaphor for our relationship to technology: we depend on technologies that complement us.

The reality of prostheses

In 1999, Sarah Jain[7] criticised the tendency to view prosthetic appliances as a metaphor for our relationship to technology: the notion of "technology as a prosthesis" describes humans as complementing themselves through technological devices, and so becoming "whole".

5 Lucie Dalibert, "Remarquables mais non (re-) marqués : le rôle du genre et de la blanchité dans les représentations des corps technologisés", Poli – Politique de l'Image, 10, 2015, p. 50-59.

6 Lesley A. Sharp, "The Invisible Woman: The Bioaesthetics of Engineered Bodies", Body & Society, 17/1, 2011, p. 1-30.

7 Sarah S. Jain, "The Prosthetic Imagination: Enabling and Disabling the Prosthesis Trope", Science, Technology and Human Values, 24/1, 1999, p. 31-54.

However, prostheses as an emblem of the human condition in a "technologised world" run into the real limits of the deficiencies actually experienced by disabled persons. The testimony of two anthropologists who have actually suffered amputations, Steven Kurzman and Vivian Sobchack, suggest more that prostheses should be considered as a "a technology," or a as tool. The point of view and experience of people who use prostheses is necessarily different from those who talk about and describe them without having experienced amputation: as Kurzman argues, the process that leads to equipping an amputee is so complex, detailed and intimate that there are no "words to express it".[8] Sobchack avoids analysing what prostheses do to humans: i.e. establishing dependence on increasingly "prosthetic" technologies, and describing prostheses themselves as autonomous and intentional agents that are independent of their users.[9] Instead, both authors suggest looking at the adjustments and possibilities that people with prostheses make every day, through new learning and new configurations that are constantly updated and adapted to personal experience.

Far from being a "radical" technology, prostheses are above all complex tools that must be "tamed" and adapted at all times. They need to be replaced and repaired as is never the case with a healthy limb.[10] It was from this qualitative and empirical point of view that the inter-university and interdisciplinary collective *Corps et protheses* was created in 2016, with the aim of deepening perspectives in the field of prostheses and implants (www.corps-protheses.org). A plurality of views has opened up the possibility of collaborations between researchers in assistance robotics and social sciences, by allowing observations and analyses to be developed within research centres and ongoing research projects.[11] From this perspective, it is true that new technological opportunities can lead to new social opportunities, and it is worth remembering that the cyborg figure is constantly torn between contrasting representations. By describing carefully the multiple ways in which people live and shape themselves in reality to their daily lives, it could perhaps free them from all gender imperatives subordinated to male power and female virtue, as well as from any abilistic imposition of normality or even superiority.

Far from being a "radical" technology, prostheses are above all complex tools that must be "tamed" and adapted at all times.

8 Steven Kurzman, "'There's no language for this'. Communication and alignment in contemporary prosthetics", in Katherine Ott, David Serlin, Stephen MIHN, op. cit., p. 227-246.

9 Vivian Sobchack, "A Leg to Stand on. Prosthetics, Metaphor and Materiality", in Marquard Smith, Joanne Morra (ed.), The Prosthetic Impulse: From a Posthuman Present to a Biocultural Future, Cambridge, Massachusetts, The MIT Press, 2007, p. 17-41.

10 Myriam Winance, "'Mon fauteuil roulant, mes jambes'. De l'objet au corps", in Sophie Houdart, Olivier Thiéry (ed.), Humains non humains. Comment repeupler les sciences sociales, Paris, La Découverte, 2011, p. 56-64.

11 Nathanaël Jarrassé, Marina Maestrutti, Guillaume Morel, Agnès Roby-Brami, "Robotic Prosthetics: Moving Beyond Technical Performance", IEEE Technology and Society Magazine, 2015, p. 69-77.

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