

# Summaries

*Annelies Decat and Annie Hondeghem*

## Equal opportunities on the agenda

*A feminist analysis of agenda setting theory*

The birth of Belgian equal opportunities (e.o.) policies is seen through the lens of Kingdon's agenda setting theory. For each of the four phases in the development of equal opportunity policies in Belgium, we describe the policy window marking a new phase. The discussion of the *process* of institutionalisation of e.o. policies in Belgium shows why feminist revisions of agenda setting theories are needed. Although both the women's movement and international developments played a crucial part in this process, it is hard to fit them into Kingdon's model. We argue that we need to re-conceptualise this process so that all factors can be taken into account.

*Aagje Ieven*

## The subject of rights (m/f)?

*Two perspectives on the European Court of Human Rights' jurisprudence on transsexuals.*

The European Court of Human Rights' recent adjudication on transsexuality is considered to have improved the position of transsexuals considerably. Seen from a mere instrumentalist perspective this is indeed the case.

This article, however, takes a different view on law, which is critical of power and promotes the protective function of law. From this perspective, the requirement of complete physical adaptation to the new sex, which the Court has formulated for a legal sex change, is suspicious. This requirement involves severe physical harm and does not protect transgender persons. Furthermore, it reinforces the assumption that legal sex reflects biological sex, and that biological sex is unambiguous, singular, static and has a binary structure. On the basis of the situation of intersexuals, transsexuals and transgender people, it is argued that this last assumption is incorrect. Moreover, legal sex, which is constituted to reflect the supposed structure of biological sex, is shown to be a socially constructed means for consolidating existing gender dichotomies and power relations.

Weighing the different types of legal regulation which differentiate or discriminate on the basis of sex, the article argues that nondiscriminatory measures suffice for a stable democratic society and that, for this purpose, legal sex does not need to be an unambiguous, singular, static and binary structured category recorded at birth.

*Marjolein Kuiper*

## Wild thinking about difference

*Annemarie Mol's philosophical activism*

This is the first in a series of interviews with three Dutch scholars, who each recently published a book on the human body. In the first interview Annemarie Mol talks about *The Body Multiple. Ontology in Medical Practice*. Her book deals with the bodies that suffer from atherosclerosis. Mol argues that the body is not a singular object, observed by multiple subjects, but that in different surroundings we actually practice different bodies. This does not necessarily lead to controversies. Mol observes a form of 'tensed peace'.

*Londa Schiebinger*

## Gendered innovations in science

This article starts from the assumption that feminism has brought changes to science, such as a debate in *Science* about the existence of a 'female style' in science. However, in order to recruit and retain women in science, more needs to be done. Gender analysis of science is the key to change. In the gender analysis of science three levels are distinguished. The first level is directed towards increasing the number of women. Secondly the cultures of science have to be studied in order to make the institutions more congenial to women, e.g. the practice that scholarly articles written for peer-reviewed journals are often given lower scores simply because they have been written by a woman. The third level focuses on knowledge. It became clear for instance that U.S. medicine did not work as well for women as it did for men. As a result the U.S. announced in 1991 the Women's Health Initiative, a fourteen-year study of diseases unique to women.

*Berteke Waaldijk*

## Yearning for cultures

*Citizenship and the humanities*

Berteke Waaldijk explores how the Liberal Arts and other humanities programmes relate to the dichotomy of public and private spheres. She argues that in the twenty-first Century the humanities should continue their traditional role of preparing people for active citizenship. But today active citizenship does not merely mean preparing for membership in the national public domain as defined in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, i.e. the opposite of the private domain. Rather, the humanities should nowadays prepare students for simultaneously taking part in various domains, in transnational or sub-national communities, in virtual and geographic links, in communities held together by shared experiences (such as war or migration, being gendered or racialized), by the preference for a particular medium, by passion for a certain art form, by shared interests or common political beliefs. The simultaneous participation in such diverse communities requires a sense of ambiguity, a willingness to entertain various truths at the same time and to regularly shift perspective. Waaldijk argues that humanities students, as experts in ambiguity, have much to offer to such forms of diverse and active citizenship.