

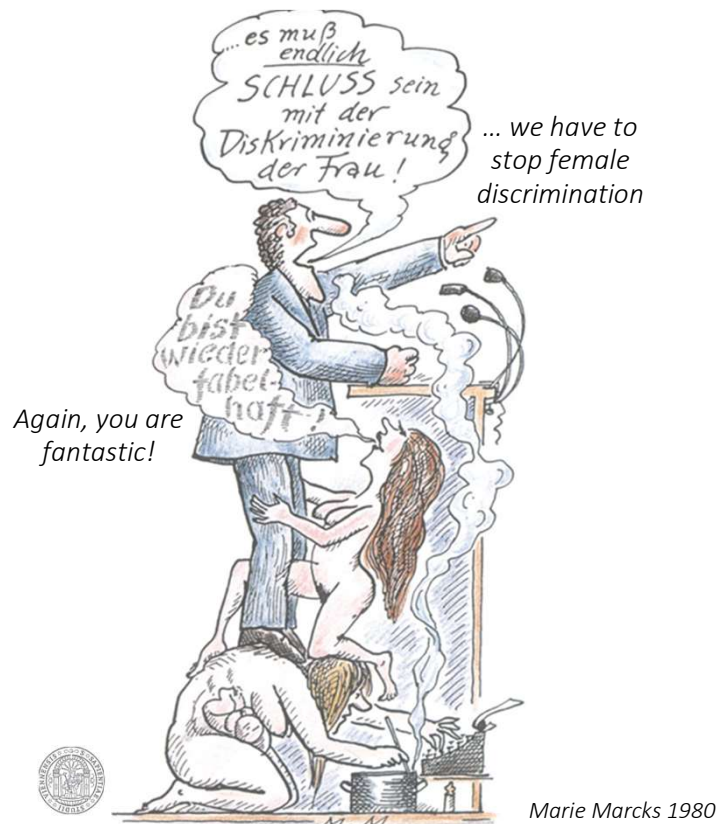


# GENDERed INNOVATION inSPACE

How feminist perspectives transformed research in Geography

Anindita Datta, Peter Hopkins, Lynda Johnston, Elisabeth Olsen and Joseli Maria Silva (2020) (Eds).  
Routledge Handbook of Gender and Feminist Geographies. London and New York: Taylor & Francis.

# The relevance of research topics in human geography for understanding the gendered life in academics



## Feminist critique of research in economic geography

- Invisibility of social reproduction
- Reproduction of a public-private-divide
- Attention primarily to hegemonial masculinity
- Invisibility of „home“ in scaled economic activities
- Disembodiment economic activities and processes
- Ignorance of intersectionality in the construction of care work
- Disregard of patriarchy and the location of empowerment
- Epistemology of ‚objective‘ knowledge production

# GENDERed INNOVATION inSPACE

## Outline of my talk

1. The historically „sexualized“ nature of Geography as a discipline
2. Milestones in the development of feminist research in Geography
3. Re/Concepualisations of Place, Space and Scale
  - Transformations of Research in Feminist Geography
4. Re/Concepualisations of the Human/Society/Culture – Nature - Divide
  - Transformations of Research in Feminist Geography
5. Conclusions      How feminism transformed research in geography

# 1. The ‚sexualized‘ nature of geography as a discipline

Geography as a young discipline  
„Mother Earth“ as the subject of love  
and the object of discovery



Marie Marcks (1994) Roll doch das Ding, Blödmann!

Quantitative Revolution  
Geographia, beloved Eve of Quali-  
factus, is kidnapped by Quantifactus



Peter Gould (1985): The geographer at work.

# 1. The ‚sexualized‘ nature of geography as a discipline

Geography as a young discipline  
„Mother Earth“ as the subject of love  
and the object of discovery



Marie Marcks (1994) *Roll doch das Ding, Blödmann!*

The Revolution of the Radicals  
El Barbo, the Marxist, kidnapped  
Geographia from the Quantificatus



Peter Gould (1985): *The geographer at work.*

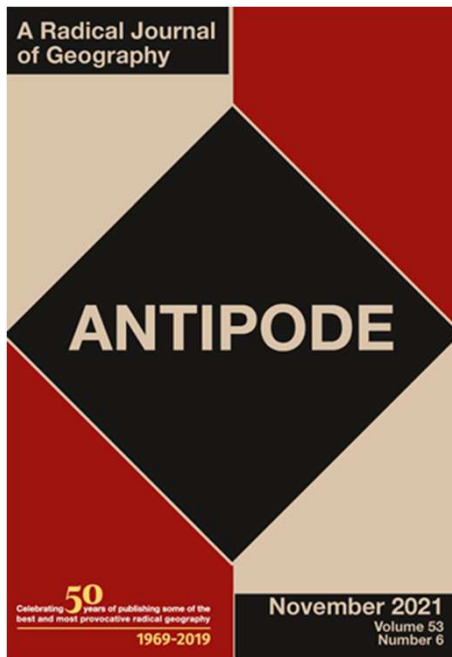
Elisabeth Binder(1989)

Multi-paradigmatic discipline  
Feminism ‚just‘ as one of the many  
paradigms in Geography?



Freytag et al (2016) (Hrsg.) *Humangeographie kompakt,*

## 2. Milestones in the development of feminist research in Geography

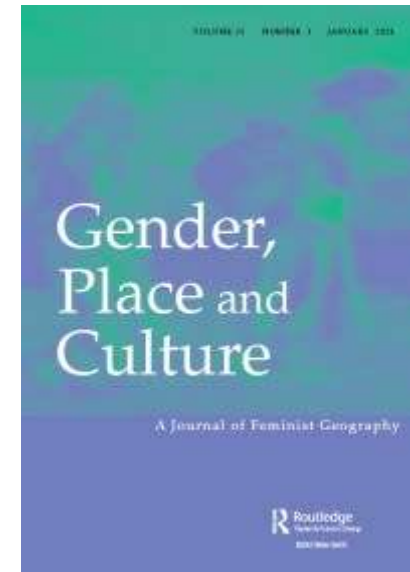


### 50 years of Antipode 1969 - 2019

Burnett, Pat 1973. Social change, the status of women and models of city form and development. *Antipode* 5, 3, 57-61.

Zelinsky Wilbur 1973: The strange case of the missing female geographer. *Professional Geographer* 25, 101-105.

### 25 years of Gender, Place and Culture 1993 - 2018



## 2. Milestones in the development of feminist research in Geography

### First publications & discussions

Burnett, P. 1973. Social change, the status of women and models of city form and development. *Antipode* 5, 57-61.

Zelinsky W. 1973: The strange case of the missing female geographer. *Professional Geographer* 25, 101-105.

1970s

### First German Thesis

Gilbert (1985) Binder (1999)

### Institutionalisation

1980 WGSG at the IBG  
1984 Speciality group AAG  
1988 Study Group in the IGU  
1989 AK Feminist Geographien  
1989 Geo-Rundmail

### First introductory books

WGSG (1984)

### Criticism of research approaches & agendas

Monk J. & Hanson S. (1982) On not excluding half of the human

1980s

### First Books on Body/Sexuality

Duncan (1996) Valentine (1999)

### Publications in German

Bühler et al. (1993) Scheller (1995) Wuchterpfenning (1997) Strüver (1999)

### First State of the Art Reviews, Conceptual Books

McDowell (1993) Rose (1993) Massey (1984) Jones et al (1997)

### Institutionalisation Publication

1993 Gender, Place & Culture  
1993 International Studies of Women and Place Series

1990s

### Renaming into Gender

1996 Commission on Gender & Geography of the IGU  
2005 AK Geographie und Geschlecht im VGDH

### Studies on Intersectionality & Masculinity

Berg & Longhurst (2003)

### Inclusion in Dictionaries

2009 International Encyclopedia of Human Geography

### First Anthologies

Moss (2002) Nelson & Saeger (2005), Moss & Al-Hindi (2008)

2000s

### First Publications on New Feminist Materialism, Emotions & Affects

### Renaming back to Feminism

2019 AK Feministische Geographien im VGDH

### 2018 25 years of GPC

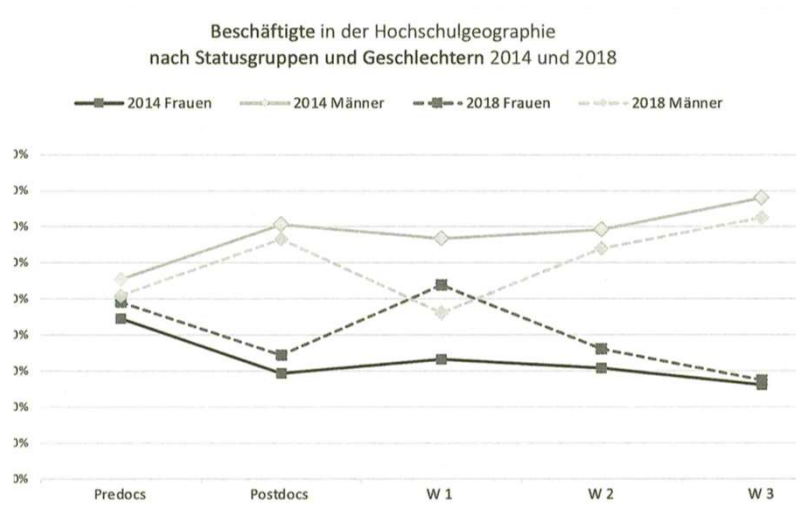
### New Anthologies

2020 Routledge Handbook of Gender and Feminist Geographies

2021 Handbuch Feministische Geographien. Arbeitsweisen und Konzepte

2010s

# Gender In/Equality in Geography at German speaking Universities and Research Institutions



b. 4: Geschlechterverhältnis der Beschäftigten in Statusgruppen 2014 und 2018

Bauriedl S. (2022) Geschlechtergerechtigkeit in der deutschen Geographie. Ergebnisse der VGDH-Studien von 2014 und 2018. *Berichte. Geographie und Landeskunde* 95, 1, 97-122.

- Geography still is seen as masculinist discipline (e.g. we still have more male students)
- The cascading of women in academic Geography still will need some time (Bauriedl 2022)
- In terms of citations or participation/communication behaviour at academic conferences Mathilda still is also a (female) human geographer (Aufenvenne et al 2021 & 2024)
- Women still do more care-work - outside and inside the organisation, targeted mentoring is difficult for younger female professors due to the high administrative workload (Wack 2024)
- Physical geographers still want us to reflect on gender structures in their disciplinary field (Wack 2024)

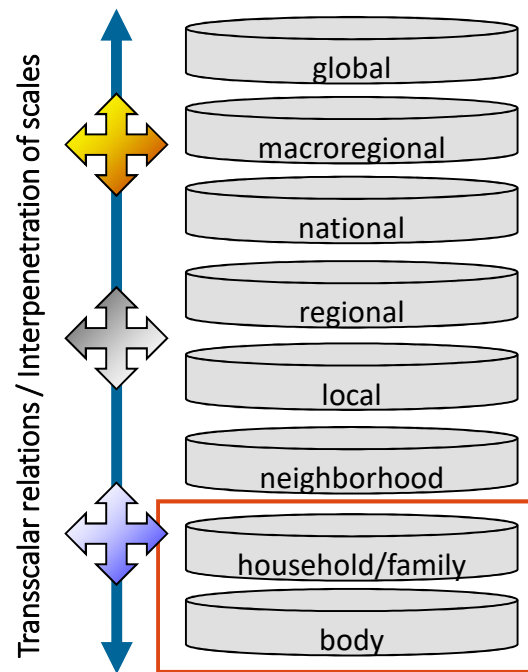


# 3. Re/Conceptualisations of Place, Space and Scale Situating knowledge construction



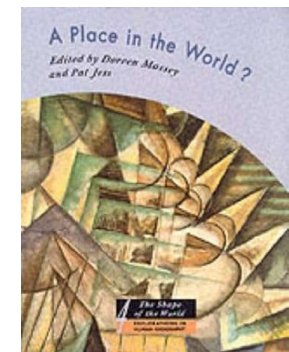
Space as a network of dis/empowering relations between human (and non-human) beings created by the working of power structures at different spatial scales and across different spatial scales

Situated / localised / partial knowledge construction



Objectified / globalized / hegemonial knowledge construction

Place as the experience of social power relations constructed at and across different spatial scales in a specific (spatialised) arena



### 3. Re/Concepualisations of Place, Space and Scale

Domestic workers from the Phillipines congregate with friends on their day off, sunday, in the Central district of Hong Kong

... Sundays in Central District are a spectacular sight. There in Hong Kong's most celebrated financial district, amidst awesome high-rise structures, towering hotels, and dwarfed colonial government buildings, crowds of domestic workers, mainly from the Philippines, but also from other regions of South and South-east Asia, gather to socialize, to attend to personal matters, and to escape the confines of their employers' homes and their mundane weekly routines of domestic work.

On Sundays in Central the noise is louder, the colors brighter, and the crowds more overwhelmingly female than on other days of the week. Filipinas who gather in Statue Square on Sundays and public holidays have been described as „one of the most colourful and cheerful features of life in Hongkong ....”

*Nicole Constable (1997): Maid to Order in Hong Kong. Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press.*



Nick Maslen 2018, Alamy Stock Photo

### 3. Re/Conceptualisations of Place, Space and Scale

Working bodies are gendered, racialised & sexualized - and emotional



„ ... women are constructed as inappropriate bodies in the rational spaces of the mind – especially in bureaucratic, academic, scientific and high-tech workplaces.“ (McDowell 1999)

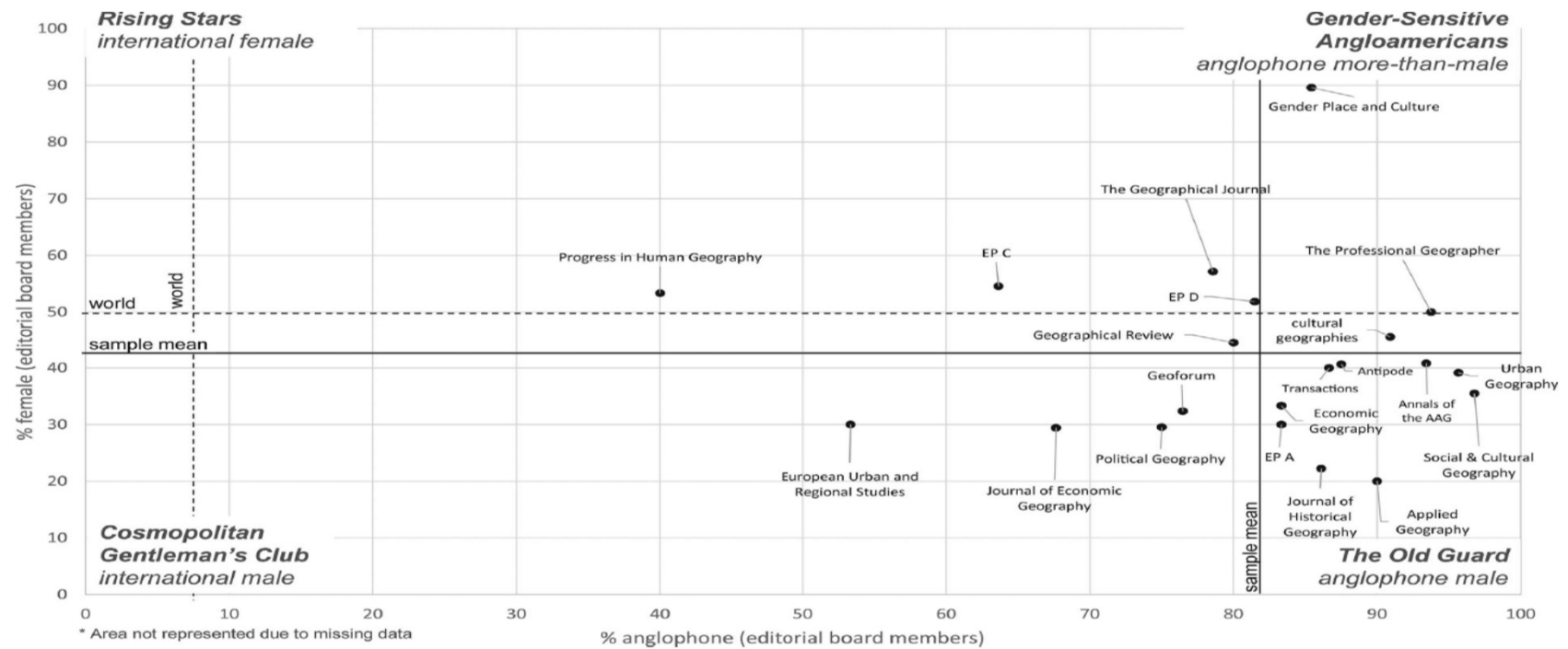
#### Men in high-tech, scientific research

Doreen Massey (1995)

- Paid work is talked about in celebratory terms – it is „loved“
- Home is erased by working practices that frequently involve evenings, weekends ... which override holiday entitlements
- Home is invaded by studies, home computers, and modems
- Scientists' minds are often still „at work“ even when their bodies are doing „things domestic“
- One side of the home-work dualism (work) erases the other (home)
- A minority of men resist this

# Who makes Geographical Knowledge?

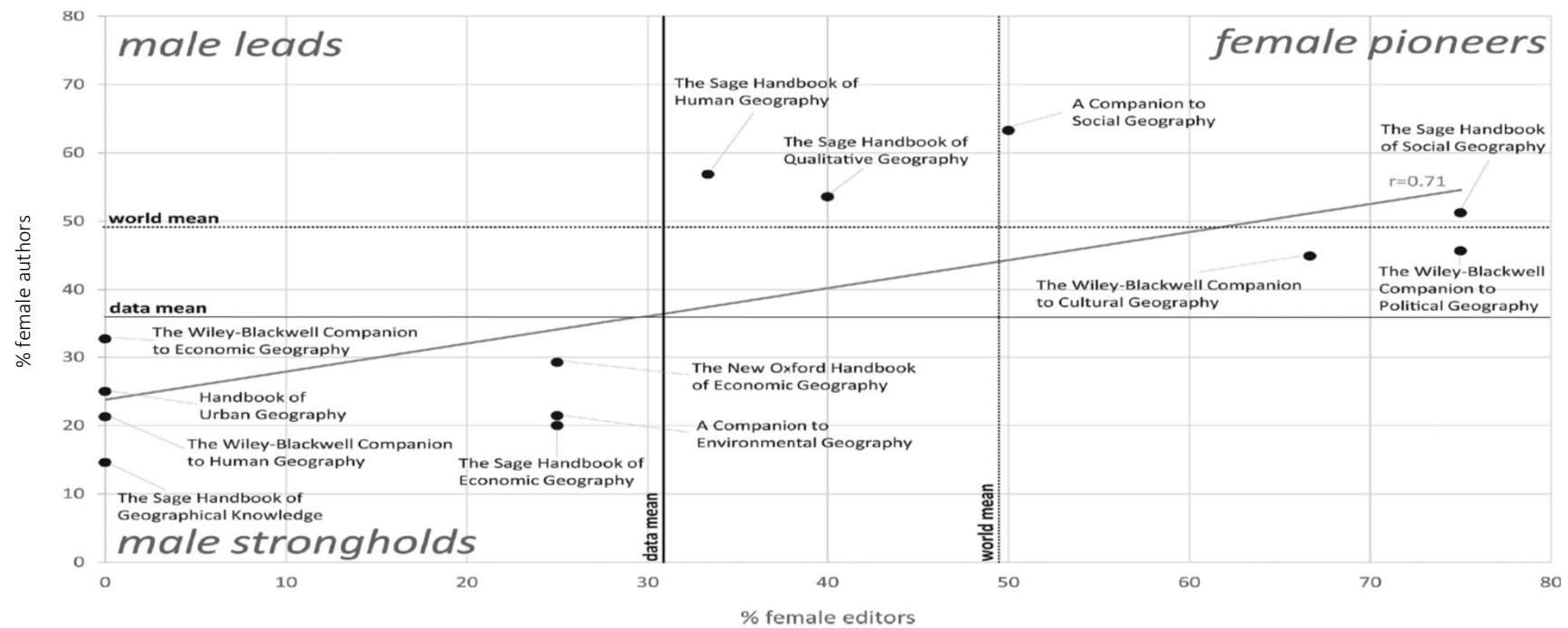
Share of women and share of Anglophone members in editorial boards of geography journals



Schurr Carolin, Müller Martin & Imhof Nadja (2020) Who makes geographical knowledge? The gender of Geography's Gatekeepers. *The Professional Geographer* 72, 317-331.

# Who makes Geographical Knowledge?

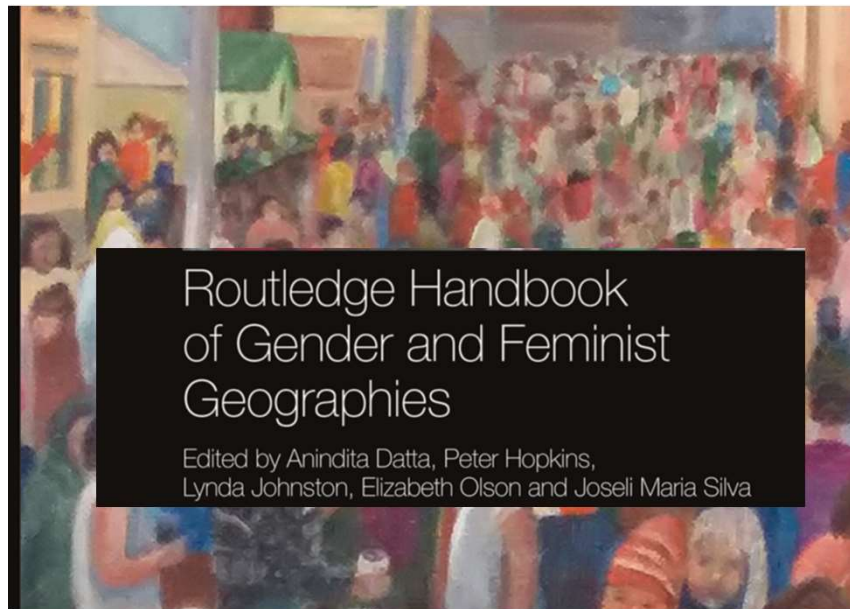
Share of female editors and authors of geography handbooks published 2009-2019



Schurr Carolin, Müller Martin & Imhof Nadja (2020) Who makes geographical knowledge? The gender of Geography's Gatekeepers. *The Professional Geographer* 72, 317-331.

# Transformation 1

## Constructing networks of differently situated knowledge production



- Intention was to reduce the dominance of Anglo-American and European Western knowledge circulation and show diversity of voices and perspectives
- The editors of the handbook are from India, the UK, New Zealand, the USA and Brazil
- Feminist & gender geographers were invited to contribute, and, wherever possible, to co-author with others, such as established, or new and emerging scholars, students, activists, community groups and artists
- The Handbook has 48 chapters written by 100 authors from 18 countries

## Transformation 2

### Addressing differences in nodes of localized knowledge production

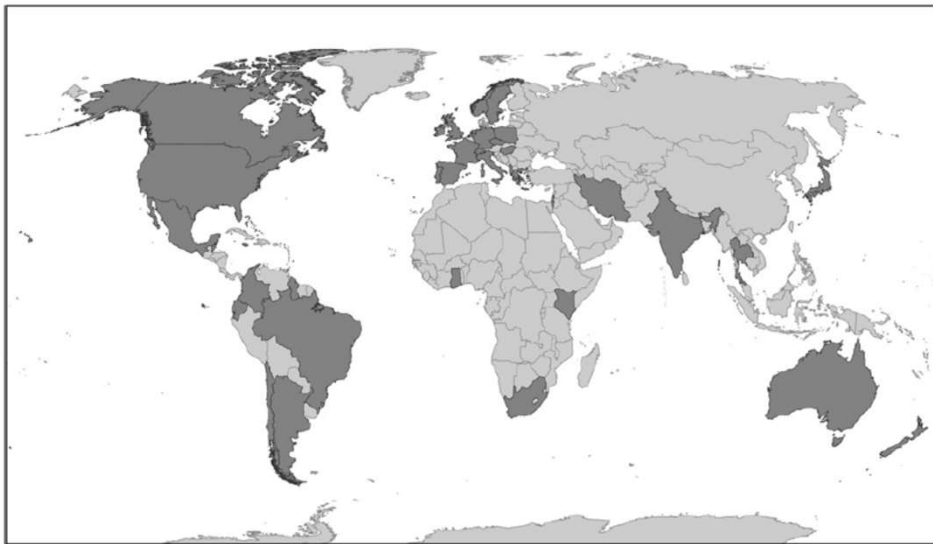


Figure 1. Map of contributing author's countries (cartographer: Trina King, Wilfrid Laurier University).

Marianne Blidon & Sofia Zaragocin (2019) Mapping gender and feminist geographies in the global context. *Gender, Place & Culture* 26 (7-9): 915-925.

39 country reports included in the special issue celebrating the 25th anniversary of the journal *Gender, Place, and Culture*

Asia (8) Hong Kong, India, Israel, Iran, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand

Africa (3) Ghana, Kenya, South Africa

Europe (16) Albania, Czech Republic, France, Germany and German-Speaking Countries, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, French-speaking Switzerland, The Netherlands, United Kingdom

North America (3): The Anglophone Canada, The Francophone Canada, USA

Oceania (2) Australia, New Zealand/Aotearoa

South America & the Caribbean (7): Argentina, Brazil, The Anglo-Caribbean, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico

# Transformation 3

## Creating new forms of knowledge production & research practice



FIGURE 18. The iceberg. From Community Economies Collective 2001; drawn by Ken Byrne.

Gibson-Graham (2008) argue that the diverse economies research program „is a performative ontological project that builds upon and draws forth a different kind of academics practice and subjectivity.“

In order to make marginalized, hidden, alternative economic activities visible and more real and credible as objects of policy and activism they suggest

1. an ontological reframing based on a performative epistemology rather than a realist or reflexive one
2. a re-reading for difference based on an ethical rather than a structural understanding of social determination
3. a cultivating of creativity based on an experimental rather than critical orientation to research



# Transformation 4

## Creating new forms of research practice & knowledge presentation



<https://www.fotocommunity.de/photo/kalbender-gletscher-lichtschattensucher/37771475>

- Doing participative activist research together with those affected (e.g. Pierre et al. 2020)
- Doing research on indigenous, amateur, folk knowledge (e.g. Endfield & Morris 2012 on amateur meteorology)
- Using innovative research methods such as storytelling, narrative, literatur, and the visual art (e.g. Carey et al. 2016 on research in glaciology or Marston et al 2020 on felt politics of climate change)
- Using experimental forms of the presentation of knowledge (e.g. Nicolaisen et al. 2021 on transforming astrophysics in a planetarium)

*„ ... approaching ice through feeling and affect, emotional response, sense of place, the personal and the intimate, kinship and family rather than through the attributes and characteristics of the dominant masculinist scientific glaciology often characterized by control, prediction, ice penetration, measurment, and quantification.“ (Carey et al. 2016)*

## Transformation 5

# Targeted placing of feminist studies at conference venues



Les Emibois 1988

Location of Women/Gender/Feminist Studies conference venues is important (Pereira 2022)

Strategic places with high authority make an event more significant, so do not choose corridors or rooms of ,some university somewhere‘.

Prestigious conference places with high value atmosphere affects peoples experience of the knowledge exchange and the personal/collective identities and relations constructed through it.

Places which are ,meaningful‘ for the localized academic community make more ,important‘ people to attend.

# Transformations 6

## Placing Feminist Geography at the Book Shelf



Librarians, booksellers, archivists have a key function in determining whose knowledge is recognized, read and cited

Books establish sisterhood across time and space and these relationships can be especially nourishing for women, gender, feminist colleagues working in conditions of individualised institutionalisation.

*Pereira Maria do Mar (2022) A shelf of one's own and a room with good views: the importance of place in negotiations of the status of feminist scholarship. Gender, Place & Culture 29, 983-1008.*

# Transformations 7

## Practicing Fieldwork as a mother



Experiences in the field as well as data collected are shaped by gender, caring obligations, sex/uality, dis/ability etc.

Motherhood changes risk evaluations while on fieldwork (Hart 2020)

Fieldwork accompanied by children is logistically challenging as well as enabling the breaking down of barriers (Jenkins 2020)

Doing fieldwork while leaving children at home needs a lot of emotion work and juggling time logistics (Jenkins 2020)

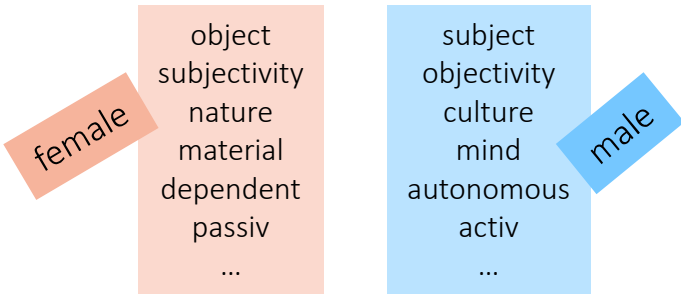
# 4. Re/Conceptualisations of the Human/Society/Culture – Nature - Divide in feminist research

## Feminist Science Studies

critiques the dualistic conceptions that form the basis of modern science

## Ecofeminism

emphasises the need to empower women because of their closeness to nature



considers the interdependency of agency of humans and non-humans

## Feminist New Materialism

## Feminist Political Ecology

analyses the gendered power relations in the appropriation and exploitation of nature under capitalism

Bauriedl & Hoinle (2021)  
Bosworth (2020)  
Gibson-Graham (2011)  
Strüver & Marquard (2021)  
Waitt & Campell (2020)

# Transformations 8

## Embodied aspects of working in the field

The acceptance of women into the world of men is evident from the washing line



De Nationale Geologiske Undersøgelser for Danmark og Grønland (GEUS) (2013): Vi, de jordbundne. Glimt at GEUS gennem 125 år (1888-2013). København: Klima-, Energi- og Bygningsministeriet.

- Data collection & analytical methods are increasingly intrusive / destroying in physical geography (Fleischmann & Meyer-Hanschen 2005)
- Although fieldwork in physical geography is an obvious site of 'hyper-masculinity', it gives women pleasures too (Bracken & Mawdsley 2004)
- As management of menstruation / performance of menstrual etiquette is extremely difficult while on remote Antarctic fieldwork, suppression injections are considered quite often as the primary strategy of women (Nash 2023)
- If young researchers encounter bodily limitations in the field they typically jeopardize their health for the sake of their research (Jokinen & Caretta 2016)

## 5. Conclusions

### Feminisms transformations of geographical research

- Cooperation of scholars with diverse knowledges is high in feminist geography, however, anglo-centric feminist geography still dominates in the discussions (Zaragocin 2021) and diversity of knowledges does not necessarily translate into teaching (Jokela-Pansini & Wintzer 2023)
- Cooperative forms of knowlegde production that include active participation in the struggle against oppression have a long tradition in feminist geography, while collaborations between science and art in the production and presentation of knowledge are only just beginning.
- Rooms with good atmosphere and ‚long bookshelves‘ are important in negotiations of the status of feminist scholarship.
- Fieldwork is extremely attractive to women, we need to better preparing our PhD students and postdocs for health issues that can occur in certain research areas or be exacerbated in certain regions.
- There is still an open discussion about the relationship to nature associated with modern data collection and analytical methods in physical geography.

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

# GENDERed INNOVATION inSPACE

How feminist perspectives transformed research in Geography