

1: Action Record - Women's struggles and strategies

Pergamon Press Ltd. FEMINISM IN THE NETHERLANDS¹2 PETRA DE VRIES Prinsengracht , KH Amsterdam, The Netherlands Synopsis--In the first part of this article the author gives some background information about Holland and analyses the beginnings of modern feminism in terms of theories and consciousness.

Yet while defining prostitution as "sex work" implies entitlements, it also glosses over gendered inequality, writes Petra de Vries. Can the abolitionist arguments of the nineteenth century provide the basis for an alternative? In , two American women issued a shocking report about the living conditions of prostitutes who served the soldiers of the British Army in India. All of them were confined in secluded areas and subjected to compulsory medical treatment for venereal disease. Other abuses occurred as well. Soon the report became known among European feminists. Virtually all of them considered prostitution a terrible evil, an archetypical form of sexual subordination of the entire female sex. When the report about the British Army came out in a Dutch translation, its front page showed a picture of a submissive-looking Indian woman who was being kept in chains. It is clear that she does not need anyone to tell her what to do. How do these images reflect different feminist positions in debates on commercial sexuality and how do they reflect political and legal changes? The Netherlands is a particularly interesting case since the ban on brothel-keeping, which existed since , was abolished in . It is remarkable that not only Dutch brothels were among the first in Europe to become legalised, but also both the prohibition in the past and the current legalisation in the Netherlands were partly embedded in a feminist agenda to improve the lives of women in the trade. Prostitution is a complex and contested issue for professional historians as well as for feminists today. Not surprisingly this has an effect on the perspectives and interpretations of the historian who studies feminist political discourses around prostitution. My reading of the sources has been informed by two interrelated perspectives. Firstly " and this may seem obvious " the particular social meaning of the prostitution contract and the institution of prostitution as such vary according to historical and cultural circumstances. However, much depends on the conditions in which a specific commercial sexual transaction takes place. However, with the rise of modern democratic nations, prostitution and the state become entangled in a new web of relations. It is within this context that feminist ideas on prostitution originate and solidarities are built. Moreover, although considered immoral in most historical periods in the Netherlands, in the second half of the nineteenth century " the main period this article focuses on " prostitution becomes more and more loaded with meanings about femininity. Nineteenth century state policies on prostitution will be the subject of the first section of this article. The last section is devoted to a discussion of the feminist legacy from the past and the re-emergence of prostitution politics during the so-called second wave. Public women and public policy: Abolitionism originated in England around and will be forever connected with the name of its charismatic leader Josephine Butler. To understand the feminist position within the wider abolitionist movement, the Dutch regulation of prostitution and its assumptions about gender will be discussed first. According to the law, adult men and women could engage in commercial sexual exchanges, but neither men nor women under age should be allowed to visit or work in brothels. New methods of policing prostitutes did indeed develop. In France and the Netherlands this usually included some form of registration of prostitutes by the police and a set of rules about the conditions for getting and keeping a license. Hence it was a municipal affair; some cities had sanitary regulations while others never implemented them. Most regulations were introduced in the period between and around , after the promulgation of the Gemeentewet municipal law in , although the system had already operated in some cities on and off before that. Allowing for local laws and social mores, the sanitary regulations in various European countries were basically similar. Fighting venereal disease by a police des mœurs or a Sittenpolizei " to use the French and German terms " involved drastic measures that infringed upon the lives of women who were considered as outcasts and labelled as prostitutes. Although the system in Dutch cities was relatively loose compared to notorious places such as Paris or Berlin, policemen could pick up women from the streets and handle them according to what police rules prescribed, or worse. State regulation of prostitution is extensively documented by an ever-growing number of historians who unequivocally have pointed to the bad treatment of prostitutes

under an all-male medical police. This view of male victimisation, and the resulting focus on the protection of the male citizen was part of a culture that feared licentious female sexual behaviour in general. A whole range of legal and political texts was permeated by a deep suspicion of female sexuality. Prostitutes were women who apparently acted independently from male control. This might have reflected their actual circumstances, since many prostitutes were in a transitory stage of life as relatively young women who were no longer dependent daughters and not yet or not any longer dependent wives. Just as the father possessed marital power and exercised control over his wife and daughters in the family, the state should exercise control over the public woman. Without such powers, it is impossible to exercise police supervision. The role of the state in sanitary inspection was hotly debated between the 18th and the early twentieth century. A wide variety of groups and individuals contributed to this debate, notably male abolitionists, socialists, liberal doctors, politicians, neo-Malthusians, sexologists and so on. In nearly all debates ideas about gender were of central concern making the prostitution struggle also a struggle about the proper, improper or inevitable gender arrangements in the new democratic state. Feminists shared a vision but also developed their own ideas on prostitution in interaction with all those other voices, creating different views of the matter, depending on the political and social roots of their advocates. For the sake of clarity I will distinguish between an earlier and a later period of feminist thought, roughly corresponding to different approaches to what was seen as a common problem. This usually included a kind of civilisation programme to turn former prostitutes into decent housewives or servants, as well as teachings about how one could be saved by the word of the Gospel. Outside her asylum she was also quite active. Around 1840, she organised together with a German colleague, Bertha Lungstrasz from Bonn, a big meeting about rescue work in Rotterdam which was attended by a quite astonishing number of six hundred women. Pessimistic about the possibilities of rescue, she showed compassion for prostitutes and despised their sin at the same time. Perhaps for this very reason, she deserved pity. The founders and main force behind the union were the remarkable sisters Anna van Hogendorp and Marianne Klerck-van Hogendorp, daughters from a well-known aristocratic family whose male offspring traditionally belonged to the elite of influential civil servants at the highest governmental levels. Anna and Marianne van Hogendorp built forth on the female tradition of rescue work but the union itself aimed to be a more political organisation. The establishment of the union was also an act of emancipation in itself since the first abolitionist group in the Netherlands – the Nederlandsche Vereeniging tegen de Prostitutie Dutch Society against Prostitution, founded in 1840 – was an all-male organisation and reluctant to include women in its ranks. The latter was a euphemistic way of saying that men alone could not run the state, so they needed a helping hand. Instead it advocated a single moral standard for both sexes, as every abolitionist and feminist would repeat over and over again for the next 20 years or so. Why could men not be chaste like women? Sisterhood, however, was a complicated affair. Most feminists and prostitutes were separated by a great gulf of class, pity, social distance and a motherly attitude on the part of the former. The metaphor of motherhood – mothers reaching out to daughter-prostitutes – was an important element of the political identity of the leading members of the union. The idea of universal sisterhood, then, was essentially embodied as a bourgeois moral mother. Love, labour and the vote: What these women distinguished from their religious sisters was, among other things, their voice. Loudly, clearly and angrily they conveyed their feelings about the existence of prostitution and regulation. That something like this actually existed! A legitimate system that explicitly was organised to protect men who, just for the sake of their sexual needs, could buy women, as objects, as toys! This idea dated as far back as to at least Mary Wollstonecraft. For example the prostitution question became an integral part of the fight for female citizenship and the vote. Now let us turn our attention to one of the early meetings of the Nationale Vrouwenraad van Nederland Dutch National Council of Women which highlights some specific aspects of the feminist critique. The meeting was held in 1844. Four lectures were delivered. This was a sign of the growing sisterhood between widely different groups of women and an indication that resistance against regulation and prostitution in general constituted one of the binding forces among them. Poverty, low wages and exploitation forced women into prostitution. The appalling conditions of the working class made things worse, especially the bad housing situation which caused the whole family, often together with extra boarders, to sleep all in one room. The argument about the housing conditions was a new theme, showing the typical

phenomenon that prostitution and other morality issues could easily be adapted to fit a wide range of social critique. Also the growing interest among feminists in education and the role of mothers simmered through in her argument. In order to try to catch a man they had to give in to male sexual demands. She had been on the side of the abolitionists for a long time now; however, as a woman she was not supposed to join the all-male medical debates on prostitution. Medical opinion about sexuality, venereal disease and public health was a main building block of regulation. However, pro-regulationist doctors were increasingly challenged by abolitionist and other medical men who tried to undermine their claims. It was in part a technical discussion about contagion and germs. By , the belief in the effectiveness of regulation to combat venereal disease was eroded as it became clear that contagion could not be prevented by sanitary inspection. However, much more than just strictly medical issues were at stake here. Men who could not or would not control their sexual urges the very ground for regulation were in her eyes morally weak and sick. This argument was typical. In the discourses of Jacobs and other feminists, cultural notions of femininity and masculinity changed roles: Jacobs was not the only woman who used her medical authority to promote the feminist cause. A German woman whose name is not known expressed what many feminists at the time would probably see as a good joke: One could argue that she “like many other radicals of the period” projected a future in which a reformed heterosexual bond was the central social unit, the cornerstone of society. The key words were love and equality. The law of and its repeal: Yet their ideas and actions were part of the big wave that turned the tide of the liberalist view of prostitution. On the level of law and governmental politics, the circumstances around were quite favourable for abolitionism to broaden its demands. The regulation system was besieged from inside and outside or fell into disuse. Brothels, it was argued, could only exist if there was a traffic in women and vice versa. It was not that feminists believed that brothel-keeping would in itself end prostitution, but like many others they agreed that at least the exploitation of women in brothels which Jacobs also had vividly described in her lecture in would be put to an end, together with the horror of traffic in women. That these suppressive policies would be effective was a mere utopia. This had already become clear when the bordellos in Amsterdam were closed in . The prohibition of brothel-keeping, then, must be seen as a mere symbolic victory. For a progressive minority that disagreed with liberal state policies it signified the end of a state that condoned men to pursue their sexual needs at the expense of exploited women.

2: Feminism in the Netherlands - Wikipedia

Today's approach to prostitution in the Netherlands reflects the currency of the concept of "agency" advocated by feminists since the s. Yet while defining prostitution as "sex work" implies entitlements, it also glosses over gendered inequality, writes Petra de Vries.

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: What does research about female aggression among song sparrows have to do with breast cancer support groups? Reading *Feminist Science Studies: A New Generation* will answer that question. What connects these studies is a dedication to at least three interrelated questions and issues: These questions mark out well-known territory and may sound familiar enough to scholars of feminism and epistemology. But what is exciting is that the field now increasingly referred to as "feminist science studies" is attracting a wide variety of new researchers who put epistemological conceptions about the construction of "nature" into practice in their own disciplines and fields of research. Not surprisingly, the contributors to this anthology are to some extent aliens in their home disciplines. They all do away with accepted notions of objectivity and ideals of value-freedom in science, embracing, instead, multidisciplinary approaches and boundary crossing. This is especially evident in the first part of the book, "Undisciplined Identities: Forging Knowledge Across Borders," in which we encounter among the contributors a "dual citizen," an "oxymoron," an "insider-outsider," and a "resident-alien. For example, biologist Banu Subramaniam describes how she came to view her work differently through collaborating with textual critic Michael Witmore on a rhetorical analysis of her research on flower color variation in morning glory populations. At the conclusion of the project they isolated two "rhetorical junctures" , 92 , among them an allegory of race and multiculturalism associated with flower color. Her astonishment at what her history as a person and as a scientist contributed to her scientific inquiries led her to declare: *Transforming Disciplines from Within*," encompasses articles that not only deconstruct existing models and methodologies of science for instance, "Rereading Geology" but also make an effort to expand feminist perspectives, methods, and theories. Michelle Elekonich, in her studies of female-to-female aggression among song sparrows, challenges not only the male-centered paradigm inherent in this research but also the simple male-female duality that might be suggested by an unreflective feminist perspective. She points out that she expected her under-researched female birds to be different not only for biological reasons, but also "simply because they were females" Kasi Jackson comes to similar conclusions in connection with her study of a particular fish species. She points out that rather than reversing sex role conventions and focusing on under-researched females with "male" traits, one should rather question the assumptions underlying gender based representations of the natural world in general. Whoever believes that culture influences only animal behavior studies should read "Sexy Science," in which author Phoebe Lostroh criticizes the masculine mode of thinking inherent even in work on cells and molecules. The third and fourth sections also reflect a sociological and philosophical approach that treats science as a phenomenon functioning within an entire cultural, political, and linguistic set of relations. In these sections, contributors deal with implementing feminist science studies in the academy and with reintegrating science, community, and action. The reader will find here useful You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

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Feminism in the Netherlands began as part of the first-wave feminism movement during the 19th century. Later, the struggles of second-wave feminism in the Netherlands mirrored developments in the women's rights movement in other Western countries.

Starika Foreword [Page vi] This fascinating study by Dr. Philomena Essed of the University of Amsterdam promises to break new theoretical ground in research on African-descent women in Western high-technology societies. It is an interdisciplinary analysis of gendered social constructions of racism as experienced by samples of African-descent women in the United States and in the Netherlands. *Understanding Everyday Racism* is a revised version of Dr. Her ideas about racism as experienced by African-American women are just as illuminating. I hope that what Dr. Throughout history there have been people subscribing to racist beliefs, but there have also been oppositional groups. This book represents oppositional views of Black women. It reports results of a cross-cultural investigation of racism. I have analyzed reconstructions of reality gathered in interviews conducted with African-American women in California and with Black Surinamese women—first-generation immigrants in the Netherlands. Whereas most other studies of racism have a macro orientation, little attention has been paid to its everyday manifestations. The experienced reality of racism one finds in novels or autobiographies of Black authors is hardly visible in the social sciences. This study examines crucial, but largely neglected, dimensions of racism: How is racism experienced in everyday situations? How do Blacks recognize covert expressions of racism? What knowledge of racism do Blacks have, and how is this knowledge acquired? Through the accounts of Black women about their daily racial experiences, this study problematizes and reinterprets many of the meanings and everyday practices the majority has come to take for granted. A general feature of these societies is the fact that the superiority of Euro-American culture is taken for granted. Although in many of these countries the language of cultural tolerance suggests increasing equality among different racial and ethnic groups, this is not the case. On the contrary the idea of tolerance is inherently problematic when applied to hierarchical group relations. This will be illustrated by examples from the Netherlands, where tolerance is generally assumed to be a prevailing national attitude. Racism not only operates through culture, it is also the expression of structural conflict. Individuals are actors in a power structure. Power can be used to reproduce racism, but it can also be used to combat racism. This study shows how power, operative in everyday situations, perpetuates racial and ethnic oppression. Note, however, that I focus on racist practices, not on individuals. Although individuals are the agents of racism, my concern is practices and their implications, not the psyche of these individuals. This study examines more specifically racism among Whites with higher education. This is important when we assume that, the more opportunities people have to gain information about racism and the more authority they have by virtue of their social positions, the more responsible they are for the racist implications of their practices. Dominant group members are, however, generally inclined to deny racism. Therefore, the definition of the situation, and more specifically who defines whether situations are racist, is at the heart of this study. These questions are addressed through an analysis of the knowledge and perceptions of Black women. This book is a reworking of a Ph. Because of space limitations I had to cut out, in this commercial edition, pages of the text. As a result some of the technical details of the methodological underpinning of this study could not be included. For those who are really interested in seeing more of it, however, I indicate in the text, at relevant points, those places where additional material is available which, upon request, can be obtained from me. This study is part of an ongoing project on Black perceptions of Whites, which I started in the beginning of the s. I reported on this subject, among others, in my book *Everyday Racism*, which first appeared in Dutch and recently in English Hunter House, [Page ix]California, *Everyday Racism* is tuned to a general public. It combines minimal theory with a maximum amount of real-life stories. Readers who are not familiar with race relations theory may want to read that book first as an introduction to the notion of everyday racism. *Understanding Everyday Racism* is for advanced readers. The project reported here is the result of five years of additional research and writing — *Understanding Everyday Racism* presents a theory and analysis of the

concept of everyday racism. The writing was, obviously, a solitary activity, but the project itself was very much a collective effort. The generous cooperation of Black women enabled me to obtain unusually detailed data about racism. I am profoundly grateful to the women—“their names cannot be mentioned”—who gave their time and reconstructed their experiences, which form the empirical basis of this study. I am sure many of them will read this study. I hope I have done them justice. Throughout the years many people have encouraged me in my study and writing and I can here acknowledge my indebtedness to only some of them, doing so more or less chronologically. It dramatically changed my views of, as well as my relation to, the social sciences. Support for the completion of this study has come from many sources in the Netherlands and in the United States. Henk Heeren encouraged me to persevere when initially it seemed almost impossible to acquire financial support for the project, given the sensitivity of the topic and the fact that racism is generally denied in the Netherlands. I deeply appreciate the financial contribution of the Mama Cash Foundation for the completion of the project in the United States. Further I am grateful for the financial support of the Ministry of Education and Science and the University of Amsterdam for allowing me to complete the analysis of some problems that emerged from the data when the project was nearly finished. I thank the University of California, San Diego, for allowing me to use their facilities during my stay. I owe him many many thanks for his generous hospitality, for giving his precious time to discuss with me a range of interview techniques, and for providing me with much needed background information about the California area. I also benefited from talks with Hugh Mehan, whose questions [Page x]and views about my research were very stimulating. They invited me to their meetings, discussed my work with me, and generally gave me the feeling that I was welcome. I owe an invaluable debt to Chris Mullard. His comments on my work have been challenging and very inspiring. Doing the interviews is always the nice part of the job; transcribing is a completely different matter. I feel deep gratitude and respect for Micky Victorina, who, on her own, did a perfect job on the transcriptions of all the Dutch interviews. Sharon Belden has been a great help in correcting my English. She took over a great deal of the administrative work involved in the completion of this study. I am grateful for the encouragement I received from many friends. Special thanks are due to Glenn Willemsen, who was not only a colleague but also like a brother. I have very much enjoyed our discussions about research and politics. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the contributions of the students in my courses on women and racism at CRES. Their questions and suggestions about the nature of racism in the Netherlands have made teaching a very stimulating challenge. I am also indebted to my family, in particular my parents, for equally encouraging daughters and sons when study and career were concerned. My mother, Ine Corsten, and my friend Kitty Lie have been supportive in a very special way. I have learned, and I am still learning, from their outspoken views on justice and injustice. There are no words to express my gratitude to Teun van Dijk. I could not have been more fortunate than to have a partner who knew my work well enough to be a severe critic as well as a staunch supporter. Positive feedback has made the project a pleasant and inspiring one, despite the fact that it deals with a serious problem. I hope the perceptions of the Black women reported in this study are useful for all of us, Black and White, who feel responsible for creating a qualitatively better society. References [Page] Aalberts, M. University Press of America. *Journal of Social Issues*, 39 3 , 69—“ Klachten over racisme, discriminatie en extreemrechtse organisaties [Complaints against racism, discrimination, and extreme right organisations] January 12, June 30, Performance and ethnic style in job interviews. Complexities in the midst of a simplistic world view. *Journal of Black Studies*. University of California Press. Onderwijs onderzoek in Nederland: Ethnicism in social science? Centre for Race and Ethnic Studies. The nature of prejudice. Original work published Amin, S. The experiences of Black girls in Britain. The psychology of ordinary explanations of social behaviour. Explanations, communication and social cognition. *Research on ordinary explanations*. Essays on race, sex, and class in American history. University of Massachusetts Press. *Essays in the history of the American Negro*. The social animal 3rd ed. The Dutch plural society.

4: Project MUSE - Feminist Science Studies: A New Generation (review)

Josephine Butler and the Making of Feminism: international abolitionism in the Netherlands () Petra De Vries

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5: Petra De vries - Rotterdam, Netherlands (books)

Petra de vries Abstract In the first part of this article the author gives some background information about Holland and analyses the beginnings of modern feminism in terms of theories and.

6: Reader - History of Gender and Class in Europe

Petra De Vries The history of Dutch abolitionism within the wider international context highlights the complex relationship between abolitionism and feminism. Feminism and abolitionism were intricately related, both playing a central role in discourses about sexuality and the State in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

7: Feminist debates and prostitution politics in the Netherlands

Petra De Vries Correspondence p.a international abolitionism in the Netherlands () the rise of evangelical feminism in the Netherlands and its.

8: SAGE Books - Understanding Everyday Racism: An Interdisciplinary Theory

Dutch feminists (renÅ©e hoogland, Petra de Vries and Iris van der Tuin) discuss shifts in feminist theory from the vantage point of their own generational location.

9: Feminism in the Netherlands | Revolvly

de Vries, Petra () 'The Shadow of Contagion: Gender, Syphilis and the Regulation of Prostitution in the Netherlands ', pp. 44 - 60 in R. Davidson and L. Hall (eds) Sex, Sin and Suffering: Venereal Disease and European Society Since

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