

Summaries:

Bala, Elisabeth: Vampires and Androgynes. Aphorisms on Women's Images in Advertising and Fashion photography.

Using a 1924 advertisement for the vacuum cleaner "Vampyr" as a starting point, this pictorial and textseries satirically documents the changed roles of men and women in advertising and fashion photography up to the present. Its remarkable conclusion being that men have been having fun cooking, living environmental-consciously, and being luxury-oriented ... that is, at least since 1995!

Benzing, Elisabeth/Bocka, Andrea/Schmihing, Patricia: On-line - Lesbian Life-Forms.

This article deals with lesbian life-forms as gleaned from interviews with eight women ranging from the ages of 28 to 42. The interviews are done in a non-structured manner, often dealing not only with actual life-situations but also with expectations for the future, with some women taking stock of their sexuality and what it has meant for them to come-out to relatives and friends. Problems with disguised and undisguised discrimination are discussed and individual strategies for coping with these are shared. In all the interviews, the paramount survival strategy seems to be the great value put on the women's friendships with other women and the network of relationships they have built for themselves.

Krüger, Dorothea: Living Alone - from Half-a-Life to Having-it-All.

The author concerns herself with women's single lives on two levels. On the one hand, she emphasizes the change in attitudes towards living alone as life-form from the 50's to the present through an analysis of the current discourse in mass media, education, and social science. On the other hand, on the basis of a qualitative-empirical study on 30- to 40-year old, single, childless women she delineates how they shape and evaluate their single lives for themselves. Her conclusion is positive despite all the difficulties and discrimination that single women still experience. "Living alone has become a self-evident alternative to a selfless, sexless, only-the-development-of-others supporting single person who does not lay claim to a life of their own."

Meyer, Sibylle/Schulze, Eva: Women in the Modernization Trap.

The pressure for change that young women force onto their marriages and families depend most of all on their attitudes towards their careers. As a result, demographic data has been changing in the areas of willingness to marry, fertility, and willingness to obtain divorce. Other life-forms besides that of the traditional family are also gaining ground: non-conjugal living arrangements (with or without children), single-parent families, single and communal households. Viewing the daily lives of mothers, two aspects come to focus: child-care and the activities that go together with it are becoming more complicated and costly; the time that is spared by mechanization of certain tasks must be invested in other household activities. The employment of women has not spared them from duties within the household and often only the assistance from grandparents makes this "balancing" possible. The slight relief that women experience on the whole results in the postponement or total relinquishment of child-bearing.

Notz, Gisela: "Leit-?-Bild" Family - the Ideal Image of the Family.

The image of the traditional nuclear family is still elevated by national policies, in ideologies, and even from representatives of Family Sociology. The many signs of change are bewailed upon as value- and stability-loss. The division of labor between man and woman, particularly for rearing and problem-solving tasks, has proven to be the most assiduous element of the family. Reconciling family with career remains the women's problem alone, not the men's. However pressure for change towards new life-forms is coming mainly from the women. They are creating networks of friends and relatives out of which they find resources.

Ostner, Ilona: Female Life-Forms and German Social Policy.

Welfare states intervene in two ways in self-actualization processes of women - in the freedom to secure their own incomes and in fulfilling child-caring duties within their own families. In Europe, Germany belongs to the states that follow the model of "a dominant nourisher and intensive family bonding". The woman is dependent on the man's income through her attachment to the family, whereas on the other hand, the woman is spared her social duties through a stronger commitment on the part of the state for the care of needy dependents. The thesis of the feminisation of poverty is, after massive shifts in the social structure, now "only" true for single mothers.

They are either forced into full-time or precarious jobs or run a high poverty-risk. On the whole, the course of German women's careers over time is characterized by high family-centeredness with all the negative consequences for their pension payments in comparison with those of the men. In conclusion, a cross-country analysis of various European states is offered, comparing the benefits offered to women who wish to opt out of marriage and/or career.

Rupp, Marina: Female Life-Change - Life-Designs of Young Women as Seen from Non-marital Conjugal Relationships.

The author describes in which dimensions, how and from which social groups non-marital, conjugal relationships are used as an alternative method of shaping life-design. Her analysis is based on a longitudinal analysis of data from 900 young, unmarried couples in Bavaria. The questions that point to whether these relationships are merely a variant of female life-design and/or whether they mark the path to a new standard itself are pivotal to the interviews. For most of the women these relationships have become an accepted transitional phase, a "way-station" on the path to a traditionally conceived family life. While this life-phase is taken advantage of by many women, since it offers greater free-space and possibilities to shape life-design such as economic- and career-autonomy, that take for granted the support of partners in the household, it still remains basically limited to the phases of education and training and the consolidation of the relationship.

Schmitz-Köster, Dorothee: Living apart together - A New Life-Form for Emancipated Women?

To accept being a pair and still live apart in separate households seems to be a new life-form that mostly women favor. The motives are heterogeneous: LAT-relationships may be unwilling adaptation to specific career and work-market demands or decisions made willingly in face of conscious career orientation. Some wish to avoid, prevent, and omit problems in their pair relationships through more distance, others hope to more consciously care for their relationships through separate daily lives. LAT-relationships create free-space and explode old role models but are arduous since they bring with them time- and success-pressures for being together. Perhaps it is the feeling of living an experiment with constant change, a lot of being-on-the-road that prompts many to live-out this new life-form for the short-term as a transitional phase towards the pair household or a single life.