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Heiner Fangerau  
The new president of the EAHMH

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# EAHMH NEWSLETTER

## A word of introduction from the President

In the name of the Scientific Board, it gives me great pleasure to introduce our new newsletter which we intend to publish at least twice a year. This first issue, which has been put together by Jonathan Simon our treasurer, includes a report on our recent and very successful EAHMH Conference in Lisbon organized by Laurinda Abreu, whom we thank for all her fantastic work. It also includes contributions by the winners of the EAHMH 2013 student and book prizes. However, in the newsletter we would like to reach out beyond our own activities and address issues that are of general concern for our field. Thus, I have taken advantage of my contribution to inform you about a dramatic affair affecting

the history of medicine in Switzerland. Finally, if you go to the end of this newsletter, you will find an appeal for contributions aimed at bringing this newsletter to life and making it a sustainable forum for our Association.

First, a few words of introduction as the new president of the EAHMH. My name is Heiner Fangerau and I hold the chair for "History, Philosophy and Ethics of Medicine" at Ulm University, a small city in the South of Germany between Stuttgart and Munich. My PhD was on the German "Racial-Hygiene-Movement", and my post-doctoral thesis treated the development of biomedicine and biomedical ethics

at the beginning of the 20th century around the example of the German-American physiologist Jacques Loeb (1859-1924). My main research interests include the shaping of medicine as a life science around 1900.

Here I am concentrating on questions of the transfer of knowledge and scientific networks. Additionally, I am working on questions related to the evolution of medical diagnostics and medical imaging. I am a member of the editorial boards of the *Medizinhistorisches Journal*, *Sudhoffs Archiv*, *Medicine Studies* and the *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*.

## EAHMH Conference, Lisbon 4-7 September 2013

This year the EAHMH conference was held at the National Public Health School in Lisbon, an event organized by the University of Évora in collaboration with the University of Lisbon. More than one hundred papers covering a wide range of subjects

were presented and discussed under the title of *Risk and Disaster in Health and Medicine*. The strategies developed to cope with risk and disasters form the core of public health and medical philosophy, a view confirmed by the papers pre-

sented in Lisbon. Among other subjects, there were panels on the concepts of risk, risk management policies and innovation and risk assessment. The programme is still available via the following link (see 'detailed programme'):

<http://www.eahmhconference2013.uevora.pt/>



The river cruise—the highlight of so many EAHMH conferences!



Another working lunch. The scientific board meets in Lisbon



Noortje Jacobs winner of the 2013 Pieter van Foreest Student Prize

## The Lisbon Conference (continued)



The keynote speakers were Javier Moscoso (CSIC, Spain), who addressed a privileged theme of medical history on display, Barbra Mann Wall (University of Pennsylvania) and Manuel Valente Alves (University of Lisbon).

At the conference dinner, the 2013 EAHMH Book Prize was awarded to Alun Withey, for his *Physick in the Family: Health, Medi-*

*cine and Care in Wales, c.1600 -1750*, published in 2011 by Manchester University Press.

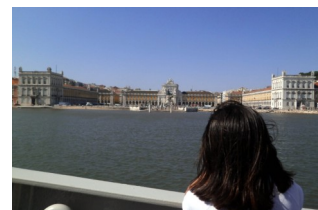
Noortje Jacobs, a PhD student from Maastricht University received the Pieter van Foreest Student Prize for her presentation at the conference on the history of clinical trials in the Netherlands.

The conference ended on Saturday afternoon with a boat trip on the Tagus River. The weather was wonderful, as you can see. We would like to thank all the participants for making this such an enriching experience.

Laurinda Abreu



The reception in the town hall



Lisbon seen from the river

## The 2013 Pieter van Foreest Student Prize

My name is Noortje Jacobs and I have just finished my first year as PhD-student at Maastricht University in the Netherlands. For my PhD-research, I map the changes in regulatory ideals to safeguard the ethical conduct of human experimentation in the Netherlands after WWII.

Whereas the Dutch medical profession could maintain in the 1950s that the traditional Bildung-ideal of internal contemplation and the existence of disciplinary courts were sufficient to guarantee ethical research practices in Dutch hospitals and research clinics, its societal position and cultural identity would undergo a marked change

after the 1960s, resulting in the erection of externally mandated medical-ethics committees and the development of national penal laws.

In my PhD-thesis, I hope to show that this regulatory change was no simple consequence of continuous unethical behaviour on the part of Dutch medical researchers, but rather the result of shifting (and interdependent) conceptions of (a) what counts as good science, (b) the societal responsibilities of a modern medical profession and (c) the type of expertise that is necessary to assess the moral quality of scientific research proposals. I was very pleased to be awarded the Pieter van Foreest student prize at the

EAHMH-conference in Lisbon for my talk on the conceptualization of the notion of risk in relation to human experimentation ('Risk as Moral Obligation') by the Dutch Health Council in the 1950s. The questions and comments of those who came to listen to my talk were helpful and motivating for the continuation of my research. I feel honoured that my work was well received by the European community of medical historians.

*The Pieter van Foreest prize is awarded by the Scientific Board for the best student presentation at the EAHMH conference.*

## The 2013 EAHMH Book Prize by Alun Withey

I am absolutely delighted, and also very honoured, to have been awarded this year's EAHMH book prize. It was a wonderful experience to attend the conference in Lisbon, to meet many members of the Association and its committee, and also to see so many familiar faces. It's an experience I won't forget.

When I wrote *Physick and the Family*, based on my PhD research, its aim was to

be more than the sum of its parts. It is, first and foremost, a book about Wales and Welsh people. It looks at unique Welsh characteristics from the language to the landscape, and charts the effects that these things had upon medical knowledge and practice in Wales. Given the lack of attention paid to Wales it filled an obvious historiographical gap.

But it also uses Wales as an exemplar for wider questions

about the experience of early modern medicine more broadly, and takes Welsh sources to pose new questions about the sickness experience, domestic medicine, poor relief and so on. I always hoped that it would speak to a wider audience and be a work of mainstream, rather than local, history. The award of this prize is a sign that it has achieved this goal.



Alun Withey recipient of the 2013 EAHMH book prize

## Swiss neutrality put to the test - a letter from the President

Dear EAHMH members, dear colleagues,

Some of you might have already heard about the struggles surrounding the institutionalized history of medicine at the University of Zurich in Switzerland. For over a year, the Institute of the History of Medicine and its members have been under pressure. To me, it seems as though political interests have been interfering with scientific interests and questions of academic (and personal) freedom have been raised concerning, for example, the monitoring of e-mail. As one of our colleagues has put it, 'many dark forces' seem to be involved. Putting my personal views to one side, however, I feel my first duty is to inform those unaware of the events in Switzerland in as neutral a manner as possible. Thus, I have decided not to expand on my own interpretation of what is going on in Zurich, but instead relay what has been written by the International Service of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation available on the link [swissinfo.ch](http://swissinfo.ch). Our Gemanophone members can get more background informa-

tion in the online edition of the 'Neue Zürcher Zeitung', and elsewhere. The petition mentioned in the report (which some of you, like me, have already signed) can be found in an English version here:

[www.akademischerprotest.ch](http://www.akademischerprotest.ch).

[swissinfo.ch](http://swissinfo.ch) and agencies November 8, 2013;

"Around 600 academics from around the world have signed a petition asking for the reinstatement of Iris Ritzmann, a University of Zurich professor, after she was sacked amid accusations of giving confidential information to journalists concerning a colleague.

The move comes two days after the resignation of the university's rector, Andreas Fischer, over the affair. Fischer said in a statement that he took "ultimate responsibility" for the situation and that his decision was "in the interest of the university".

Ritzmann, a professor at the university's Institute for the History of Medicine, was dismissed from her position on October 29. She stands

accused of providing confidential documents to the media, detailing criticism of Christoph Mörgeli, the head of the University's Medical History Museum at the time and also a rightwing Swiss People's Party parliamentarian.

The petition, which was printed as an advert in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung newspaper on Friday, claims that she "almost single-handedly maintained scientific standards at the institute over many years and under the most adverse of circumstances". Put together by a group of her academic peers from the Universities of Lausanne, Zurich and Innsbruck, among others, it asks for her reinstatement, for "deeply rooted" problems at the institute to be made public and for an explanation into if and why the Zurich public prosecutor had been given access to university correspondence metadata such as emails. The prosecutor had been called in by the university to investigate Ritzmann for breach of confidentiality."

For more on this affair, please visit the [website](http://website).

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*Philipp Sarasin, a professor of history at the University of Zurich, told Swiss public radio that the situation was already "devastating".*

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## EAHMH

European Association for the  
History of Medicine and Health  
<http://www.eahmh.net/>

### FACEBOOK:

European Association for the  
History of Medicine and Health  
[eahmh@ymail.com](mailto:eahmh@ymail.com)



## The EAHMH and upcoming conferences

The European Association for the History of Medicine and Health (EAHMH) aims to foster research and the international exchange of views on all issues concerning health and medicine in Europe and their connections with the extra-European world.



Membership is open to scholars from a range of academic disciplines and countries. One of our key activities is organizing an international conference on the history of medicine and health. This is held every two years in a different European city.

The next EAHMH conference will be held in Ulm, Germany in 2015.

Meanwhile we are all looking forward to the upcoming Society for the Social History of Medicine Conference in Oxford, 10-12 July 2014. Make a note of the deadline for proposals: 1 January 2014.

For more information visit the [website](#).



## APPEAL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

### EAHMH - scientific board

#### Officers

President - Heiner Fangerau  
Ulm, Germany

Secretary - Jonathan Reinartz  
Birmingham, UK

Treasurer - Jonathan Simon  
Lyon, France

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Laurinda Abreu, Portugal

Astri Andresen, Norway

Iris Borowy, Germany

Octavian Buda, Romania

Anne Hardy, UK

Frank Huisman, Netherlands

Hilary Marland, UK

Fernando Salmon, Spain

Dear EAHMH members, we hope you find this new association newsletter useful and informative. We plan to continue to produce it on a biannual basis. This is too infrequent for it to carry information concerning upcoming conferences and workshops apart from the bi-annual conferences of the EAHMH and SSHM.

Thankfully, this information is available on the EAHMH website as well on the excellent 'The Facebook' page (thanks to our new secretary, Jonathan Reinartz)

What we would really appreciate instead is information concerning appeals for research projects and partnerships around various topics in the history of medicine.

At our last meeting of the scientific board, we agreed that we should relaunch the

'network' initiatives of the EAHMH which had been very successful in the past.

From this perspective the newsletter could serve as a platform for those interested in establishing or widening such networks to communicate their interest to other members (this information would also be available on the association's website).

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we would like reports from different members throughout Europe concerning how they see the state of the history of medicine in their own country or region. For this, we will be approaching individual members, but if you would like to write a report on a city, region or country in Europe, please contact us at the following address:

[eahmh@ymail.com](mailto:eahmh@ymail.com)

While we in the scientific board make every effort to make the association dynamic and responsive, in the end the association is the sum of its members. We have noticed that the membership has dropped off over the past few years. At only 25 euros per year, the fees allow us to pay for student bursaries and to fund the network initiatives. For the members of the board, however, the most important aspect of the membership is not the fees but rather the tangible sign it offers of a European (and even international) community of historians of health and medicine.

Jonathan Simon (treasurer)  
On behalf of the Scientific  
Board of the EAHMH