

Poster Presentation

ATTITUDES ON SOCIAL AND RACIAL CONTROL IN CALIFORNIA

Alicia Villela

The history of the eugenic movement in the United States at the beginning of the twenty century, is a remarkable case study to show how involuntary sterilization of defective persons, particularly in California was used for some eugenicists who were convinced that the future of the United States depended on protecting the "race".

A remarkable number of sterilizations laws were strongly support in the United States and between 1907 and 1960 more than sixty thousand retarded and mentally ill persons were sterilized without their consent, all victims of programs designed to cut off the flow of allegedly defective genes into the nation's pool.

California sterilization program provide a peculiar model for many states in the United States and also for other countries to invoke because more than 6000 operations were performed in its institutions during at least three decades.

This situation changed when a postwar influx of immigrants from all around the world arrived in the United States and then many Americans seemed to feel threatened by the unprecedentedly high number of immigrants. Some eugenicists like Harry Laughlin who was the superintendent of the Eugenic Record Office, Charles Davenport, director of the ERO, Paul Popenoe who was in charge of the California sterilization program and others were active in bringing their genetical arguments to support immigration legislation and linking the hardening of immigrant legislation to the development of the eugenic program in USA.

The California law was introduced in February, 1909 as a bill by Senator W.F. Price of Santa Rosa. It passed the Senate on March 16 th with 21 ayes and 1 no. On march 22th passed the House with 41 ayes and not a single vote record against it. It was finally approved on April 26 th by Government James N. Gillet and became a law on June 25. 1909. California Law like Indiana that was the first state to pass a sterilization measure based upon eugenic principles, it gave institutional physicians broad powers to reviews inmate records and to sterilize those whom they decide would benefit from the procedure.

The California law, the Eugenic Record office gave a list of members to be considered as socially unfit and be possible eliminated from the human stock: the feeble minded, the paupper class, the criminaloids, epilepticos, the insane, the constitutionally wak, those predisposed to specific diseases, the congenitally deformed, those having defective sense organs, such as the deaf generally.

During these years, racial considerations became foremost. Considerable attention was paid to the fact that most of these people were immigrants. With

these sentiments, it was easily enacted the Immigration Restriction Act of 1924. The important feature of the new Law was not only the restriction of immigration to two per cent, but the selection among immigrants which was achieved by reducing the relative proportion of new immigration.

Poster Presentation

AN ANALYSIS OF THE THEORETICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN GENDER AND SCIENCE.

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The aim of this communication is to analyse the theoretical and epistemological implications derived from the question about the androcentric condition of science, based on the idea of objectivity and autonomy of scientific knowledge. This issue will lead us to think about the role that the ideology of gender plays on the construction of science, after considering the elements that characterize its singularity which contribute to determine its identity in relation to other kind of social practices.

Firstly this paper introduces the central ideas of some feminist researchers about the relationships between gender and science. Then these arguments are analysed in relation to some contemporary transformations in physics that lead to reconsider the notions of objectivity and cognoscibility of the physic world, questions that are in the base of the feminist criticism to the androcentric bias of science.

Finally, it is proposed a critical lecture about the role that gender plays on the construction of scientific knowledge. This question can't be reduce to a simple opposition "masculine / feminine science" but its field envisages the study of the complex relationships between mind and nature that are shown in the way that we interrogate our object of study.

Poster Presentation

DOES SCIENCE FIT IN TELEVISION?

Beñar Kortabarria and Elhuyar Fundazioa

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Undoubtedly, if one has enough economic resources, there is not problem. But if those resources, do not exist? We all know that television is an expensive communication medium; nevertheless, the economic factor does not constitute an insurmountable obstacle for the scientific disclosure. Attending to the objectives of reporting, informing and entertaining, we, as the ones who dedicate to the disclosure of science, can have a space in the small screen. The secret is up to knowing how to find an equilibrium among rigorosity and amiability of the contents and, consequently, to adopt an adequate communicative format.

The program called Teknopolis, produced by Elhuyar Fundazioa, complies its sixth season of emission in the Basque public television. It is a weekly program of half an hour dedicated to scientific disclosure. Many of its contents attend to the present time research of the Basque Country, but without forgetting what science gives around the world. The experience of Teknopolis, being already a consolidated program, and the evolution in terms of audience, always raising, takes us to the conclusion that science, really, is of interest for the main public and, consequently, for television.

Poster Presentation

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS COME FACE TO FACE WITH MODERN BIOTECHNOLOGIES IN THE EUROPEAN PROJECT PULSE (PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF LIFE SCIENCE)

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PULSE is a project promoted by three Science Centres (Danish Experimentarium, Portuguese Pavilhao do Conhecimento - Ciencia Viva, and Italian Museo Tridentino di Scienze Naturali) and supported by EU.

A two-day happening on biotechnology was organized in November 2003 during the European Week for Science and Technology for over 300 students within Denmark, Italy and Portugal.

The initiative aimed to identify the most effective activities to apply as informal education tools on life science and allow students to form a personal opinion on the topics discussed.

Participants filled in a [questionnaire](#) both at the beginning and end of the happening: the results were analyzed and students showing the most and least mind changes were interviewed to enlighten the reasons of their answers and collect their feedback on the project.

The project provided interesting insight on the crucial aspects of organizing such an event, in the view of stimulating student critical attitude towards such a controversial problem. It also proved to be an effective tool to bring together experts and students and could prove useful for the diffusion of research project results.

More information and the student's [PULSE web magazine](#) are available at www.experimentarium.dk/dk/pulse and www.mtsn.tn.it/progettispeciali/pulse.html.

Poster Presentation

SPANISH LITERATURE AND SCIENTIFIC POPULARIZATION: HISTORICAL APPROACH (XVI-XVIII)

M^a Dolores González Rodríguez

Before scientific journalism and scientific specialized publications, literature had the role of a primitive popularization of science. The history of the Spanish literature offers interesting examples of an early communication of science through the literary fictions. Literary text are a platform for the scientific communication; three literary genres, Renaissance's dialogues, Baroque burlesque poetry and Enlightenment's essays, typify how was shown the nascent modern Science in literary plays for three centuries.

Literature had an educative and pedagogic role, in the sense of "scientific ideas' bearer". More than being essential in the plot, scientific contents are depicted by literary characters, background ideas and the social prejudices about scientific practices, or the problems with philosophy and ideology.

The study of the literature of this period is a beforehand example of what later will be the scientific popularization and, at the same time, it offers resources for spreading scientific knowledge to a general public. Some of this resources are metaphors, explanatory digressions, technical vocabulary, social problems and utopian thought, prejudices, patriotism and the modern ideas, interest for museums and others cultures, the role of savants in Spanish society – especially doctors, astronomers, mathematicians.

Poster Presentation

SEXUAL IDENTITY WITHOUT CULTURAL DIVERSITY – THE PARADOX OF A PREVENTION CAMPAIGN IN FRANCE.

Eleni Meliou

CERIC; 2004

We present an ongoing research on the interrelation between culture and sexuality by the means of AIDS public campaigns. The focus is set on the common but paradoxical strategy that members of sexually different groups (heterosexual and homosexuals) are addressed by the means of identical communication campaigns. Even though epidemiological studies show that specific publics are the high risk groups, the target group of campaigns often remains the general public.

We examine the mass media public campaigns that were held in France in the year 2000, and analyze how culturally different groups are addressed, in terms of diverging sexual behavior and practice. By the means of situational analysis (Analyse Semio-Contextuelle) on the campaigns' components, the communication strategies for the different groups are compared and checked on their heterogeneity with regard to their target group.

Poster Presentation

IMPACT OF AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT IN A NEW SCIENCE COMMUNICATION DEGREE

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New science communication programs are being established at The University of Western Australia (UWA), including a BSc (Communication Studies) and postgraduate courses. The poster highlights the use of authentic assessment within all aspects of the science communication program.

Relevance is a clear objective of all our assessments and an attempt has been made to make all assessments realistic, useful and reflective of tasks that science communicators do in the workplace. Students have prepared and presented talks about science to both their peers and primary school students, written press releases about current UWA research, designed posters for research groups, produced short digital movies about science, attended and evaluated science seminars and written articles after interviewing researchers.

A key component of all assessments has been reflective: students have been asked to reflect on the worth of all assessments as well as their impact on the student's personal learning. The poster features examples of student work and feedback from reflections concerning student perceptions of the use of authentic assessment. Feedback has also been gained from university and industry staff who have participated in assessments via questionnaires and interviews.

Author CV

Dr Jan Dook

Jan has a background in Human Movement and Exercise Biochemistry that has been transformed into an active role, including development and teaching, within the new Science Communication programs at The University of Western Australia. Based in the Centre of Learning Technology within the Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences, she is also currently the faculty's CATLyst - Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning - and is involved in the introduction of an outcomes focus to the university.

University of Western Australia – <http://www.uwa.edu.au>

Centre for Learning Technology - <http://www.uwa.clt.edu.au>

Dr Nancy Longnecker

Nancy has been a lecturer and research scientist at The University of Western Australia since 1988 working in the areas of plant nutrition, science communication and science education. From 1994- 2000, she coordinated the Education Program of the Cooperative Research Centre for Legumes in Mediterranean Agriculture (CLIMA). She is now based in the Centre for Learning Technology and works in the Science Communication programs.

University of Western Australia – <http://www.uwa.edu.au>

Centre for Learning Technology - <http://www.uwa.clt.edu.au>

Poster Presentation

CHILDREN'S RECOGNITION AND DECISION TO INQUIRED PROBLEMS THROUGH COMMUNICATIONS: A CASE STUDY IN SCHOOL SCIENCE

Hiroki, Fujii

Hiroshima Women's University, Japan

This study is the endeavor to develop the children's scientific inquiry skills in order to be able to apply scientific knowledge to the issues and the problems children encounter when they do something in daily life. In the study, I also attached great importance to the learning process that the children try to recognize and decide inquired problems through their communications. The study developed many learning materials focused on the learning process.

The result of the trial at elementary science lessons for about one year and a half and the evaluation through participant observations and interviews for the children and the teachers showed the following:

- Most of the children discovered and expressed many kinds of simple questions through their encounters with interesting natural objects and phenomena in learning materials.
- Some of the children mastered to raise simple questions to inquired problems through their communications. But the argument about inquired problems isn't easy for the children. It is necessary for teachers to support the argument precisely with considering the children's development of communication skills.
- Most of the children constantly understood inquired problems and promoted reflective thinking on inquiring actions. Moreover, they had a sense of responsibility toward their own science learning.

Poster Presentation

FROM PAPER TO MULTIMEDIA: NEW TOOLS FOR MODERN SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATION

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By examining the history of public communication of science, we can see how new technologies and new media can interact with changes in new communication forms. We can remember examples as known as the first science articles in the 'Gazzete de France', the book 'Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo, tolemaico e copernicano', written by Galileo Galilei in 1632, and the english films of the serie 'Unseen World', in the beginnig of last century.

Now, the digital age arrives with a set of big challenges for traditional mainstream media. In the new scenario, multimedia is the new language, the user becomes the axis of communication process, interactivity is the key and knowledge is the new name of information.

If we represent information and interactivity as a pair of variables, and compare tradicional media (books, press, radio, cinema, television) with the 'new' multimedia, this one can reach the highest values.

In this poster innovative uses of visuals and multimedia will be presented, with a practical example -a multimedia infography development step by step-, to show how scientific communication can take advantage of multimedia tecnologies and help us to identify emerging trends in the promotion of scientific culture.

Poster Presentation

THE TECHNO-SCIENTIFIC IMAGES IN THE GREEK INTER-WAR YOUTH PRESS: THE CASE OF THE AIRPLANE.

Vaios Tsilikas and Michalis Assimakopoulos

(National Technical University Athens)

In this article we examine six youth journals of inter-war Greece, in order to get a picture of the context and the goals of science and technology popularisation at the period.

We claim that the picture gained from the above studies, apart of the ideological differences, is a picture of science and technology as a western ideal, where its utilitarian use prevails from its notion as a means to a new world picture. The scientist is pictured mainly as a sympathetic but idiosyncratic figure, sometimes wise. The techno phobic ideal is also strongly represented.

The journals are definitely in resonance with the ideological fermentations of examined period. The attempts, after the failure of irredentism, to create a new national idea based on a notion of modernity are the major framework of this work.

Poster Presentation

BORGES Y LA CIENCIA: LA ENTONACIÓN DE UNA METÁFORA

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The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of the science present in the literature written by Jorge Luis Borges. This author has a conception of the science similar to the one he has of the philosophy. In his view, both instruments are incapable to account for the world conceived as a labyrinth. Furthermore, our knowledge of it is not objective but rather a production of fantasies. However, the scientific theories have a significant presence in his shorts narratives and essays. Moreover, the borgesian literature deals with the problem of the infinite and the limit, represented for the rationalist philosophy by the paradox. This concept destabilizes the scientific and speculative thought. In conclusion, his texts are not just paradigmatic examples of the way Borges uses the science as a constituent of his literary production, but it serves him to divulge, communicate and reflect about this issue.

Poster Presentation

ETHNOPHARMACOLOGY AND DRUG DISCOVERY

Dr. Francisco Pérez García

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Ethnopharmacology is useful for searching new bioactive drugs. Less than 1% of 300000 higher plants species have been studied and 5% could become extinct by 2050. It is of utmost importance to develop sustainable practices, to implement the Convention of Biodiversity that positions indigenous people as the rightful owners of applications of indigenous plant knowledge and to obtain ethnobiodiversity data about popular use of medicinal plants, since this knowledge is disappearing at a high rate because of accelerated acculturation of the societies and substitution of traditional knowledge, considered inferior, to the so-called modern culture. Therefore, next generations will contribute and share to the knowledge and preservation of a part of the local and global cultural heritage and it will be find out new or rare uses of medicinal plants, which could lead to the used of new plant-derived medicines since many drugs have been discovered from natural sources: quinine, colchicine, digitalis derivatives, morphine, vincristin, etoposide, camptothecin, taxol among many others.

Our laboratory study plants used in the Southamerican traditional medicine for different diseases and we have isolated from *Pluchea sagittalis* by bioguided assay fractionation an active principle with anti-inflammatory activity called taraxasteryl acetate.

Poster Presentation

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTION OF MALE/FEMALE RESEARCHERS IN THE CSIC OF CATALONIA

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Women are under-represented among researchers in Europe and their numbers decrease drastically in higher research positions. In Spain, 53% of university students are women, while only 13% of university Full Professors are female. In the CSIC, the largest governmental research institution in Spain, 32% of permanent researchers are female, 75% of them at the lowest rank. The progress of females into higher positions has been much slower than for males. Our objective was to investigate whether lower scientific productivity was among the reasons for this slow progression. We have considered the data from the 15 CSIC centres located in Catalonia (total researchers, 284). We focused on calculating a 'production rate' during a period of four years, 1999-02, to compare the productivity of male and female at different levels of their career. The sample covers a wide range of fields of knowledge and has a distribution of female and male researchers similar to the whole CSIC. The results highlight that there are no significant differences in the production rates between sexes that could justify the difference in promotion to higher positions. An implementation of measures to correct this situation is mandatory.

Poster Presentation

BROWN DWARFS DO EXIST!

Dra. Carmen del Puerto

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The first “brown dwarfs” known were discovered with the IAC-80 telescope, at the Teide Observatory (Tenerife), by researchers at the Instituto de Astrofísica de Canarias (IAC). Until that moment, brown dwarfs were mere theoretical hypotheses, but their discovery has allowed for great advances in the study of stellar evolution. This poster presents the results of an investigation about the origin of the term “brown dwarf,” in relationship with the nature of these cosmic objects and their effect on the media. *Brown dwarfs* are the missing link in the chain of stellar evolution: not stars or planets, and who knows about dark matter. It is more than a new name, be it correct or not. Similarly to what happened with *black holes*, their scientific relevance resides in their own theoretical notion, and the subsequent proof of their existence. However, the current interest, scientific and of the media, for *brown dwarfs* is not due as much to the inclusion of a new species in the “cosmic zoo,” as to the fact that the discoveries of the first *brown dwarf -Teide 1-* and the first *extrasolar planet -51 PegB-* happened almost simultaneously. Since 1995, the announcements of new planets and *brown dwarfs* follow one another in the media and, in some cases, with significant doubts about whether it is one object or the other.

Poster Presentation

ASTRONOMY AS A SCIENTIFIC MIND SEDUCER

Bibiana Bonmatí Recolons

Instituto de Astrofísica de Canarias

Recent European surveys about science show a scientific vocation crisis. The need to improve the interest in science at a young age requires a extra information, in addition to formal education, in order to motivate the new generations. Astronomy is probably one of the most coloured subjects in science.

Displayed in this poster, is a qualitative analysis of the "special characteristics" of Astronomy used in the mass media to attract the public towards science. Science journalists must to compete with many other news, most of them with hard social

involvement. Moreover they have to do an extra effort to "translate" the scientific terms into a more intelligible words. Behind a great Universe image could be a complex phenomena explanation, that must be rigorously described and, at the same time, understandable by the public. Luckily, in some cases, the writers can play with the language and use some word tricks to approach science to all kind of readers. The outreach of science done out of school is the way to temp the youngest to study sciences. Not only the mass media, also the science museums, the visits to the scientific equipments, like the astronomic observatories, could awake the interest through science. Thanks to its properties, Astronomy continues to be a mind seducer, attracting people to science.

Poster Presentation

THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN NATIVE VISIONARY EXPERIENCES AND COLONIAL SCIENCE IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH-CENTURY TAHITI

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In 1812, the conversion to Christianity of Pomare, king of Tahiti, initiated an irreversible series of changes in the religious and social life of the island. Pomare's conversion was the culmination of a fifteen-year christianizing process initiated by the London Missionary Society, founded in 1797. Nevertheless, the native rejection of the new religion occurred regularly. The most notable was the cult of *mamaia*, initiated in 1827 by two 'apostate Christians,' Teao and Hue, and which propagated rapidly in the Society Islands of Tahiti and Maupiti. The importance of inner revelations, prophetic visions, and the belief in the intercourse with the world of spirits had been deeply rooted within the Tahitian tradition. New was the *mamaia* prophets' attempt to express their visions through Christian themes and imagery. The native 'apostates' desired to contest Christian authority in its own terms. This is why it was so crucial for contemporary Christian missionaries to discredit through scientific arguments the relevance and authenticity of the visions claimed by the *mamaia* prophets. My paper analyzes the way in which those British missionaries articulated their rebuttal of *mamaia* prophecies within the framework offered by mainstream Christianity, and reinforced by arguments borrowed from the contemporary sciences of the mind.

Poster Presentation

POPULARISATION OF THERMODYNAMICS AS A STRATEGY OF LEGITIMISATION.

Stefan Pohl Valero

Ph.D. student, History of Science UAB.

What means popularisation of science? What are its main goals? Is the public a passive receptor? The intellectual content and the professional organisation of science can not be separated from its social and cultural environment. Consequently, scientist must justify their activities to the political powers and others institutions upon whose support they depend. Thus, it is clear that scientists do not propagate scientific knowledge for its own sake, but they try to persuade specific public sectors, showing that science both supports and nurtures broadly accepted social, political, and religious goals and values.

The popularisation of Thermodynamics in the second half of the 19th century in Spain exemplifies this process of legitimisation. How the Spanish social and cultural values shaped the meaning of Thermodynamics in this period, is the main subject of the present poster. I will argue that, trough popularisation, some Spanish scientists categorised Thermodynamics as a product of theoretical physics, as a strategy for legitimating this discipline, in a moment in which physics was not well institutionalised. In this process, they portrayed Thermodynamics in such a way, that they thought would avoid materialism critiques, and therefore confrontations with the religious authorities.

Poster Presentation

THE ROLE OF REMOTE SENSING IN THE COMMUNICATION OF GLOBAL AND LOCAL CHANGE

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Human beings assimilate the world chiefly through their senses of sight and this can explain why the use of images has always been so important in the communication and representation of the scientific world.

The development of modern technologies for visualizing the scientific aspects of life on the Earth has provided new opportunities for communicating the increasing complexity of science to the public. In particular, the use of Earth Observation satellites for civil purposes started in the 70s has opened new perspectives in the perception of natural phenomena and antropic impact, especially of those processes developing on a long term period and on a global scale. Instruments for remote sensing extend the capability of human visual field, giving access to additional information about the physical world surrounding us that the human eye could not perceive.

The possibility to observe from a remote perspective and almost every day processes like climate change, ozone depletion, desertification, hurban development, makes it possible to observers appreciate and experience the complexity of environment, reveal the impact of human activities on the terrestrial ecosystem, and understand concepts like global and local change as never before.

In this poster the impact of Remote Sensing imagery as an effective means of communication of science and its importance for a better environmental awareness is described.

Poster Presentation

MAKING SCIENCE FRIENDLY

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There are common people that have science and technology matters among their hobbies and enjoy them. They are used to belonging to amateur associations dealing with the different fields, astronomy, cosmology, biology, environment, etc. Does science conceived as a scientific culture contribute to thereto? Efficient public communication of science faces a problem derived from the heterogeneity of recipients, i.e. age, educational background, time availability, and so on. But almost all people have specific interests and hobbies modelled by their educational or cultural background. So, why do not use this potential for scientific culture as a way to provide elements that contribute to self-satisfaction by developing abilities that will allow him or her to arouse these feelings and to share them? In a wide sample of Catalonian regions, as in other Spanish ones, scientific amateur associations offer activities and call for the active participation of people of all ages. This is a tool to awake, canalise and communicate science and technology. Yearly, as science friends, they are widely represented in Catalonian Science Week coordinated by FCR. Clearly hobbies towards science and technology are a way to make public science communication friendly. Further prospection will trace a map of the scientific and technological communication in Catalonia showing the most frequent branches of the different fields, geographical areas and features of participants.

CONTEXT: Science communication to the public has come to age in Spain as shown by a number of indicators: digital/print publications, activities and institutions dealing with the subject and organization of national/international conferences. Several initiatives are contributing to science dissemination in Catalonia, such as the Circle of Friends of Science (CAC). It includes and coordinates a number of amateur scientific associations devoted to different scientific fields. Collected data will allow to map their situation and to assess its success to extend/exchange benefits and experience. **METHODOLOGY:** A survey on the number of amateur scientific associations has been undertaken. Data about members (number, age, background, participation), scientific field, regularity of the activities organized, attendance and information about their geographical and population characteristics are being collected in this work. Success indicators are established taking into account facilities and number of inhabitants of the specific place (small village or city, rural or urban typos) where each association is located.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS: Astronomy and meteorology are the scientific topics that arouse the most interest. Environment (pollution versus preservation and types of action to preserve it) generates the next most interest. Natural science, botany, ornithology, entomology also arouse a great

public interest. Results depend on urban versus rural environment, but media, mainly television attract people towards the topic which it deals with more frequently. To enjoy science by itself could be the motto of amateur science friends and is another way to deal with public science communication. Other benefits of those experiences are to organize extra-academic activities to become children familiar with scientific topics. Further coordinated actions in public science communication will take advantage of this kind of studies at national and international level.

Poster Presentation

THE COMMUNICATION OF SCIENCE IN MÉXICO DURING XVIIITH CENTURY IN THE *GACETAS DE LITERATURA* BY JOSÉ ANTONIO ALZATE

Silvia Torres Alamilla

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Abstract

To introduce science as a part of general culture has been the work of many pioneers who since the XVIIth century, considered to carry science to people. They thought that this was an important part of scientific work. Several glorious attempts have been registered during the history of Science in México, and for some specialists, the scientific popularization is located since the XVIIth century, when modern science and the knowledge of the systems of the world became an important part of people's education.

It will be through the XVIIIth century in Mexico that a character will highlight with great intensity: the *Presbítero* José Antonio Alzate, the most enlightened Mexican of the XVIIIth century in Mexico, scientist that looked in science the manifestation and the creation of an own culture.

Alzate immersed in the enlightenment ideas that permeate the Mexican Society of his time; he wanted to take science to the people. For that purpose he published along 30 years, a series of periodic publications from which the most important was The *Gacetas de Literatura de México* from 1788 to 1795. It was in this publication where he captured topics as varied as medicine, botany, chemistry, agronomy, philosophy, zoology, architecture, anthropology, natural history, geography, botany, mining, etc. Also this publication opened a space to the presentation of ideas and other scientific results of people of his time and many times published debates and polemics on certain topics as the nomenclature of Linneo, the origin of the northerly lights, the eclipses, etc.

Poster Presentation

DOCTOR-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Josepmaria Argemí Ballbé, Mireia Andrés Villarreal and Joan Vidal-Bota

CONTEXT: Cultural diversity has changed our professional attitudes in doctor-patient relationship. Patients are also confronted helpless with the new reality. This is a very recent trait in the European continental society and neither patients nor professionals seem to feel very comfortable with it. We rather behave unconfident and conflicts tend often to turn up as a result of uncertainty and confusion. In this paper we try to appoint the main priorities needed to overcome such detrimental situation. We try to draw the attention to values that enhance humanity in doctor-patient relationship.

METHODOLOGY: We undertake a bibliographic revision about different approaches to the problem in several countries so far. Our proposals are matched with the standards historically proposed by Hippocrates, and accepted through the centuries by the common medical sense to verify that they agree with the appropriate ethical excellence.

RESULTS: although tolerance and respect to minorities seem a convenient approach for integration of cultural diversity in hospital setting, the most effective attitude both for patients and professionals relates with solidarity and open-minded and self-detached professionalism that try to understand other cultures and give them personally the necessary support.

CONCLUSIONS: cultural diversity represents a challenge for health professionals. It can be faced either by getting defensive, or considering it as a chance to enrich oneself and others through solidarity and open-minded attitude. Whereas getting defensive avoids interpersonal relationship and makes tolerance suspicious leading up eventually to conflicts, solidarity and understanding give rise to integration and social welfare and should be promoted in every institution.