

Call for Papers
Special Issue of Historical Social Research

Sleep – Knowledge – Technology

Guest Editors: Hannah Ahlheim, Dariusz Zifonun, Nicole Zillien

Introduction

Having neglected sleep for a long time, historians, social scientists, and anthropologists have only recently begun to elaborate that this ‘biological necessity’ is strongly shaped historically, culturally, and socially: sleep habits and sleep disturbances vary, sometimes considerably, across centuries, social classes, and different cultures. In this sense, sociologist Brian Taylor replaces the common notion of “being asleep” with the “more sociologically amenable one of ‘doing sleeping’”—opening up a new perspective on sleep and sleeping. According to the concept of the *knowledge society*, sleep no longer simply takes place but is ‘made’ with recourse to scientific knowledge and techniques. A significant contribution in this context was the establishment of sleep laboratories from the 1970s onward and the spread of new technologies for sleep measurement, which enabled a systematic, interdisciplinary production of knowledge about sleep and sleeping and influenced the ideas of the malleability of sleep. For mundane practices, this conception of sleep is accompanied by the requirement of adequate knowledge about the conscious, efficient, and adequate use of sleep. However, this requirement is difficult to fulfill in view of scientific knowledge due to its always provisional, fragile, and conflicting nature.

Special Issue of Historical Social Research: Sleep – Knowledge – Technology

Accordingly, this special issue explores the production, application, and legitimation of knowledge about sleep. We aim to investigate which kinds of knowledge are capable of certainty and how these bodies of knowledge circulate beyond the boundaries of the laboratory and enter everyday life. The special issue will bring together both empirical and theoretical articles on sleep knowledge. With an interdisciplinary focus on sleep knowledge, we encourage applications from scholars in history, the social sciences, anthropology, as well as other related fields.

Specifically, we invite proposals for papers from three interwoven perspectives:

- historical analysis of the production of sleep knowledge in laboratories,
- ethnographic studies of the current sleep laboratory, and
- analysis of everyday sleep tracking practices.

Themes might include:

- Negotiations of ‘certainty’ and ‘objectivity’ of sleep knowledge.
- Significance of ‘measuring’ for the ideas of ‘good’ sleep.
- The interplay of number-based objectivity and bodily subjectivity.
- Roles researchers, subjects, and technologies play(ed) in a (self-)experimental setting.
- Methods, norms, standards, and modes of knowledge spreading beyond the laboratory.

Submission

The deadline for submissions is January 31, 2022. Please submit your proposals in the form of an abstract (approx. 3,000 characters). Invited authors will be informed until February 15, 2022 and asked to submit their working papers (40.000–60.000 characters) until September 1, 2022 for the authors' conference. The authors' conference serves as a collaborative review process for the intensive exchange and critical examination of the submitted contributions. The conference will be held in smaller, thematically focused online groups on 06 and 07 October 2022 respectively. We will provide for cross-reviewing as part of the workshops: Ideally, each author will comment in writing on the submitted paper of another author and, if necessary, review it again after resubmission. The final version of the articles should then be submitted by the end of November 2022.

Jan 31, 2022	Feb 15, 2022	Sept 1, 2022	Oct 06/07, 2022	Nov 30, 2022
proposal submission	selection and corresponding feedback	submission of working papers	authors' conference	final submission

The Special Issue of Historical Social Research is scheduled for release in early 2023. *Historical Social Research* (HSR) is an international peer-reviewed journal focusing on inter- and transdisciplinary research. The journal is, among others, to be found on SocINDEX with Full Text, JSTOR, and on the Social Science Citation Index. The online releases of HSR articles coincide with the print publication. Authors can use the final version of the article from the moment of publication freely and post a copy of it on institutional websites or on academic-related portals like Academia or ResearchGate (more information on <https://www.gesis.org/en/hsr/about-hsr>).

Further Information

For questions regarding the special issue, please contact the editors: editors@schlafwissen.net.

Please submit your proposal (approx. 3,000 characters) until January 31, 2022 to: editors@schlafwissen.net.