



drupa 2016 – Press Release No. 21 / 1 June 2015

2015 drupa Prize goes to 32-year old Nina Kleinöder

Focus on Occupational Health and Safety in the West German Iron and Steel Industry in the 20th Century

Historian and Dr Designate Nina Kleinöder has won the 2015 drupa Prize. drupa awarded the Oberhausen-local for her dissertation “Occupational Health and Safety in the West German Iron and Steel Industry in the 20th Century. Structures, Actors and Intertwining Processes”. She was awarded the prize by Claus Bolza-Schünemann (CEO at Koenig & Bauer AG and Chairman of the drupa committee), Werner M. Dornscheidt (CEO at Messe Düsseldorf) and Prof. Dr. Anja Steinbeck (Principal of Heinrich-Heine University, Düsseldorf) as part of a festive event on 1 June at Düsseldorf’s Industrieclub.

In her prize-winning work Kleinöder explores the falling number of works accidents in the German iron and steel industry since the 1920s and 30s and examines the causes of this trend. Because – as Nina Kleinöder firmly believes – this trend is not only due to technology and automation or rising occupational safety legislation. The background is considerably more complex. It is from this perspective that Dr. Kleinöder approaches the matter: the academic attempts to find answers to questions to help to reveal the real causes: how was this steady drop in accident numbers possible? What agents work together and what motives did they pursue here?



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Dr. Kleinöder proceeds in exemplary fashion tracking the accident figures from four companies in the iron and steel industry in the Rhine-Ruhr region (Hoesch, Krupp, Mannesmann and Thyssen). Over the course of her work the academic reveals a complex intertwining network of in-company and external influences – as well as a blend of economic, political and human factors that range between volition and regulation, between economic reality and social extectations.

The development of occupational health and safety as it exists today is – her key finding – the result of a cooperative intertwining process between numerous actors and influences from unions, associations, science, politics and society with one decisive criterion: companies from the iron and steel industry played a successful and influential role here and thereby proved that occupational health and safety and the continued health of employees are also matters close to their heart.



Nina Kleinöder was born in Oberhausen in 1983 and after leaving school with an “Abitur” she studied Modern and Contemporary History including German Regional History, Economic History as well as Contemporary English and American Studies at the Heinrich Heine University. In 2009 she completed her studies with a Master of Arts and went straight on to study for a Doctorate in History.



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The drupa Prize

Every year Messe Düsseldorf awards the drupa Prize to the best doctoral thesis in the Arts Faculty at Heinrich Heine University (HHU). It has already honoured outstanding arts dissertations at the Düsseldorf University since 1978 promoting the publication and dissemination of the dissertation with prize money of Euro 6,000. Deciding who is to receive the drupa Prize every year is an expert body consisting of the Principal and Vice-Principal of Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf, Chairman of the drupa Committee and CEO at Messe Düsseldorf.

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