

Vidotto M 2:30-5:30

Women and Science

The narrative of the human pursuit of knowledge has traditionally excluded the voices that were not in power. In this course, we will focus on scientific and technical knowledge and on women. This is a rich case that gives us instruments to recognize the importance of diversity in science. The course is organized in two parts: the first historical and sociological, the second philosophical.

First, we will consider the historical and sociological contexts that have prevented women from accessing and producing scientific knowledge. The students will be introduced to a selection of remarkable women of science, from antiquity to our days. We will discuss the ground-breaking aspects of their work and the specificities of their experience as scientists. We will highlight how gender identity, race and economical background contribute to create different experiences.

We will then discuss questions at the center of the feminist reflection on science: How biases manifest in scientific production? Does the gender of the knower make a difference? At the light of these questions, what does objectivity mean? We will discuss some of the answers these questions have been given in the field of feminist epistemology, the perspectives these answers opens for general epistemology, and the relation between these issues and current scientific research.