



The politics of knowing: research, institutions and gender in the making

Call for papers

Proposed date: 27-28 November 2007
Venue: Prague, Czech Republic

Deadline for submission of papers: 30 April 2008
Notification of submitters: 30 June 2008
Early registration: 15 July 2008
Deadline for papers for conference: 30 September 2008

Science today, perhaps more than ever, is the site of multiple negotiations. Market values increasingly drive scientific research and higher education yet the traditional emphasis upon rational knowledge remains. The range of actors with a claim to 'have a say' in science has also grown to include a range of voices beyond academe, from industry and the public. These new actors may play different roles in different contexts and geopolitical spaces. All these processes also have a gender dimension – from recruitment and retention of students and employees, to work-life balance and the gendering of knowledge production processes and practices.

The conference will showcase research on these issues from (social) science and technology studies, and feminist and post-colonial studies under the framework of the project *Knowledge, Institutions and Gender: an East-West Comparative Study* (KNOWING, Framework Programme 6, www.knowing.soc.cas.cz). We welcome papers on the following themes, especially from early-stage researchers and from researchers from Central and Eastern Europe.

Themes:

- **Excellence and (public) accountability**

Scientific excellence is not just measured by citations but by a range of performance measures including commercialisation and public engagement activities. How have these new measures evolved and what have been their effects upon researchers' experiences and identities as well as broader institutional dynamics within Universities and research institutes? What new roles are social and natural scientists playing in the public sphere? Are these processes and their effects gendered? In particular, is there gender bias in 'measuring excellence'? Have these developments played out differently across the natural and social sciences?

- **Epistemic communities, research collaborations and disciplinary dis/semblance**

Science has long been depicted as a community of peers. However, there are many forms of hierarchy and inequalities therein, especially with respect to gender, age and national context. What are the implications of these differences for the formation and functioning of scientific communities? How do they shape patterns of publishing, citation and collaboration? What developments in authority and influence have we witnessed since the end of the Cold War? What are the practical forms of interdisciplinarity in natural and social sciences nowadays? Are our communities of scholarship extending across the globe as never before? What do these changes mean for gender inequalities across the sciences?

- **Growing into/growing out**

Recruitment and retention of students and employees in the natural and technical sciences is a key priority for governments across the new Europe. How are Universities managing growing student numbers? How is research training changing vis-à-vis these developments? What are the gender implications of these developments? Are there disciplinary differences in ways of mentoring, training and developing careers across the sciences and geopolitical spaces?

- **Material practices of knowledge production and the legitimization of knowledge**

In order to be produced and be counted as legitimate, a knowledge claim has to be constructed and enacted by various actors and in diverse contexts. What role do humans, materials, technologies and discourses play as actors of practices of knowledge production and knowledge legitimization? In what contexts and networks (e.g. collaborative, institutional, disciplinary, political) is knowledge produced, how are these contexts and networks formed and managed and what are their impacts on production and legitimization of knowledge claims? What are the practices and visibilising technologies involved in knowledge production? How does science (re)construct “reality” in the social and natural sciences?

- **Methodologies revisited: science studies of social sciences and humanities**

A look at science studies journals and conference contents shows a marked focus on research into natural sciences, medicine and technologies. Much less attention is given to science studies of social sciences and humanities. What are the methodological specificities of studying different disciplines? Are the research objects in science studies of SS&H enacted differently in terms of their materiality, spatiality and temporality? How can be researchers’ positionality and epistemic authority negotiated in their own fields (disciplines, communities) and with what consequences for reflexivity?

Submission of proposals:

Proposals of 200 words or less (for a presentation of approx. 20 minutes) should be sent by e-mail to marcela.linkova@soc.cas.cz by 30 April 2008 at the latest. The papers will be assessed by the Conference Scientific Committee and applicants will be notified about the result of the review process by 30 June 2008. Full papers of no more than 6000 words are to be submitted to marcela.linkova@soc.cas.cz no later than 30 September 2008.

Financial matters:

The early registration conference fee is EUR 30 - deadline: 15 July 2008. The regular conference fee is EUR 50 – deadline 30 September 2008. The conference fee may be waived/supplemented for students, early career researchers and/or speakers from disadvantaged regions/institutions. An application form can be obtained from marcela.linkova@soc.cas.cz and submitted by 30 April 2008 at the latest. Applicants will be notified of the results of the review process by 30 June 2008.

Contact person:

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