Course Description

The aim of the course is to create a critical perspective towards the relationship between gender and technology. The question of which gender possesses technological competences and which does not is one of the determinants of this relationship. In terms of technological competences, women and men are unevenly associated with certain roles and despite the findings of the history of technology discipline, men are usually thought to be producers of technology, while women are accepted to be consumers of it.

The social processes that shaped technological development were historically man dominated. Women were excluded from the social and economic opportunities required to become producers of valuable technologies. In addition, machinery, the engine of capitalist production, did not offer equal opportunities to women. In this respect, technology oriented jobs in the engineering discipline were considered as a male profession because their dynamics were based on masculine tradition and empowered by capitalist relations.

This course also has a critical stance towards studies concerning gender in natural science and technological occupations and which use the acronym STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) as an umbrella representation. “The Science” in STEM mainly refers to natural sciences and excludes social sciences. In addition, many studies in related literature use the acronym STEM for those fields where women are severely underrepresented. The term STEM creates and reproduces a dichotomy between natural and social sciences, which originated from the basic dualisms of nature/social, rational/irrational, analytical/emotional and finally men/women.

Therefore, students who take this course are expected to analyze and question the interactions of gender, science and technology without taking the relationship involving them as granted.

The course is divided into three parts. In the first part, theoretical issues will be our main focus and we will emphasize the theoretical debates concerning the relationship between science, technology and gender. In the second part, we will be discussing application fields of mentioned theoretical debates and major topics of science and technology studies with respect to gender. The final part will provide examples of current emerging topics in literature so as to assess where we are heading to in this field.

The course will be taught in an interactive seminar format.
Method

For the first part of this course, besides lectures in class, students are expected to read the assigned articles and prepare annotations for them. The second and third parts of the course load will be divided among students or groups of students (depending on the number of registered students). Each student or group of students will present an article each week. Class time will be devoted to discussions led by the students, to which the instructor will contribute and react. This way of doing will involve group discussion and formal seminar leadership by students. Students’ ideas, suggestions and active participation are essential to the course, and they are expected to come to class having read and thought about the articles.

Paper Assignment

The first eight weeks of the class will critically examine the literature, distil the central arguments and deploy other insights to illuminate relationships between gender and technology. Having covered the key issues, students are expected to select a topic and write a proposal about it, accompanied with a bibliography containing the essential literature on their topic. Feedback for the proposals will be provided by the instructor the following week and students will then have enough time for further revision and writing. They are expected to hand in their paper at the end of the term.

Proposal due date: Week 8.

Feedback for proposals: Week 9.

Submission of papers: Final exam date is also the deadline for paper submissions. Papers will be submitted digitally.

Final exam: There will be a compulsory final exam.

Grading

Annotations for marked articles: 20 pts (annotations can either be a critical question, comment or one/more paragraph concerning the article - maximum 1or 2 page(s)).
Participation to discussions in class: 20 pts.
Paper = 25 pts
Final exam= 35 pts.
Schedule and Topics

**Week 1 Introduction**

What is gender? What is Technology? How do we think about technology in relation to gender? What does a feminist analysis bring to technology studies? What are the implications of a feminist analysis of technology in practice, for action?

**FIRST PART: THEORETICAL DEBATES**

**Week 2 Is Science A Man?**


**Week 3 Masculinity and Technology**


**Week 4 Social Construction of Technology**


**Week 5 Feminist Science and Technology Studies**

*WAJCMAN, Judy. Feminism confronts technology. Penn State Press, 1991. (Intro.& 1st Chapter)


SECOND PART: APPLICATION FIELDS OF THEORETICAL DEBATES

Week 6 Household Technologies


Week 7 Machinery and Design


Week 8 Work and Technology I (Paper Proposal Due date)


Week 9 Feedbacks for the Proposals & Presentation of North Country the Movie and discussion
Week 10 Work and Technology II


Week 11 Reproduction Technologies

*Elizabeth Ettorre Reproductive Genetics, Gender and the Body: *Please Doctor, may I have a Normal Baby?* Sociology 2000; 34; 403-420.


THIRD PART: EMERGING TOPICS IN FEMINIST SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY STUDIES

Week 12 Digital Games and Gender


Week 13 Ecofeminism & Technology


Week 14 Surveillance and Technology


SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


