

Scienze del vivente, democrazia e questioni di genere

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Life Sciences, Democracy, and Gender Issues

Abstract: The intertwinements between science and democracy are many and diversified. On one side science is an essential part of the life of contemporary liberal and democratic societies. On the other side scientific and research practices are questioned by demands of justice, equality and recognition that are typical of today democratic life. Some of those demands are connected to gender equality, end of discrimination on the ground of sexual orientations and so on. Discussing the relation between science and democracy entails also discussing the relation among science, democracy and gender issue. I will highlight three ways in which the relation between science and democracy is crossed by issues related to gender equality and recognition. In particular I will claim that gender issues can enrich the debate about the relation between scientific practices and democratic society. First, discussing gender issues in scientific practice fosters the “democratization” of science. Then, science can contribute to the democratic processes of recognition of gender diversity by debunking ideas about promoting an understanding of the variety of life. Gender issues highlight the possibility of a mutual and virtuous relation between science and democracy: democratic values can improve research and scientific practices, and scientific understanding of reality can contribute to democratic education and public debate.

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