

Feminist Epistemology:

How a Case Study from History of Science Undermines Harding's Standpoint

Theory*

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In her “Women’s Standpoints on Nature: What Makes Them Possible” (1997) Sandra Harding supports feminist standpoint theory by introducing the new idea that men and women belong to different cultures, *gendered cultures*, a belonging which endows them with different standpoints about nature. Central to her article is the assumption that nature is heterogeneous, in the sense that there exist several aspects of natural regularities to which men and women are differently exposed. She concludes that “differences between cultures are also differences between the resources available to sciences” (1997, 190). She further identifies four categories of such differences aiming to explain the “obvious fact” which other feminist analysts have already pointed out: women scientists produce the less sexist and androcentrist readings of nature (1997, 187).

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