

Queer STS: An Introduction

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This contribution will give a first introduction to the term 'queer' and how it is relevant to science and technology studies (STS). In a broader sense, 'queer' stands for questioning hegemony and the labeling of identity; most popular is its use in the context of sexuality. Similarly to the emergence of the gender studies from women's studies, queer studies emerged from gay and lesbian studies. The latter managed to trigger an academic discussion of sexuality as a category of differentiation structuring social relations. However, as the concept of heteronormativity shows, gender and sexuality have to be seen as interdependent in order to fully understand their part in social structures (Hartmann & Klesse 2007, Degele 2008). The critique of heteronormativity emerges from queer theory and is an analytical perspective exposing heterosexuality not only as regulating individual sexual relationships but social relationships in general (Jackson 2005). As social structures are also reflected in science and technologies, mechanisms of heteronormativity can be made accessible to change by critically examining where the gender binary and a heterosexual norm are used as solid constants determining 'scientific' results and thus perpetuating their structural impact on society.

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Jackson, Stevi (2006). Gender, sexuality and heterosexuality: The complexity (and limits) of heteronormativity. In: *Feminist Theory* 7/1. pp 105-121.

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