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"The Emperor has no Clothes...Let us Paint our Loincloths Rainbow: A Classical and Feminist Critique of Contemporary Science Policy"

Macintosh, Alastair

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The British government's White Paper on science together with government research council reports are used as a basis for critiquing current science policy and its intensifying orientation, British and worldwide, towards industrial and military development. The critique draws particulary on Plato and Bacon as yardsticks to address who science is for, what values it honours and where current policy departs from imperatives of socio-ecological justice. Metaphors of the "Emperor's new clothes" and incremental spectral shift in attitude help illuminate both the problems and ways forward. The paper calls for a re-integration of classical perspectives with added insights, often ecofeminist, from philosophy, poetics and a theology of reverence. Predication on the values of love, interconnectedness and orientation towards childrens' all-round development should be central to curricular reform. Consistent with the views of Plato, the original founder of the Academy, the utilitarian role of science ought to be balanced with a contemplative role of science as the art of knowing ourselves in relation to nature. Only with such a holistic academic approach can it adequately rise to providing a pedagogy of authentic human development, service to the poor and remedies, rather than contribution, to the ongoing destruction of nature.

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