

Kristin Gjesdal

Unruly Women - Philosophers, Romantics, Revolutionaries

Opprørerne. Kvinner som endret filosofien

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The women in modern philosophy were as brave as they were prolific. The questions they asked were challenging, and the answers they offered were bold and unconventional. The women in modern philosophy delivered uncompromising analyses of truth, knowledge, ethics, social justice, gender, racism, and the relationship between human being and nature. Yet these women have been written out of the history of philosophy – and this to the extent that today we hardly know that they were there.

In Unruly Women: Philosophers, Romantics, Revolutionaries, Kristin Gjesdal brings the reader along to a philosophy class at Temple University in Philadelphia. With a group of students, she explores key ideas and concepts from eleven women who were left out when the history of modern philosophy was written. In a lively and accessible prose, she revisits the life and thoughts of these exceptional women. We encounter Germaine de Staël as she navigates the aftermath of the French revolution, Rosa Luxemburg as she fights for social justice in late nineteenth-century Berlin, and Angela Davis as she confronts American racism in California in the 1970s and beyond.

As activists and as philosophers, these women were rebels in their own time. Their thinking is no less unruly – or relevant – today.



Photo: Lina Hindrum

Kristin Gjesdal is Professor of Philosophy at Temple University, Philadelphia. She has published a number of monographs and research articles on modern European philosophy and been invited to present her scholarship at top-tier universities in Europe, the US, Asia, the Middle East, Australia, and beyond. She has received the Eleanor Hofkin Award for excellence in teaching and won ample international recognition for her research. She also writes popular philosophy in English and Norwegian.

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Interview

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'When I first heard Kristin Gjesdal's lecture on women in philosophy, it was almost a revelation (...) Here is a philosopher suggesting that women's presence in philosophy is not a new phenomenon. Women have been contributing to philosophy since the very beginning of the discipline. Kristin Gjesdal helps us to find the women in modern philosophy, see them, and understand their works. As philosophy. It is a great achievement.'

Solvejg Balle

'Exhilarating enthusiasm [...] an overdue act of justice.'

Klassekampen