



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

13-14 September 2011 Mid Sweden University, Campus Sundsvall

# CHALLENGING GENDER: Normalization and Beyond

PROGRAM



**International Conference 13-14 September 2011  
Challenging Gender: Normalization and beyond**

**Program Overview**

Tuesday (Chair: Ulrika Schmauch) M 102

- 09.00      *Registration and coffee*
- 10.00      Opening ceremony
- 10.15**      Key note **Professor Bob Pease**  
**Theorizing normalization as a privilege and unearned entitlement**
- 11.15      Key note **Professor Philomena Essed**  
**Dissidence and Nonconformity in Academia: The example of Social Justice Scholars**
- 12.00-      *Lunch*
- 13.00      Key note **Dr Sarah Neal**  
**Places, identities and things: why interdisciplinary approaches to belongings, boundaries and borders matter**
- 14.00      Book presentation: **Normalization and “outsiderhood” – Feminist readings of a neoliberal welfare state** *Siv Fahlgren, Anders Johansson and Diana Mulinari*
- 15.00      *Coffee*
- 15.30-17.00 Plenary discussion: Challenging gender; Normalization and beyond  
Leader/moderator: **Professor Gabrielle Griffin**  
Participants: **Bob Pease, Philomena Essed, Bronwyn Davies, Siv Fahlgren, Anders Johansson, and Diana Mulinari**
- 18.00      *Guided tour: Sundsvall's stone city.*
- 19.00      *Dinner at Stadshuset*

Wednesday (Chair Bodil Formark)

- 08.30-      Key note **Professor Claudia Mitchell R106**  
**Mapping the spaces of Girlhood Studies: From the 1980s to the present**
- 09.15      *Coffee*
- 09.35-      Working groups *Parallel Sessions*  
1a: Gender, race/ethnicity and class – (Chair Siv Fahlgren) M 101  
1b: Gender, race/ethnicity and class (Chair: Katarina Giritli Nygren) M105  
2. School health promotion and gender based violence – (Chair Katja Gillander Gådin) M 205  
3. Challenging girlhood – (Chair Eva Söderberg) M 206
- 11.45      *Lunch*
- 12.45      Working groups *Parallel Sessions*
- 13.10      *Coffee*
- 13.50      Key note Future directions **Professor Bronwyn Davies M 102**  
**Playing with and against the forces of normalization: feminist narratives and lines of flight**
- 15.00      *Conference end*

**Tuesday 13 th September, Chair Ulrika Schmauch**

## **Key Note Speakers**

**10.15 Professor Bob Pease, M 102**  
Deakin University, Australia

### **Theorizing normalization as a privilege and unearned entitlement**

This paper provides a theoretical overview of some of the ways in which the process of normalisation functions as forms of privilege and unearned entitlement. It outlines how privileged groups come to represent the dominant norm whereby white, male, able-bodied, heterosexual, middle-class people in Western societies embody what it means to be normal. The paper also explores strategies for challenging the normalisation of privilege by encouraging the development of responsibility, not only for discriminatory individual actions, but also for the social practices which legitimate them.

**Bob Pease**, PhD, is Chair of Social Work at Deakin University in Australia. His main research interests include men's violence against women, cross-cultural and global perspectives on men and masculinities, critical social work theory and practice and pedagogies for undoing privilege. His most recent books are *Critical Social Work: Theories and Practices for a Socially Just World* (co-edited, Allen and Unwin 2009), *Migrant Men: Critical Studies of Masculinities and the Migration Experience* (co-edited, Routledge, 2009), *Undoing Privilege: Unearned Advantage in a Divided World* (Zed Books 2010) and *Men and Masculinities Around the World: Transforming Men's Practices* (co-edited Palgrave 2011).

**11.15 Professor Philomena Essed, M 102**  
Antioch University, USA

### **Dissidence and Nonconformity in Academia: The example of Social Justice Scholars**

The presentation features women scholars who resist racism and related systems of oppression through critical research and teaching, but also through their work outside of the university walls. They are, although academically accomplished, not the typical professional academic.

How do they experience their commitment to social justice in – often – unsupportive surroundings? What are the challenges they face as dissident scholars and what are the rewards? How do they combine the demands of scholarship with social and other public interventions, and what keeps them going?

**Philomena Essed** is professor of Critical Race, Gender and Leadership studies, Antioch University, *PhD in Leadership and Change Program* and affiliated researcher, Utrecht University (The Netherlands) *Graduate Gender Program*. Trained in Social Anthropology, Women's Studies and in Race Critical Studies her research and teaching transcend national, cultural and disciplinary boundaries. Best known for introducing the concepts of *everyday racism* and *gendered racism*, her work has been adopted and applied in a range of countries, including the US, Canada, South Africa, Sweden, Finland, Russia, the UK, Switzerland, and Australia. She has lectured in many countries - from Finland to Brazil; from South-Africa to Canada – and published numerous articles in English and in Dutch, some of which have been translated into French, German, Italian, Swedish and Portuguese. Her monographs include *Everyday Racism* (Hunter House 1990); *Understanding Everyday Racism* (Sage 1991); and *Diversity: Gender, Color and Culture* (University of Massachusetts Press 1996). Co-edited Volumes: *Race Critical Theories* (Blackwell 2002); *Refugees and the Transformation of Societies* (Berghahn 2004); and *A Companion to Gender Studies* (Blackwell 2005, 'outstanding' 2005 academic reference, American Librarian Association). Volumes in progress include *Clones, Fakes and Posthumans: Cultures of Replication* and *Dutch Racism*.

**13.00 Ph. D. Sarah Neal, M 102**  
Open University, UK

### **Places, identities and things: why interdisciplinary approaches to belongings, boundaries and borders matter**

Caught somewhere between sociology and geography, spending time thinking about the cultural and affective turn of both and pre-occupied with how the non-human (animals, plants, weather, views, things) seem to profoundly shape the form and nature of social relationships this paper suggests that inhabiting such a unclear and unstable disciplinary position may be both helpful and necessary in developing properly nuanced and more multidimensional understandings of ethnic identities and identifications. Using qualitative evidence and argument from previous research on ethnicity and rurality in England and from current research on everyday multicultural encounters in urban spaces in England the paper examines and explores the ways in which people and places and the non-human combine, interact and animate so as to define and claim and exclude particular groups and populations one the one hand but also disrupt and counter and change places, identities and ethnic imaginaries on the other.

**Sarah Neal** is Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Social Science at the Open University, UK. *Sarah Neal's* research and writing is in the areas of ethnicity, multiculturalism and race; rural spaces and the countryside; community and belonging; multiculturalism and policy-making and research methods. She has published in a range of academic journals such as *Sociology*, *Journal of Social Policy*, *Journal of Rural Studies*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *GeoForum*. Her most recent books include *Rural Identities: ethnicity and community in the contemporary English countryside* (2009, Ashgate). She co-edited and co-authored *Community* (2009 McGraw Hill) with Gerry Mooney and *The New Countryside: ethnicity nation and exclusion in rural Britain* (2006, The Policy Press) with Julian Agyeman. She is currently co-authoring *Race, Multiculturalism and Social Policy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) with John Solomos and Alice Bloch.

## **Book presentation**

**14.00 Associate Professor Siv Fahlgren, PhD. Anders Johansson and Professor Diana Mulinari (ed) M 102**

### **Normalization and “outsiderhood” – Feminist readings of a neoliberal welfare state**

This volume presents an illuminating analysis of the ways in which normalization processes and practices operate in a welfare state in an age of neoliberalism. This informative book problematizes the meaning of the phrase ‘normalization processes and practices’, that for an Anglophone audience may smack of functionalism. The historical context of the deliberate adoption of normalization processes and practices in Sweden in the post-World War II era was, in the first instance, an expression of the inclusivity designed to decrease inequalities and to achieve social justice. However all the contributors to this volume, show very clearly how notions of normalcy, of normalization, in a neoliberal time operate not only to create an integrating and equalizing context but also, and much more critically, to exclude certain groups of people, and produce a structural inequality that in recent years has been discussed under the term of ‘utanförskap’ or outsiderhood.

## **Plenary discussion**

**15.30 Challenging gender – normalization and beyond M 102**

**Moderator Professor Gabrielle Griffin, York University, UK**

**Panel: Bob Pease, Philomena Essed, Bronwyn Davies, Diana Mulinari, Siv Fahlgren and Anders Johansson**

- 1) The Swedish meaning of normalization as ‘the right to belong’ creates the idea of a kind of public good. To what extent does something like this idea exist in the Anglophone world in relation to ‘normalization’?
- 2) Why is the concept of normalization not much used in the Anglophone context?
- 3) Can we think of normalization as a ‘universal’ process or – and in what ways – is it particular, and culturally specific?
- 4) Does normalization function differently for women and men, or different ethnic groups, and if so, how?

- 5) What is the efficacy of the idea of normalization in the social policy context?
- 6) How do we measure normalization?
- 7) What are the norms that are addressed through normalization?
- 8) How does 'normality' figure in normalization?
- 9) Is normalization actually ever possible, and what exactly does it mean?
- 10) How is normalization resisted (in the everyday)?

**Gabrielle Griffin** is Chair, Board of Studies, Centre for Women's Studies, at York University. Her research has partly focussed on contemporary women's writing; women's cultural production; feminist theatre; and writing diaspora, and partly on Women's/Gender Studies as a discipline and more sociological topics such as women's employment and violence against women. Her main current research interests are in women's contemporary cultural production; women's theatre; diaspora studies; narrative and identity; research methods in the arts and humanities. Just to mention two examples from her long publication list: *Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Trends in the Social Sciences and Humanities* (In: Luidmila Pipiya, ed. *The Social Sciences and Humanities: Research Trends and Collaborative Perspectives*. Moscow: Russian Academy of Science, 2009), and *On Not Engaging with What's Under Our Noses, Or Race, Ethnicity and Gender* (In: *Reading Women's Writing*, *Transatlantic Conversations: Feminism as Travelling Theory*, eds. Mary Evans and Kathy Davis, London: Ashgate, 2010).

## Wednesday 14 th September Chair **Bodil Formark**

### Key Note Speakers

**08.30 Professor Claudia Mitchell R 106**  
McGill University, Canada

#### **Mapping the spaces of Girlhood Studies: From the 1980s to the present**

I am interested in the ways in which Girlhood Studies has evolved from a paradigm that grew out of the early work of Angela McRobbie, Valerie Walkerdine and others in the 1980s in which the significance of girls lay in their alienated absence, through to the troubled Ophelia and Girl Power phenomenon of the 1990s, and more recently to a model based on participatory presence, as read through a framework which sees girls as cultural producers. While each of these and other 'girlhood eras' bring with them their own problematics, what I find crucial is the recognition that girlhood can and needs to be studied in its own right and not just in relation to a developmental trajectory from female infant to woman. We know that Girlhood Studies has a history. Without appreciating that history there can be no fruitful speculation about its future. Given my experience as the editor of *Girlhood Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* and my work in the global context of girlhood ( for example the United Nations and other development arenas), I invite us to consider where Girlhood Studies might go from here.

**Claudia Mitchell** is a James McGill Professor in the Faculty of Education of McGill University, Montreal, Canada, and an Honorary Professor at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Her research looks at youth and sexuality in the age of AIDS, children's popular culture, rurality, girlhood, teacher identity, participatory visual and other arts-based methodologies, and strategic areas of gender and HIV&AIDS in social development contexts . She has written extensively in the area of girlhood studies, gender and schooling (*Seven Going on Seventeen: Tween Studies in the Culture of Girlhood; Redefining Girlhood; Girl Culture Encyclopedia; Methodologies for Mapping a Southern African Girlhood*), and is the co-founder and co-editor of the award winning journal, *Girlhood Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. She serves as an advisor to a number of international organizations working in the area of girlhood, including the Canadian International Development Agency, UNICEF, Plan International and UNGEI (United Nations Girls Education Initiative).

**13.50 Professor Bronwyn Davies M 102**  
Independent Scholar, Australia

#### **Playing with and against the forces of normalization: feminist narratives and lines of flight**

In this paper I present my own rewriting of an Australian children's story from my childhood, *The Fairy who Wouldn't Fly*. Written in the 1940s, and rewritten in the 1970s, the narrative trajectory in these earlier versions, is from difference to normalization. The fairy who wouldn't fly, and other creatures who won't be as they should, are each banished to the *Woodn't*, where they must stay until they learn to conform to the specific categorizations and striations (the structures and organization) of Fairyland. In my rewriting of the story I have sought to realize a narrative that is informed by an emergent material feminism. Drawing on Barad in particular, but also Bergson and Deleuze, the new narrative trajectory in my story is not one of opposition or resistance to the forces of normalization, but involves a process of creative evolution—a movement toward the not-yet-known.

**Bronwyn Davies** works as an independent scholar and is a professorial fellow at Melbourne University. She is well known for her work on gender, literacy, pedagogy and working with poststructuralist theory. More recently she has been working on a critique of neoliberalism as it impacts on subjectivities at work and school, the relations between pedagogy and place. *Pedagogical encounters* (with Susanne Gannon and others) and *Deleuze and collaborative writing: An immanent plane of composition* (with Wyatt, Gale and Gannon), were published by Peter Lang in 2009 and 2011.

# Session Stream 1a: Gender, race/ethnicity and class

Chair **Siv Fahlgren**

M 101

**09.35 Åsa Andersson,**

University West, Trollhättan, Sweden, Section for Cultural Studies, [asa.andersson@hv.se](mailto:asa.andersson@hv.se)

*Young Roma Women – Identification and Resistance*

The Roma population was recognized as a national minority in Sweden in 1999, but despite this, many Swedish Roma citizens are still in the margins of society and are to varying degrees, affected by problems stemming from social exclusion. As in other European countries the Roma minority in Sweden has for several centuries been subjected to racialization, discrimination and oppression. Their marginalized situation today can be understood as the result of a complex interplay between experiences of rejection from the Swedish society and its institutions and the Roma way of handling this by strengthening the group and the sense of community as a strategy of social and cultural survival.

My paper examines issues related to identification and power structures in terms of gender, ethnicity, and social status for young Roma women. Questions regarding these fields are especially critical to consider in relation to young Roma women's experiences and narratives since they are often associated with tradition and culture and a presumed gender- and generation-based subordination. The paper will also focus on the gendered issues raised by the politics of recognition for Roma people.

**10.00 Diana Mulinari**

Center for Gender Studies, University of Lund, Sweden.

*The right to the city. Normalisation and the antiracist struggle*

The article aims to explore violence as discourse and praxis around which multiple identities are both created and contested in changing city spaces. Theoretically the study is located in a feminist/postcolonial re-appraisal of the concept of identity as experience and social relation and aims to develop an intersectional perspective of the complex connections between space, belonging and boundaries. The focus lays on 32 in depth interviews with antiracist/antifascist activists and analyses their every day experience of struggle against normalization processes; through which the presence of Nazis and cultural racist actors become a “natural” component in city landscapes.

**10.25 Heidi Carlerby,** Erling Englund, Eija Viitasara, Anders Knutsson, Katja Gillander Gådin

[heidi.carlerby@miun.se](mailto:heidi.carlerby@miun.se)

*Associations between risk behaviour and parental background – a cluster analysis among Swedish boys and girls in the HBSC study*

**Objectives.** The aim was to analyse how health risk behaviours (HRB) are clustered and associated with parental background and family wealth among Swedish boys and girls.

**Design.** Data were collected from Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC), a global cross-sectional survey. A total of 12,143 boys and girls participated in the study. The pupils were categorized in subgroups according to parental background: Swedish (80.0%), mixed (10.6%) and foreign (9.4%). Cluster analyses were used to identify HRB profiles. Multinomial logistic regression analysis was used to estimate associations between cluster allocation, parental background and family affluence scale (FAS).

**Results.** In total 11,232 boys and girls were identified and allocated to five cluster profiles. The cluster profile of multiple HRB was associated with both mixed background and foreign background in girls, but in boys with mixed background only. The cluster profile of inadequate tooth brushing was associated with foreign background in both boys and girls. Low FAS was associated with multiple HRB and inadequate tooth brushing in girls, but not in boys.

**Conclusion.** The most disadvantaged cluster was multiple HRB, which was characterized by high prevalence of smoking, drunkenness, low physical activity and high soft-drink consumption.

### **10.55 Jonny Bergman**

Ph D Sociology, Department of Social Sciences, Mid Sweden University

#### *Analysing the 'normal' A critical discussion of situatedness in Grounded Theory*

In this paper I engage with problems and possibilities of grounded theory research. I discuss how in studies of refugee migration, we have to move beyond analyses of the 'other' and analyse 'ourselves' as participants and co-producers of a situation creating 'otherness'.

I take my study on how asylum-seeking refugees in Sweden manage their lives as a starting point for the discussion. The situation was identified as disempowering and characterized by temporality. This situation created challenges and inhibitions in the asylum-seeking refugees' lives and triggered actions of resistance (Bergman 2010).

One of the problems I encountered in the study was how the research was to be situated in relation to temporal and spatial normalising process in the reception of asylum-seeking refugees in Sweden. The question of how matrices of power along the lines of class (capitalist society, neoliberal discourses), gender (hegemonic masculinity) and race (whiteness) can help us understand the situation for asylum-seeking refugees in Sweden arose.

I argue that by sensitising grounded theory research to its temporality and spatiality in relation to matrices of power, we may be able to move towards analysing the position of the 'normal' and beyond researching the 'other'.

### **11.20 Susanna Öhman**

Associate Professor Sociology, Department of Social Sciences, Mid Sweden University

#### *Making Sense of Risks among Gays in Sweden The role of gender and previous experience*

There are groups in modern societies, such as gays and lesbians, who do not experience their life and their life conditions as secure as others do. This does not mean that structural variables such as gender or sexual orientation by themselves can explain these differences. It is more likely that individual life experiences such as hardship or discrimination lead to these variations in understanding of risk. By that, we mean day-to-day experiences, where family, friends and working colleagues play an important role, together with the physical setting and community relations determined by the locality in which the individual lives. Though there is little knowledge about the interactions between these factors and understanding of risk, there is sufficient research to indicate that minority groups can be stigmatised and have a low status in society. Further, it can be assumed that there are latent factors expressed through these structural factors, e.g. experiences of vulnerability, risk exposure, lack of power, sub-cultural allegiances and exclusion. The empirical analyses are based on national surveys 2005, 2008 and 2011 (random samples of 2500 people each year). The results confirm differences in understanding of risk between homo/bisexuals and heterosexuals. The results also show that earlier experiences are important to understand these differences.

### **12.45 Anne-Sofie Kalat**

Ph D Student, Dept. of Sociology, Uppsala University, Anne-Sofie.Kalat@soc.uu.se

#### *To be Seen and Learn, but not be seen learning – Negotiations of Young Men's identities in schooling*

The subject of young men, masculinities and schooling has been highlighted in present policy due to the concern of "under-achievement". This paper sums up conclusions from a Ph.D. project (2005-prel 2011) on young men's identity negotiations in Swedish upper secondary school, with special attention to a rarely problematized setting structured by high-performance and white, upper middle-class students. Social categorizations (e.g. gender, class and age) and dominance-relations were thus studied as micro-processes, but placed in the context of equality/equity and education. The study's design was inspired by ethnographic methodology and combined participant observation with semistructured individual and group interviews. The research participants were men and women, age 15-16, in two school classes. The material was conducted during their first year at a Natural Science program respectively a Vehicles Program, educational settings with connotations to masculinity but significantly different in terms of class and educational policy. The research aims to contribute to a more complex understanding on the processes and framings of achievement and to enhance knowledge of gendered identity processes in schooling among youths.

### **13.10 Elin Montelius**

Ph D Student, Dept. of Sociology, Mid Sweden University, [elin.montelius@miun.se](mailto:elin.montelius@miun.se)

#### *Class, gender and the moral imperative of the health discourse*

The aim of this paper is to discuss the theoretical relationship between class and gender and the perception of health risks, drawing on Beverley Skeggs theory of class and gender on one hand and a social constructionist and governmentality perspective of health risk on the other. Class, as well as gender and ethnicity are constructed and maintained by the attribution of value and moral worth, as well as by the processes in which cultural value systems are being inscribed in individuals and thus becomes a part of the self. There is a normative health discourse with the aim of governing the individuals to become healthy, rational and reflexive. Faced with different health risks due to modern lifestyles the individuals are expected to regulate themselves and their body's, and thus act as risk avoiding subjects. There is thus a moral imperative in the health discourse, whereby the ones who doesn't comply are at risk of blame and stigmatization. The paper therefore discuss to what extent the moral imperative of the health discourse interacts with the positioning and differentiation by which class and gender are constructed and reproduced.

### **13.35 Susanne Gustafsson**

PhD in Public Health, Mid-Sweden University

#### *Challenging understanding of normalization in the context of women's activism in Jämtland*

Data will be drawn from an earlier study concerning activist groups in rural Sweden. A pragmatic approach makes it possible to combine Bourdieu *and* Foucault: Much of Bourdieu's theoretical development concerns the division of action and structure (Bourdieu 1977). However he never described the bridge-building between them, between activists acting *and* the structures, such as the gender order, that the agents are situated in relation to, –how these compound processes can be understood in terms of possible linkages and connections. Foucault focused, on objectivizing the subject and how it can be seen as continuous interaction resulting in dividing practices; the making of separation, for example the sick from the healthy or the criminals from the “good” ones (Foucault 1982). His ideas about a web of subject-object positions that may house complexity and contradictions. But what happens if we turn this imagination upside-down? As long as I know he never wrote about this turning point, from where possible linkages and connections *in between* subject/object relations can be understood. The suggested intervening concept “processes of transformation” is needed to join these in part different approaches. It needs a further development, which the paper is concerned with.

## Session Stream 1 b: Gender, race/ethnicity and class

Chair **Katarina Giritli Nygren**

M 105

### **09.35 Katarzyna Wolanik Boström**

PhD, Dept. om Culture and Media Studies Umeå University, [katarzyna@kultmed.umu.se](mailto:katarzyna@kultmed.umu.se)

In Sweden, there is a growing number of immigrant doctors and Poles are one of the largest non-Scandinavian groups. In my paper, I analyse how three Polish female doctors tell about the complex process of adapting to the professional role in Sweden and meeting expectations of doing things "the Swedish way". This process has ethnical, class- and gender implications, as a doctor's role is not only about "transnational" medical knowledge and skills, but also the more nationally specific social and cultural capital and embodied dispositions. The interviewees tell how migration can create a feeling of de-skilling and confusion, not only due to language problems, but also not knowing the social codes, e.g. the "right" way of performing class and gender, thus threatening a doctor's professional status in spite of the acknowledged medical competence. A display of impatience and anger or a "too feminine" way to dress may be considered inappropriate in the Swedish context. The "normalisation" of the professional role has profound implications on the doctors' identity and they tell about a process of both adaptation and resistance to what they perceive as "Swedish" norms and values

### **10.00 Karin Jarnkvist**

PhD student in Sociology of Religion at Umeå University, [karin.jarnkvist@religion.umu.se](mailto:karin.jarnkvist@religion.umu.se)

*What has Bourdieu and Connell to say about weddings?*

The primary purpose of my paper is to *analyse how brides and grooms deal with the gender normalisation of the wedding context, from the perspectives of Pierre Bourdieu and Raewyn Connell*. The analyse is based on empirical results from a qualitative study in which I interview 16 Swedes in eight couples, all about to get married. The stories of the interviewees show images of what a "real" wedding is and what it means to be a bride and groom. How a person deal with these images has partly to do with class. That is why the theory of Bourdieu might be useful. The stories also illustrate how gender normalisation can be met and challenged in different parts of a person's life. That makes Connell's theory of different dimensions of gender convenient in the analyse.

### **10.25 Angelika Sjöstedt Landén**

Department for Culture and Media Studies, Umeå University, [angelika.sjostedt.landen@kultmed.umu.se](mailto:angelika.sjostedt.landen@kultmed.umu.se)

*Concealment of gender in knowledge- work imaginaries*

The implications of the 'flexible' work environments of late capitalism have rendered a growing interest to critical studies of work and organisation (c.f Cederström & Hoedemakers, 2010). Feminist research highlights how the hegemonisation of flexible work- ideologies may result in declining health for employees and increased gender inequalities on the work market (Hey & Bradford, 2004; Ringrose, 2007; Shore, 2008; Archer, 2008). This paper contributes to these critical strands of research by examining the multiplicity of (ideological) forces that work to install every day work practices of 'flexible subjects' by the means of knowledge- work imaginaries.

I have studied professional discourse in an organisation within the Swedish public sector. The employees formed a highly qualified work force ('knowledge-workers'). The organisation had gone through several structural changes during the past years. In this study, official documentation about the ongoing organisational changes is related to interviews with employees. Even though interviewees found the situation at work dissatisfactory, the analysis concludes that employees as well as control agencies became 'investors' in knowledge- work imaginaries. Such imaginaries, however, worked to conceal social contexts marked by stereotyped conceptions of gender, age, social class and spatiality. The problems identified in the work environment were thereby constructed as internal and individual.

### **10.55 Anna Olofsson,**

Associate Professor Sociology, Risk and Crisis Research Center, Mid Sweden University, [anna.olofsson@miun.se](mailto:anna.olofsson@miun.se)

#### *Risk perception – At the intersection of vulnerability and capability*

The aim of the paper is to elaborate the concepts of vulnerability and capability in relation to risk perception by introducing intersectional theory and testing this empirically. One of the strengths of intersectional theory is that it does not only include the intersection of class, gender, ethnicity etc in the analysis, but it also shows the variability of the effect of different socio-cultural factors in different context and at different kinds of events. The theory is applied on quantitative data composed of a Swedish national survey about risk perception. The expected results are that the developed theoretical concepts will increase the understanding of the known differences in risk perception between different groups in society. Further, the paper will highlight the importance of identifying vulnerability among those expected to be capable, and vice versa.

### **11.20 Gunilla Olofsdotter & Angelika Sjöstedt Landén**

Mid Sweden University

#### *Gendered knowledge and occupational health*

The aim of this study is to explore how the concept of gender was employed in a project financed by EU and the Social Fund. The aim of the project was to construct a model for occupational health service in order to reduce sick leave rates among employees in a municipality. The increase of long periods of sick leave in Sweden constitutes an acute problem for public economy and for individuals on sick leave. It has also become a ‘gendered’ issue in debate and policy, because men and women’s sick leave rates follow different patterns. The different parts of the program were directed towards managers and employees in long term sick-leave.

Documents are important source of information when analyzing the processes behind the emergence of a project and how it certifies certain kinds of activities. We study directives from the EU and documents by the project management at the municipality, as well as the applications and documents produced by the firms contracted to carry out different parts of the program.

The analysis highlights intersections between social class and gender in the different parts of the program. Although knowledge about gender and gender mainstreaming often is assumed to reduce inequality between groups and individuals, our study shows that it could paradoxically become an instrument to emphasize and even increase unequal power relations.

### **12.45 Lena Sawyer**

[Lena.Sawyer@miun.se](mailto:Lena.Sawyer@miun.se), Department of Social Work, Goteborg’s University

#### *“Taking pictures”: The Normalizing gaze in and out of a Swedish Family Evaluation Home*

A social welfare institution linked to the Swedish social services, “Family House” is like the many other homes for parental evaluation in Sweden, a space where parents and their children come to live (by mandate by the social services) to have their caring skills evaluated and to receive ‘support’ in how to change specific behaviors in themselves and/or their children. As such norms around “good parenting” are central to the professional work enacted at Family House between social workers and the families who stay there.

Parents who find themselves at Family House can be understood as entering into a powerful time-space for the management of subjects (Foucault 1977; 1991), that is, a space where state governing becomes self-governing. This is a space where people come under a professional gaze, evaluation and scrutiny and observed from a normative lens of sufficient or insufficient parental care. It is a space where preference for sameness is institutionalized and culture cloned (cf. Essed 2002:1068) and personnel’s talk can be understood as participating in the creation of an institutional world where the mundane and everyday are transformed into institutional and normative categories (de Montigny 1995: 28)

The following paper analyses ten interviews conducted with Family House personnel in 2008 through the lens of a normalization, which can most simply be described as a de-constructive perspective that attempts to problematize fixed and naturalized understandings of ‘the normal.’ In particular this paper discusses and problematizes the role of observation within such social work settings, and discusses how it is one of the key ways normalization processes work

within these institutions and is intimately linked with power hierarchies that have to do with gender, class, and 'race'/ethnicity. The central role of personnel's ability to 'take pictures' of families during specific time-sequences central to parenting will be discussed and analyzed from a perspective of normalization.

**13.35 Johanna Sefyrin**

Ph D. Department of information technology and media, Mid Sweden University [johanna.sefyrin@miun.se](mailto:johanna.sefyrin@miun.se)

Abstract: This paper centers on some of the consequences of women's supposed absence from IT design practices. Much research in the area of gender and information technologies focus on women's absence from IT design, but some of the research in this area underscore that this is not the only story. Recent studies indicate that the problem is not necessarily that women are excluded from IT design, but that their participation does not always become visible. This is based on the notion that women who do participate in IT design are sometimes being removed from the official image of "IT design" in normalization processes that place them in non-technical activities, even when those activities are part of IT design practices. These normalization practices were intertwined with practices of drawing boundaries between technical and non-technical activities. Based on previous research on how women are being removed from IT design practices in terms of how their participation does not become recognized, the aim of this paper is to explore what purposes it might serve to remove women's participation from the commonly acknowledged definitions of IT design practices.

## Session Stream 2: School health promotion and gender based violence

Chair **Katja Gillander Gådin**

M 205

### 09.35 Introduction

**09-45 Ph D Maria Wiklund & Ph D Student Maria Strömbäck**  
Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden

#### *Challenging individualized discourses on girls' stress*

Our paper is based on narrative interviews with girls and young women, aged 16-25 years, who have sought for help at a youth health centre because of their stress-problems. Their stories highlight the close connections between “doing of gender” and “doing of stress”. Normative feminine positions are embodied and articulated, as well as resistance to and challenges of gender orders. By the use of discourse analysis we will focus on a) girls’ own understandings of their problems, and b) the strategies they use to handle their stress. Preliminary, our analyses illuminate an *asymmetry*, or “gap”, between the girls’ consciousness and placement of their problems in a broader societal perspective – and their individual-centered strategies to handle them. Thus, the girls’ explanation models seem close to social constructionist views on health and illness. Nevertheless, they feel personally responsible to solve their own problems and experience a failure when they do not manage. In the paper we will problematize this asymmetry in relation to a societal context of individualized gendered Western neo-liberalism present in society at large but also in dominant health discourses. Embodiment, stress, gender and (dis)empowerment are some central perspectives.

**10-15 Maria Warne**  
Mid Sweden University

#### *Which health assets do boys and girls in upper secondary school find important for well-being and school achievement?*

**Background:** Schools are important environments for students’ health. Their health is often related to risk-factors in a perspective of an individual behavior. However, the new public health is focusing on supportive environments’, health assets and has a salutogenic approach. With more knowledge of important factors for girls’ and boys’ well-being, it is possible to develop school as a supportive environment for mental health and well-being, rather than focusing on how to reduce damaging factors. Several studies show that students could be a resource for school health promotion.

**Aim:** The aim was to examine health assets related to the school environment through the eyes of girls and boys at upper secondary school.

**Method:** The photovoice method was used together with grounded theory. Participants were fifty-nine students from a vocational program and from an individual program at upper secondary school. Every student got a disposable camera and were supposed to taking photographs related to the question: “*What do you think is important to feel well and to work well in school?*” In three to four workshops pictures were discussed and themes and proposals for action and change emerged from these discussions. Students were also interviewed individually and in focus groups about their earlier school experiences. The photovoice process, pictures and interviews were analyzed using grounded theory.

**Results:** Preliminary results show that both girls and boys motivated themselves to work well in school by thinking of what was coming after the school day, possibilities to relax and have fun. The girls’ and boys’ well-being were related to be treated with respect and the schools capacity to give necessary support.

### **10-45 Shivani Mathur**

Public Health Foundation of India

#### *No time for health: Reaching working men for raising health literacy*

Men have traditionally influenced household decision-making for health-seeking behaviours in South Asia. Since the IPDC announcement (1994) on male involvement, a systematic effort to enable men for greater responsibility of self and family health has begun, but mostly on reproductive and sexual health and among young men. As gender mainstreaming goes, women have been targeted for health literacy efforts on a range of health issues as ‘independent seekers of health related information,’ as the more socially and economically vulnerable section of society. A gender-sensitive approach suggests that community based outreach for men’s health shall improve their health outcomes as well.

Preliminary interactions in the field indicate that males believe that as bread-winners and following traditional notions of masculinity, they are expected to provide for the needs of the spouse and family. The hypothesis is that lack of time and economic pressures are a definitive contributor to low involvement in health outreach activities of males, despite a large number of women entering the workforce and supplementing household incomes.

This study explores the challenges in reaching health promotion messages to men (aged above 20 years) vis-à-vis their spouse, residing in three urban slums of South Delhi and who are employed in regular income generation activity. Administration of in-depth interviews among 30 married couples selected randomly from three slum communities in Delhi is the study design. Transcripts will be analysed for identifying underlying themes using a combination of inductive and deductive approaches. The results of this study may present important implications for implementation of Behaviour Change Communication programmes and interventions for men.

### **11.45 Ph D Magnus Åberg, & Ph D Maria Hedin**

Karlstad University, Sweden and Linnaeus University

#### *The pre-school teacher - a threat?*

There are few male pre-school teachers in Sweden. Research has shown that male pedagogues in pre-school can encounter different sets of stereotypes. They might be expected to be physically strong, into football, more daring than nursing. They also risk encountering suspicions of them being sexual abusers of children. Such suspicions are sustained by actual cases of male sexual abuse of children. In this paper we will discuss the impact of the discourse on sexual abuse on children on the physical men and women actually striving to be pre-school teachers. We have interviewed 20 male and female pre-school student teachers at the end of their training. We wanted to learn more of their thoughts on the pre-school teacher profession’s connection to femininities and masculinities, and found it interesting that many of them claimed that the risk for men to be labeled abusers could be a major reason for men not to choose the profession. We also learned that this question is hard to discuss and seem to be surrounded by taboos both within teacher education and in the profession. In the paper we will scrutinize the discourse on sexual abuse on children, and deconstruct the gender norms sustaining it.

#### *“Kind girl”, “kind boy” –normative stigmas or/and possibilities for non-violence*

In my presentation I will discuss certain results in process of a study focused on school- children’s mutual relationships at school. The two main focus areas of the study were popularity and mistreatment/violence. The research material was collected from about 1700 boys and girls aged 11 – 12 years in the schools of North Finland and Northwest Russia. The methods used in analyzing the research material were qualitative and quantitative. The research indicated a surprising result in process: 16 % of the Finnish boys connected the attributes “kind” or “nice” to the popularity of girls among boys. But even more often Finnish girls (21 %) connected the attributes to popularity in girls’ mutual relationships. The Russian boys and girls used the attribute clearly more seldom. In my presentation, I will focus on the attributes “good” and “nice” in the students’ texts and as concepts. I am asking, what are the meanings of the attributes. And I am also asking whether the meanings are different in different contexts and in the use of varied children. In feminist discussion the attributes have strongly been connected with a normative being of a female. You can do that interpretation also on

the basis of my research material. But what other kind of possibilities it offers? Does the material offer possibilities for breaks in the normative frames?

### **13.15 Katja Gillander Gådin and Maria Warne** Mid Sweden University

*Are schools ready for gender awareness in school health promotion projects?  
Experiences from an action research project in a Swedish secondary school.*

A school health promotion project was carried out in a secondary school where genuine participation and empowerment for all pupils were leading principles. The initial position taken in the project was that awareness of school gender relations is important for school health promotion, for teachers as well as pupils. The school health promotion program was seen as a strategic mean to improve education and health for students and to acknowledge that the curriculum defines what is taught but also has a specific organisational structure and ethos.

The overall aim with this presentation is to describe a model for genuine participation and empowerment from a gender perspective. The model was developed together with teachers and students in an action research project. A specific aim is to describe challenges and opportunities for such a project.

The program started with education of all teachers in school health promotion and gender issues. All pupils in grade 6-8 in a school in the north of Sweden participated in the project. On four occasions, ordinary school work was replaced by pupil-centred group-work on health, classmate-relations, gender and influence at school. During two days the pupils worked with prioritizing proposals for change in their school environment, which they presented as an exhibition. Obstacles and opportunities for the change process will be analysed through focus group interviews with pupils from all three grades and the teachers.

Preliminary results show that the model made it possible to engage the whole school in a school health promotion project and start changing processes through genuine participation. However, there also seemed to be several obstacles of which one was the barrier to include a gender perspective and gender awareness in the process.

## Session Stream 3: Challenging Girlhood

Chair Eva Söderberg

M 206

### 09.35 Annelie Bränström Öhman,

Ass Professor Literary Studies, Dpt for Culture and Media Studies, Umeå University, [Annelie.Branstrom@littvet.umu.se](mailto:Annelie.Branstrom@littvet.umu.se)

*"Now, when I was a girl..." The Girlhood Archives of an Middle Aged Academic Feminist*

Within Scandinavian feminist and gender studies the newly formed research field of "Girlhood Studies" can be described both as an anomaly and as a new challenge. *Who is that girl?* is the unavoidable starting question, rambling down an alley of famous girly protagonists from books and films. The image and experiences of the girl is indeed permeated by fictional elements and narrative considerations. On the other hand, there is an autobiographical context embedded in any theoretical or analytical endeavour of female feminist scholars within this field. Thus, the question of location and temporality becomes crucial, whether it is recognized or not. *Where is that girl? And when is/was she?* Drawing from a wide range of theorists and writers, from Simone de Beauvoir to Doris Lessing, Margaret Atwood, Martha C. Nussbaum and Sara Ahmed, this paper aims at highlighting the relation between the scholar and the style and whereabouts of girls as objects (as well as subjects) of gender studies. The form of the paper will be a part of its content; an archival experiment and experience, making use of memory work as well as personal diaries, novel writing and theory.

### 10.00 Åsa Ljungström

Ass.Professor, Midsweden University

*Wedlock Unlocked: Analysing the Consequence of the Pill*

This contribution considers the change in regard of single mothers in the 1960s when young people started to cohabit without marriage. This became so commonly accepted that weddings just before 1990 was distinguished as a news-item. Before 1917 sex out of wedlock was forbidden. Still, the concept of shame lived on into the 1970s, to have a child before marriage remained a shame. For centuries the base of patriarchy was funded by means of controlling female fertility and sexuality. Modernity helped loosening its grip by secularization, women's liberation, breadwinning, day-care of children. The modernisation prepared the ground for the contraceptive pill. Not only did it work as contraception, since 1964 the easily available means changed the way of thinking – as an actant. Those who experienced the conditions before 1964 and after know the difference. They elder ones still regard sexuality and reproduction an entity of marriage. The younger cohorts make a clear distinction between sex and reproduction. The cultural change of the contraceptives turns out to make a difference in the mode of thinking, experiencing life, a new range of agency, even undermining patriarchy.

### 10.25 Eva Söderberg,

Mid Sweden University

*100 words about Pippi Longstocking*

The storytelling worlds of childhood contribute to form our views of culture as well as of people. Our memories of stories may be saturated with indelible impressions or more diffuse ones, and they may create a filter below, or above, future experiences of culture. These memories may be connected to a reading experience that took place in solitude or when listening to a story being read out loud, and they may be about the contents or about the materialness of the book,

such as its scent, weight, texture, size – as well as its illustrations and cover images. Memories may also concern other kinds of experiences, for instance literary tourism and experience industry.

Adult memories of literature is an area which has not been significantly researched in Sweden. The purpose of my paper is to analyse and discuss collected empirical data from 2010 and 2011, consisting of stories with one hundred words in them about memories of Pippi Longstocking, both concerning the books and memories connected to the transmediated and in other ways launched Pippi, using theories about reception, literary sociology and gender. Those who have contributed with their memories are researchers participating in the project Challenging Gender and students at the Mid Sweden University teacher education programme. As far as reception itself is concerned, I will use the work of Wolfgang Iser, Louise M. Rosenblatt, Maria Ulfgard, Lars-Göran Malmgren and Jon Smidt to support my theories. Concerning the method of memory writing, the theoretical and methodical contributions from Bronwyn Davies and Karin Widerberg are relevant.

**10.55 Elina Oinas**

University of Helsinki, [elina.oinas@helsinki.fi](mailto:elina.oinas@helsinki.fi)

*\*The girls who won the lottery?\**

The paper discusses paradoxes around contemporary Nordic girlhoods, with focus on Finland. Today's girls are internationally viewed as the ones who won the lottery by being born in an assumedly gender equal society, with world's best primary education for everyone – in the context of another societal development: the growing uncertainty, anxiety and disillusionment among youth and the "porousness" of society.

Contemporary societies are permeated with both incredible promises and demands on girls; the contradictory pressures showing also in the statistics on mental ill-health among Finnish youth. Located between the extremely different views on what constitutes the context of today's girlhood, girls themselves need to develop new kinds of "intelligence" and skills to cope. This paper focuses on ideas of selfhood, self esteem and individuality on the one hand, and social bonds on the other. The data deals with young students' social lives on facebook, touching upon expressions of assumed freedoms, future hopes, the limited space for socially acceptable presentations of self and embodiment, and issues of shame, embarrassment, decency and affect.

**11.20 Åsa Warnqvist,**

PhD. Institutionen för litteraturvetenskap och idéhistoria vid Stockholms universitet. [asa.warnqvist@littvet.su.se](mailto:asa.warnqvist@littvet.su.se)

*"You don't have to be someone else": Embracing and refusing norms in Pija Lindenbaum's picture books*

The idea of the child's freedom and independence, and a renouncement of traditional norms, can be considered a common thread throughout the authorship of Swedish artist, illustrator and writer Pija Lindenbaum. This paper argues that Lindenbaum in her picture books emphasizes the right of the individual to step outside the social norms and boundaries inflicted by the adult majority society. Lindenbaum has, particularly during the last decade, approached issues related to a contemporary norm discussion in her picture books, not only in relation to gender and sexuality (topics explored by previous research; Österlund, 2008 & 2010; Simonsson, 2010), but also other areas of debate, like ethnicity, cultural origin, class and psychological health. This paper argues that Lindenbaum in her picture books questions norms and normative categorization through both the choices of themes and the dynamics between image and text. Through this investigation of normative categorizations, Lindenbaum approaches matters that few, in some cases no, Swedish picture book artists and writers have confronted in literature for small children.

**12.45 Bodil Formark**

Ph.D. in history, Coordinator of *FlickForsk! International network for Girlhood Studies*  
Mid Sweden University

*The hoodiness of girlhood studies – possibilities and challenges*

In Sweden Girlhood Studies has only recently been conceptualized as an academic research field. A development which almost exclusively rest on an Anglo-American influence. I argue that this trajectory of importation entails a specific set

of possibilities and challenges, which need to be addressed if Girlhood Studies is to be of gender theoretical relevance both nationally and internationally. The aim of my presentation is to discuss some of those possibilities and challenges through the notion of “hoodiness”. In this context “hoodiness” refers to the various effects of what could be called the nostalgic and insular tendencies within Girlhood Studies. I will primarily discuss the specific use of time and history which infuse the historiographies of femininity that seem to permeate the justification narratives concerning why Girlhood Studies is an important academic field. However, I will also suggest how a more dynamic and intersectional understanding of time, generation, memory and history could provide a starting point for a much needed theorization of girlhood.

### **13.10 Ann-Charlotte Palmgren**

Women’s Studies, Åbo Akademi University, [apalmgre@abo.fi](mailto:apalmgre@abo.fi)

#### *Feeling the Body and Constructing a Girlhood in Blogs*

Blogs are often discussed as places of freedom of speech and places where the blogger can construct themselves however they like. This paper discusses normativity and feelings in relation to girlhood through examples from blogs written by girls, all of the blogs belonging to the Swedish web community [ungdomar.se](http://ungdomar.se). The focus in this paper is on the feelings that the bloggers express about their body and on how these feelings can be seen as forming girlhood through norms. What are you allowed to feel? Which feelings are you allowed writing about if you are a girl blogger writing about your body? Writing about feeling unsatisfactory with their body is put forth as a norm in the blog at the same time as the web community does not allow these kinds of expressions. Within this paper I will explore how the girl’s blogging practices can be understood as reactions to power dynamics and the blog as an arena for negotiating girlhood.

### **13. 35 Concluding discussion**



Challenging gender

Theme:

Challenging Normalization processes

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