

# Gender, Equality, and Sexuality in Scandinavia

Spring 2017

Location: Stockholm

Credits: 3

Core Course: Yes

Study Tour: Berlin

Related Disciplines: Gender Studies, Sociology, Anthropology

Program Director: Iben de Neergaard, [iden@dis.dk](mailto:iden@dis.dk)

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Faculty Member: Anna Cavallin, [anna.cavallin@gender.su.se](mailto:anna.cavallin@gender.su.se)

Time: Mondays & Thursdays, 14:50 – 16:10

Location: 1E 510



\* "Swedish Dads" [www.johanbayman.se](http://www.johanbayman.se)

A gender-neutral pronoun 'hen' added to the official dictionary of the Swedish language, 2015  
Swedish toymaker publishes gender-neutral children's Christmas catalogue

**Description of course:** Sweden is the most gender equal country in the world and is well-known for its progressive culture supported by forward-thinking laws and legislations. Legalized prostitution (but illegal to purchase sexual services), paid parental leave for all parents, a very strong representation of women in leadership positions, progressive sex education, and equal rights for homosexuals are among the hallmarks of all Scandinavian societies. However, Sweden also has one of the most gender-divided workplaces in the Western world and gender equal policies do not automatically lead to gender equal behaviors.

This course explores how concepts of gender, body, sexuality and race intersect in current debates about changing family structures, children's rights, and new ethical dilemmas in a changing Scandinavia. For example, some of the recent initiatives discussed in Swedish media and worldwide – a gender neutral approach to children and the recognition of a gender-neutral pronoun “hen” in the new Swedish dictionary, Sweden's first LGBT pool, implementation of a norm-critical approach to teaching and learning, just to mention a few. We will follow public debates on various burning issues and compare and reflect on the differences observed between the United States, Sweden, and Scandinavia, as well as question norms and traditional ways of thinking about gender and sexuality.

**By the end of the semester, you will be able to:**

- Employ methodologies from critical gender and sexuality studies to analyze the assumptions about gender and sexuality, which inform studies about us as individuals, societies, cultures, etc.
- Focusing on Scandinavia and the US, examine how societies' construction of gender and sexuality intersects with ethnicity, race, class, age, dis/ability, etc.
- Be familiar with the most “burning issues” in Scandinavian debates about gender and sexuality.

**Faculty: Anna Cavallin**

B.A. (Comparative Literature and French Literature, Stockholm University). M.A. (Comparative Literature, Stockholm University). Planned PhD on Sweden in the late 19th century: gender, consumption and power in 2017 (Department of Literature, Stockholm University). Current instructor at the Department of Gender Studies, Stockholm University. Taught several courses on Swedish culture, literature, and gender for The Swedish Program Study Abroad Program located in Stockholm. Fields of research include a special focus on literary analysis contextualizing gender perspective.

**Panels/Guest lecturers:**

- **PhD Karin Milles**, researcher and lecturer specialized in language from different aspects of gender perspective.

**Field Studies:**

- **Jan 18: TBA**
- **Mar 15: Sex education in Sweden** – a workshop with RFSU, a non-profit organization that works for and with an open, positive view of sex education and relationship issues.

**Movies**

- **Something has to break/Nånting måste gå sönder**, 2014, Sweden.
- **Sex on the map**, 2012, RFSU & UR, Sweden.

**COURSE SPIRIT AND POLICIES:**

**Mutual learning atmosphere:** The course is based on a student-centered approach with a strong emphasis on class discussions. My role as instructor is to facilitate the course and learning process during, but all of us are responsible for creating the most beneficial atmosphere and environment for

## **DIS STUDY ABROAD IN SCANDINAVIA**

creation of knowledge. Different learning activities will occur during the course, such as group work, workshops, reflection tasks, field studies, movie- and text analysis and more. In addition to this, you will also be given the opportunity to add your own research and to get insights into the contemporary public debate..

**Everyone's opinion counts:** Some of the topics covered in this course could be seen as controversial and sensitive. You should feel comfortable in expressing your personal opinions regarding issues discussed in class, and we are all responsible for creating the discussion climate where this is felt by all participants. In order to attain this, also be prepared to be open to other points of view than your own, and always express disagreement in a respectful and constructive way. See this as an opportunity to broaden your perspective by listening to other opinions. The concept of safe space will be addressed and rules concerning this will be talked through during our first class session.

**Attendance and lateness:** You are expected to attend all DIS-classes when scheduled. If you miss multiple classes the Director of Teaching and Learning, and the Director of Student Affairs will be notified and they will follow up with you to make sure that all is well. Absences will jeopardize your grade and your standing at DIS. Allowances will be made in case of illness, but in the case of multiple absences you will need to provide a doctor's note. You are also expected to arrive to class on time. Multiple late arrivals are considered an absence.

**Academic Honesty:** Plagiarism and Violating the Rules of an Assignment DIS expects that students abide by the highest standards of intellectual honesty in all academic work. DIS assumes that all students do their own work and credit all work or thought taken from others. Academic dishonesty will result in a final course grade of "F" and can result in dismissal. The students' home universities will be notified. DIS reserves the right to request that written student assignments be turned in electronic form for submission to plagiarism detection software. See the Academic Handbook for more information, or ask your instructor if you have questions.

**Laptop and phones:** Attention in class is to be focused on the learning process, on class discussions and learning activities. Laptops and/or phones can be used if allowed by instructor for course purposes. Considerations will of course be taken, if you have special needs for a computer for note taking. In these cases, see the teaching & learning Center at DIS for a letter to give to the instructor.

**Format and Evaluation Criteria:** You will be evaluated in several ways. Each assignment will let you meet course objectives. All work – including in-class assignments – has to be completed in order to pass the class. Late papers or projects will be marked down with 1/3 of a grade for each day it is late.

**Disability and resource statement:** Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Academic Support ([acadsupp@dis.dk](mailto:acadsupp@dis.dk)) to coordinate this. In order to receive accommodations, students should inform the instructor of approved DIS accommodations within the first two weeks of classes.

### ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

FORMAT	EVAL.	CRITERIA	DEADLINES
<b>Participation</b>	<b>20%</b>	Includes attendance and in-class participation: engaged listening, speaking up in productive ways, participating actively in the learning activities, small group discussions, group work etc. <b>The grade will include the following parameters:</b> Active and verbal participation in class discussions and field studies. <i>This includes formal presentation of a burning issue or a dilemma and participation in debates during the semester</i>	<b>Throughout the course</b>
<b>Reflection paper I</b>	<b>10%</b>	A personally based 1-2 page reflection paper, where you respond to a class activity (reading, guest lecture, field trip etc) and communicate your own thoughts and opinions as you reveal the thought process which led you to these conclusions.	<b>Friday Sept 23rd</b>
<b>Reflection paper II</b>	<b>30%</b>	A personally based but theoretically informed written paper (4-5 pages) reflecting on your experiences with gender and sexuality in Sweden compared to the US. This should not be autobiographical or your own personal/family story but an analytical paper where you rely on some of the concepts brought up and discussed in class but put into perspective with your own experiences. The paper could also include images to be analyzed.	<b>Friday October 21st</b>
<b>Final project*</b>	<b>40%</b>	Final research paper (5-9 pages) or project (youtube-movie, audio or visual montage, parody, magazine, or maybe a queer political manifesto?). Creative projects must be accompanied by a 2-3 page academic reflection. -The final research paper or project should include a question around gender and sexuality. You are expected to answer that question in an academic manner using the theory and material from class.	<b>Friday Nov 11th</b>
*Detailed information about the assignments will be presented in class			

**Guidelines for the written assignments:** All assignments must be double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, 1-inch margins. At DIS, one page equals 300 words.

You are expected to use correct citing formats (either APA or MLA) on all assignments.

## Course Schedule – Subject to change

### 1. Jan 19: INTRO TO THE COURSE: CONTENT, CONCEPTS, GRADING, & EXPECTATIONS

*Readings:*

- the Syllabus

### 2. Jan 23: GENDER AND SEXUALITY AS ACADEMIC FIELDS OF STUDY

*Readings:*

- 'Sex & society' (Ellen Ross & Rayna Rapp, chapter 10 in Sex and Society, Lancaster et al) 1997
- 'Ethnicity and sexuality' (Joane Nagel, Annual Review of Sociology, Vol. 26) 2000

### 3. Jan 26: SOCIOLOGY OF SEXUALITY

An introduction to the theoretical study of sexuality and how to analyze and study sexuality

*Readings:*

- 'Theoretical Perspectives' (Steven Seidman, in Introducing the New Sexualities Studies 2nd edition) 2011

### 4. Jan 30: AN INTRODUCTION TO QUEER THEORY

What does 'Queer' really mean – as a theoretical framework and as a political movement?

*Reading:*

- April S. Callis (2009): Playing with Butler and Foucault: Bisexuality and Queer Theory, Journal of Bisexuality, 9:3-4, 213-233
- Autumn Elizabeth (2013): Challenging the Binary: Sexual Identity that is not Duality, Journal of Bisexuality, 13: 329-337

### 5. Feb 2: QUEER PEDAGOGY AND A NORM-CRITICAL APPROACH

*Readings:*

- Janne Bromseth & Renita Sörensdotter (2013), Norm-critical pedagogy, in Gender Studies, Education and pedagogy, Eds Anna Lundberg & Ann Werner, Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research: Gothenburg, 24-31.

## CORE COURSE WEEK FEB 6 - FEB 11

### 6. Feb 13: SCANDINAVIA: A GENDER EQUALITY PARADISE?

Are the Scandinavian countries ideal models of gender equality? What influence do the welfare systems have on gender equality?

*Reading:*

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- 'A Nordic Nirvana? – Gender, Citizenship and Social Justice in the Nordic Welfare States' (Ruth Lister, in *Social Politics: International studies in gender, state and society*, Vol.16.2 2009)

### **7. Feb 16: LIFTING THE VEIL: GENDER EQUALITY AND MULTICULTURALISM**

What does gender equality mean in a multicultural context? Is hijab a symbol of female oppression or a right to express one's religious beliefs?

*Readings:*

- Siim, Birte (2010), Migration, Multiculturalism and Gender – a Nordic Perspective, chapter to Peter Kivisto & Peter Kraus (eds.) *Challenging Power: Equality, Culture and Minorities* (forthcoming.)

*Public debate:*

- 'Hijab appeal' campaign divides Sweden, *The Local*, 25 Aug, 2013, <http://www.thelocal.se/20130825/49832>
- *Women In Sweden Wear Headscarves After Muslim Woman Is Assaulted*, *Colombo telegraph*, 21 Aug, 2013, <https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/women-in-sweden-wear-headscarves-after-muslim-woman-is-assaulted/>
- *TBA (Danish supermarket chain lifts headscarf ban*, 31 May, 2013, *Today's Zaman*, [http://www.todayzaman.com/world\\_danish-supermarket-chain-lifts-headscarf-ban\\_317046.html](http://www.todayzaman.com/world_danish-supermarket-chain-lifts-headscarf-ban_317046.html) )

### **8. Feb 20: MOVIE TIME – Nånting måste gå sönder/Something has to break, 2014.**

Feature film where issues on gender identity, sexuality and love and sexual relationships are represented through the subtle and moving person of Ellie and her struggles with societal norms, embodied in the boy she meets and falls in love with. Saga Becker was awarded the Swedish National Film Award (Guldbaggen) in the category Leading Actress for this part, and the film, and Becker, became enormously important for raising awareness on the situation for trans\*persons in Sweden.

### **9. Feb 23: NUDITY IN PUBLIC SPACES: DO OR DON'T?**

*Readings:*

- Sauna Etiquette in Sweden, *Routes North*, <http://www.routesnorth.com/planning-your-trip/sauna-etiquette-in-sweden/>
- Swedish school brings in 'gender neutral' changing rooms to avoid teenagers being labelled male or female, 26 April, 2013, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2315193/Swedish-school-brings-gender-neutral-changing-rooms-avoid-teenagers-labelled-male-female.html>
- Sweden's first LGBT pool makes a loud splash, *The Local*, 23 January, 2015 <http://www.thelocal.se/20150123/lgbt-swimming-pool-makes-splash-in-sweden>

**BREAK: NO CLASS FEB 27 AND MARCH 2**

### **10. Mar 6: PARENTING IN SCANDINAVIA: WORKING MOMS AND LATTE DADS**

What do modern Scandinavian families look like, and what are some of the issues facing them today?

*Reading:*

- "Nordic men on parental leave: Can the welfare state change gender relations?" (Lammi-

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Taskula, J. in Politicizing Parenthood in Scandinavia) 2006

- Michael B. Wells, Anna Sarkadi (2012) Do Father-Friendly Policies Promote Father-Friendly Child-Rearing Practices? A Review of Swedish Parental Leave and Child Health Centers, *J Child Fam Stud* (2012) 21: 25–31.
- TBA: Anders Chronholm, "Föräldraledig pappa"; Fathers on parental leave struggling with gender roles.
- Maia Booker, One Photographer Documents Sweden's Amazing Leave Policies, *New Republic*, May 30, 2015; <http://www.newrepublic.com/article/121928/johan-bavmans-photo-series-swedish-dads-parental-leave>

### **11. Mar 9: GENDER AND THE GAZE IN THE PUBLIC EYE**

#### **Gender discrimination and sexism in Swedish Advertising**

About the Swedish Advertising Ombudsman, an organization that reviews advertising and makes sure advertising standards are kept high by self-regulation. About gender in advertising in Sweden, and internationally: which stereotypes are at work here? Could you discern any general differences between Swedish advertising and other countries?

**Before class:** Take a look at the decisions available on the website, pick one and be ready to discuss it in class <http://reklamombudsmannen.org/eng/search-decisions>

### **12. Mar13: GENDER NEUTRAL CHILDHOOD**

Is a gender neutral society an utopia, 'gender madness' or our future? Pick a side and defend your position!

*Readings:*

- Swedish toymaker publishes 'gender-neutral' children's Christmas catalogue, Nov 25, 2012, <http://rt.com/news/sweden-toys-catalogues-gender-527/>
- David Landes, Toys "R"Us scolded for gender discrimination, *The Local: Sweden's News in English*, Oct 6, 2009, <http://www.thelocal.se/20091006/22504>
- Lydia Parafianowicz, Swedish parents keep 2-year-old's gender secret, *The Local: Sweden's News in English*, Jun 23, 2009, <http://www.thelocal.se/20090623/20232>
- Hen: Sweden's new gender-neutral pronoun, *The Day*, 26 March, 2015, <http://theday.co.uk/arts/hen-sweden-s-new-gender-neutral-pronoun>
- Nathalie Rothschild, Sweden's New Gender-Neutral Pronoun: Hen, Apr 11, 2012, [http://www.slate.com/articles/double\\_x/doublex/2012/04/hen\\_sweden\\_s\\_new\\_gender\\_neutral\\_pronoun\\_causes\\_controversy.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/double_x/doublex/2012/04/hen_sweden_s_new_gender_neutral_pronoun_causes_controversy.html)
- Cordelia Hebblethwaite, Sweden's 'gender-neutral' pre-school, *BBC News Europe*, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14038419>

### **13. Mar 16: GENDER AND RACE IN SWEDISH CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

How to introduce such concepts as gender, race and sexuality to children? Is there a way to avoid social constructs and stereotypes or can they be useful?

*Readings*

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- Reiko, Laura, (2014) Gender Matters? Swedish picture books and gender ambiguity, The Open Book: A blog on race, diversity, education, and children's books, September 30, 2014. <http://blog.leeandlow.com/2014/09/30/swedish-picture-books-and-gender-ambiguity/>
- TBA (On the debate in Sweden concerning Stina Wirsen's "Lilla hjärtat"-books)
- Reiko, Laura, (2014) Tearing Down Walls: The integrated world of Swedish picture books, The Open Book: A blog on race, diversity, education, and children's books, June 17, 2014. <http://blog.leeandlow.com/2014/06/17/tearing-down-walls-the-integrated-world-of-swedish-picture-books/>

### **LONG STUDY TOUR: BERLIN MARCH 18 - MARCH 26**

#### **14. Mar 27: GUEST LECTURE: "HEN" – the gender neutral pronoun, and how it is used**

Dr. Karin Milles will talk about the recently launched gender neutral Swedish pronoun "hen", its origins, and how it is used.

#### **15. Mar 30: MAINSTREAMING OF PORNOGRAPHY**

What is pornography? And what functions, if any, does it have in a society?

*Readings:*

- 'Porno-chic – Sex and mainstreaming of pornography in mass culture' (Anette Dina Sørensen, in *Generation P? – Youth Gender and Pornography*) 2007
- 'Let's talk about Porn! On youth, gender and pornography in Sweden' (Sven-Axel Månesson, Lotte Löfgren Mårtenson in *Generation P? – Youth Gender and Pornography*) 2007
- Sex sells, but what else does it do? The American porn industry' (Chris Pappas, in *Introducing the New Sexualities Studies* 2nd edition) 2011

### **TRANSITION TO COPENHAGEN APRIL 5**

#### **16. Apr 10 (Date subject to change): SWEDISH PROSTITUTION POLICY IN A GLOBAL SETTING**

In Sweden, the law of 1999 criminalizing the purchase of sexual services – but not the seller thereof – has been both much debated, but recently also followed by other countries. What is the history behind this law? What are the effects? How could we discuss prostitution from a gender equality point of view?

*Readings:*

Jay Levy, Pye Jakobsson, (2014) *Sweden's abolitionist discourse and law: Effects on the dynamics of Swedish sex work and on the lives of Sweden's sex workers*, *Criminology and Criminal Justice*. Published online 31 March 2014.

Kajsa Ekis Ekman, *Being and Being Bought* (2013), extracts from.

### **EASTER BREAK: NO CLASS APR 13<sup>TH</sup> AND APR 17<sup>TH</sup>**

#### **17. & 18. Apr 20: DOUBLE SESSION: 16.25-17.45 & 18.00-19.20 I. FEMINIST PORNOGRAPHY**

## **DIS** STUDY ABROAD IN SCANDINAVIA

We will watch and discuss the work of Erika Lust, a Swedish feminist porn director, screenwriter and producer promoting the aims of the feminist pornography movement.

### *Readings:*

- Constance Penley, Celine Parreñas Shimizu, Mireille Miller-Young, and Tristan Taormino (2013) Introduction: *The Politics of Producing Pleasure*, in *The Feminist Porn Book: the politics of producing pleasure*, the Feminist Press at the City University of New York: New York, pp. 9-22.

### **Before class:**

#### ***XConfessions***

Imagine the ultimate fantasy: to have your own sex stories and secret desires reenacted by other people in cinematic films. The erotica you've always wished you could watch, but nobody has ever done. This is the concept that lies beneath Erika Lust's most ambitious project to date *XConfessions*. Her erotic short films are based on the anonymous confessions submitted to the site by fans and followers and published here every day.

Please watch some of the videos available online and we will discuss them tomorrow.

<http://xconfessions.com/erotic-short-films/>

<https://vimeo.com/erikalust>

## **II.WRAP UP-SESSION**