

# Trans Studies Research Group | Events 2018

**The Centre for Gender Studies**  
Karlstad University, Sweden



Image: Lasse Långström, feature film, *Vem ska knulla pappa?*, SE 2017, 65'.

Conference | September 24-26, 2018

## **“Activism, Resistances and Alliances” : The 5<sup>th</sup> Nordic Transgender Studies Network Conference**

**With keynote speaker Julian Honkasalo, PhD, Gender Studies, Department of Cultures, University of Helsinki.**

The 2-day conferences aims to connect scholars, activists and artists working on topics related to Transgender Studies within or connected to the Nordic region. Activism is the founding stone of the emerging field of Transgender Studies and is continuously an important companion to the field of Trans Studies. This conference will present papers, posters and mini-presentations along the theme of activism, resistances and alliances and create a discussion space on activist practices, academic activism and grassroots organising. The conference will feature talks on trans activism, resistance practices, methodologies, media representation, historical and popcultural archives, art, ecology, social justice movements, prison industrial system, medico-legal issues, elderly care, ally activism, as well as affective and ontological approaches to trans research. We hope to create a specific discussion on activism, as well as a broader platform for the diversity of knowledge production in Trans Studies.

Seminar | November 14, 15:15 – 16:45, Room 4A:301A

**Prof. Ulrike E. Auga (Canterbury Christ Church University, UK)**

**“Transgender Bodies amid the Cult of Confession and the Ontological Turn”**

Michel Foucault’s unpublished lectures “On the Government of the Living” were the intended fourth volume of the *History of Sexuality* to appear under the title Confessions of the Flesh. In the 1980 held and 2012 published lectures he explains the historical foundations of the obedience of the Western subject. It is his idea that confession has largely shaped the ‘modern’ concept of the subject. Foucault locates these foundations in the connections between obedience and confession within early Christianity. In his genealogy of confession, he underlines that the ‘West’ developed a concept of confession as ‘liberation’, which does not hold in other contexts. The confession has both made us aware of our own subject-hood and subjected us to the powers extracting confessions. The problem is: to confess, to seek to know, and to produce the truth concerning oneself amounts to a submission. The injunction “Who are you?” is an innovation of the Christian West intended to guarantee obedience. Jo Sol’s documentary *Fake Orgasm* (2010) stages performer Lazlo Pearlman who explores the subversion of confessional culture via the use of the nude transgender body. As a trans performer he experiences the strong request of the audience to confess his ‘identity’, which he resists. Pearlman performs a corporeal insurrection. In his *Fake Orgasm* Manifesto, he writes “Fake Orgasm uses that space to find freedom from the normative; to subvert it, defy it, redefine it; even, and in fact, to enjoy and play with(in) it, whenever, however, with - and as - whoever we please”. The presentation using film extracts elaborates how the performative and material body denounces biopolitical regulations as well as the production of an ‘identitarian’ body and allows for a genealogical and critical discussion of trans bodies after the performative, material and ontological turn.

*Ulrike E. Auga is Visiting Professor at the Intersectional Centre for Inclusion and Social Justice (INCISE) at Canterbury Christ Church University, UK. Born in East-Berlin, she participated in the peaceful revolution in 1989 and became involved with social movements and issues of solidarity, gender and religion. She further developed her postcolonial critique when she worked for several years in South Africa, Mali, Israel, and the Palestinian Territories. She is a Gender, Cultural and Religious Studies scholar at the Centre for Transdisciplinary Gender Studies at Humboldt University of Berlin (ZtG) and the acting President of the International Association for the Study of Religion and Gender (IARG). Her research interests include: Gender, Sexuality, Cultural Memory, Nationalisms, Fundamentalisms in Transition Contexts (South Africa, West Africa, East/West Germany); Gender, Performativity and Agency in the Visual Archive; Postcolonial, Postsecular, Gender / Queer theory development; Epistemology of Gender and Religion, new Materialism and posthuman Ontology. [www.ulrikeauga.com](http://www.ulrikeauga.com)*

Seminar | September 5, 15.15-16.45, Room 5a:415

**Marie-Louise Holm, PhD (University of Copenhagen, DK)**

**“Lived lives, liveable lives: Reimagining trans and intersexed embodied lives through autobiographical accounts of the past.”**

How did intersexed and trans people of the past live and transition at a time when no category of trans or intersex existed? This question has been the point of departure for my PhD thesis. Through the reading of a Danish historical source material from the 1910s to 1970s, I have explored what kind of life narratives were articulated by persons who would today be perceived and categorised as trans before the category of transsexualism was introduced and the trope of the life story of a genuine transsexual was firmly established.

Seminar | March 28, 15:15-16.45 Room Hus 5a:415

(co-arranged seminar CGF and Social Work)

**Thomas Wimark, PhD (Stockholm University, SE)**

**“The Forever Road: liminality among queer refugees looking for a home”**

As people continue to flee repressive regimes, discussions of refugees' state of liminality has intensified. Spaces such as refugee camps and detention centres tend to force refugees to endure living in liminality for long periods of time. In this presentation, I focus on the actual experiences of movement from the old country to the receiving one. Widening the discussion on liminality to focus on the road to refuge, I argue that the road should be considered a metaphor for the connection between the old and the new place of belonging. Using material from interviews with queer refugees in the Swedish countryside, I discuss their travels on the road to inclusion. These stories lead to the development of the Forever Road where true belonging can never be achieved. Excerpts from the interviews show that refugees' ways of being both put them on the road and keep them on the road. At the heart of this concept lies structures that govern entrance to and exist from the road. In the end, I argue that this way of thinking of liminality moves discussions away from refugees' bodies and illuminates structures governing the Forever Road.

*Thomas Wimark is a researcher at the department of Human Geography at Stockholm University. His research concerns the nexus between migration, minority status and space. Recent publications include Wimark, Thomas, Lewis, Nathaniel M. & Caretta, Martina A. (2017) A life course approach to the field and fieldwork, *Area* 49 (4): 390-393. Wimark, Thomas (2017): The life course and emotions beyond fieldwork: affect as position and experience, *Gender, Place & Culture* 24 (3): 438-448.*

Double Seminar | April 11, 15.00– 16:45, Room Hus 5a:415

**“Trans bodies, affects and vulnerability”**

**Luca Tainio (University of Tampere, FI)**

**Wibke Straube (Center for Gender Studies, Karlstad, SE).**

**Luca Tainio (University of Tampere)**

**“Pink-black block activism, vulnerability and trans politics”**

This paper addresses notions of radical vulnerability, emotions and experiences within pink- black blocks as well as wider grassroots activism. I am asking what does activism feel like, what inspires action and how can we use notions such as love, rage and vulnerability in our work as activists but also as scholars. I am approaching my material within the theoretical frame of trans studies, and discussing my questions through and with interviewees from different anarchofeminist projects and collectives. The seminar will be based on a circulated text. Please contact me if you wish to attend and receive the text: [tainio.luca.m@student.uta.fi](mailto:tainio.luca.m@student.uta.fi)

*Luca Tainio (M.Soc.Sci) is a PhD student from the University of Tampere. His master’s thesis focused on the discourses on transgender in Finnish medical journals, and currently he is working on his PhD on trans-anarchism and activism. Locating himself on the field of transgender studies, Luca is interested in questions of emotions, bodies, resistance and solidarity, and combining activism and academic work.*

**Wibke Straube (KAU)**

**“Toxic matter. Anthropocentric affects and trans bodies in art and film”**

Following Malin Ah-King and Eva Hayward’s problematisation of the “politics of purity” I will investigate in this talk discourses on toxicity, the history of transgender bodies as ‘impure’ and the linkages between ecological affects and ethics of response-ability (Haraway) in the Anthropocene. By wondering how trans bodies in particular will be and are affected by the environmental crisis and climate change I trace how the intersection of ecology and trans bodies is interrogated in art and film.

*Wibke Straube, PhD, works as Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Gender Studies (CGF), Karlstad University. They completed their dissertation in 2014 entitled *Trans Cinema and its Exit Scapes. A Transfeminist Reading of Utopian Sensibility and Gender Dissidence in Contemporary Film* (2014). Wibke’s work is located the areas of transgender studies and feminist cultural studies with a focus on new feminist materialism, ecocriticism and affect theory.*



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