

# The Second Wave of Integration - Methods for Teaching Gender Theories in Business Schools

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## **Abstract**

This paper presents two separate parts of a project aiming at integrating gender theory in organization and management courses; teambuilding and visual methods.

Teambuilding theories lack descriptions and interpretations on gendered processes. Taking this identified problem as a point of departure, we developed an exercise about gender in teambuilding. The aim was to encourage students to develop their ability to understand and analyze group processes as gendered, i.e. with the help from theories on organization and gender.

Visual methods informed by gender theory may contribute to a critical view on the visual landscape of our society and its organizations. Furthermore, through visual methods students may become photographic subjects themselves and thus present alternative ways of visual representation.

Keywords: integrating gender, teambuilding, visual methods

# The second wave of integration - methods for teaching gender theories in business schools

Feminist organization theory has for some while given notice to that interactions between people, men and women, is an important point of entry to understand gendered processes, i.e. processes of segregation and power relations, in organizations and society (Acker & Van Houten 1974, West & Zimmerman 1987, Acker 1990, 1992). One of the analytically distinct gendering processes outlined by Acker (1988, 1992) is the creation of symbols, representations, and forms of consciousness that serve to explain, justify and sometimes to resist gender divisions. This paper focuses on gendered processes in 1) interactions and in 2) creation of symbols through two separate but related projects on methods for teaching gender theories in business schools. The first part is called 'gender in teambuilding' and the second part is called 'using visual methods in teaching gender theory'. The two parts in this joint project will be presented in parallel, without being analyzed in comparison. The aim here is to explore different methods to develop the integration of gender theory in teaching.

## Gender in Teambuilding and Visual methods

Over the years teambuilding has become more and more common within management educations, especially within teaching blocks on leadership and management. Teambuilding courses give students an opportunity to train their abilities in analyzing group processes in terms of power, leadership and conflict. Often teambuilding is approached from a position that views groups as a useful pedagogical tool through which students can be equipped with skills appropriate to managing within work settings. The ability to function within groups is seen as a career skill and will contribute to that students become more efficient in 'real' work life organizations. Criticisms towards teambuilding theories, methods and practices has highlighted its' inability to include the social, cultural and political context of different groups, as well as its' inability to incorporate current developments in social theory (Elliott & Reynolds 2005). Teambuilding theories, methods and practices lack descriptions and interpretations on gendered processes. Thus, when teachers tutor in teambuilding courses, they are not equipped with devices to be able to intervene in group processes to question and problematize gendered processes. Consequently, students' learning in teambuilding is insufficient, because of its' inability first, to include that the context, organizations and society, can be considered as gendered, and second, to incorporate current developments in feminist organization theory.

Against this background of insufficiencies in teambuilding theories, methods and practices, there is a need to include knowledge about gender and gendered processes. Taking these identified problems as a point of departure, we developed an exercise about gender in teambuilding. The aim was to encourage students to develop their ability to understand and analyze group processes as gendered, i.e. with the help from theories on organization and gender.

Visual methods in teaching may be one way to bring to light the various aspects of communication that legitimize, defy or provide ambiguous stands vis-à-vis gendered social relations. By exploring new ways of using visual methods we may be able to highlight a wider range of symbols and representations, and discuss their relation to the gender order. Through visual methods the position of the subject could be further problematized and highlighted. Pictures, films and other visual material based on the male norm characteristic of the present gender order may by and large reproduce the same order. Visual methods informed by gender theory may then contribute to a critical view on the visual landscape of our society and its organizations. Furthermore, through visual methods students may become photographic subjects themselves and thus present alternative ways of visual representation.

## Review of relevant literature

Gender is still a rather rare topic in management education and business schools. However, there is a body of literature that analyses what happens when gender as an issue is introduced in management education. The literature reports that academics introducing gender in teaching face hostility, overt and covert, from peers and students, since the topic is rarely seen as a strategic business issue (Marshall 1999, Sinclair 2000).

Whilst the mainstream literature is concerned to understand how teams at work behave, and how they can perform more effectively without much critique on their theoretical or methodological place in context, critical perspectives have questioned their positions as “neutral” approaches that are good for all (Elliott & Reynolds 2005). Understanding groups theoretically and in the classroom through the lens of theory of gender illuminates how the intersection of power and gender are reflected in patterns of work, communication and influence in the life of a learning group or a management team.

Research on conversational behavior has conceptualized interaction in terms of a gendered division of labor wherein men dominate conversation and women behave in a supportive manner (Zimmerman & West 1975, West & Zimmerman 1987). A conversation can be dominated by using a disproportionate amount of available time as well as through the use of interruptions, which serve to gain the floor. In literature on behavior that help the conversation going and which may support the speaker, three types of speech element are central. These are the use of (1) questions, (2) tag questions, and (3) minimal responses (Kollock et al 1985). The literature suggest that men talk more, interrupt and overlap others more, and use minimal responses as a lazy way of filling a turn and showing a lack of interest (Fishman 1978). Men interrupt women more than women interrupt men (Zimmerman & West 1975, Fishman 1978). Women, on the other hand, seem to talk less, interrupt less, ask a greater number of questions, and use minimal responses as a way of supporting the other speaker.

Research on minorities and majorities in organizations has shown the significance of numbers for how a particular group will behave and be treated in an organization (Kanter 1977). Kanter showed the behavior displayed by women in male-dominated organizations to a large extent is a structural effect of women’s situation as a minority. Women in senior management post are often the solitary women at that level, a situation conceptualized as a “token”. Being in a token position leads especially to three kinds of effects: visibility, contrast and assimilation. These effects lead in turn to the token being obliged to behave in a particular way (Kanter 1977).

There are two main approaches to visual methods in the social sciences. Common to the visual methods traditions in both anthropology and sociology is the conventions of “the realist tale” (van Maanen 1988). According to these conventions, the author is a scientific expert, and, thus, all personal reporting and personal reflections should be discarded. The scientist observes “objectively” and, in line with this tradition, photography is seen as a “reflection” rather than an “interpretation” of what is photographed. The corresponding visual tradition in sociology drew on documentary photography. Sociologists found that the documentary photographers had consummate involvement with their subjects, something that many sociologists were looking for. However, this documentary movement did not address issues of representation, ideology or how the photographer’s relationship with the subject influenced the end result (Harper 1998).

A reflexive approach to the visual entails a perspective on “reality” that goes beyond objects that have a visual presence. Human imaginations and conversations are also visual (see for example Lakoff and Johnson 1980). A reflexive visual ethnography then seeks to represent visible aspects of experience which different people interpret differently based on their own subjective knowledge (Pink 2001). Although there are several studies on the use of film in teaching in primary school (Berglund 2002, Blom 2001, Bloomfield and Child 2000, Graviz and Poso 1992), and there is a whole field of gender analysis in film theory, not much have been written on the use of film in teaching in the social sciences (Tollin and Törnqvist 2005).

Combining the intentions of both the researcher and the informant, collaborative photography is the result of their negotiation. This can, however, be done in a variety of ways. Researchers may work with one informant (see Collier and Collier 1986) or groups of informants (see Larson 1988). There are several reasons for engaging in collaborative photography. Many cases attest to the researcher’s interest in participating in the photographic culture of the informants. Another advantage is the possibility of research subjects (or students) to assert their subjectivity in relation to the researcher (or teacher) (Lantz 2005). There are a few recent studies that use participatory photography. One study used photography in order to give young pupils a chance to communicate what they liked and disliked about their school. Referring to their method as “photo evaluation”, the authors argue for an alternative to feedback forms (Schratz and Steiner-Löffler 1998). Moreover, there are

two recent studies that use collaborative photography in organizations (Warren 2002, Lantz 2005).

### **Questions**

Due to our extensive experience from teaching organization, management and gender we were well aware of the sensitivity of the subject. There is often resistance towards the area, both among women and men. Moreover, women were underrepresented at both schools, as they constituted only 30 % of student body population.

The management course did however have an even proportion of women and men, which made the circumstances relative beneficial. Simultaneously this was an exception compared to the overall male dominated context, and we were well aware of that this also affected students' opportunities to reflect on the interaction between women and men in the group.

The exploration of visual methods in teaching organization, management and gender took place in various sorts of courses and contexts within the same school. Thus, although the overall context was male-dominated, we understood that the conditions for the successful implementation of visual methods in the classroom would vary. For example, in some courses, students had very little or no knowledge of the field organization, management and gender. However, one course was a specialized course named Organization, management and gender, where this particular field of knowledge was the main focus.

In the photographic assignment the main focus was on enhancing the students' learning processes. The assignments moreover aimed at assessing how well the students have grasped core theoretical concepts of the course and to what extent were able to make their own interpretations of the theories. The aspiration was also that the project should provide a way to bridge the gap between theory and practice and make students involved and bring examples and own observations to the classroom. By exploring reflexive visual methods when teaching organization, management and gender, we wish to further problematize the gendered visual landscape of today.

### **Method**

#### *Students in teambuilding*

The course Leadership (5 credits) is an in-depth optional course within the specialization in Management (60 credits) that is offered during year 4 in the education in Economics and Business Administration at the Stockholm School of Economics, SSE. At the time of this project there were 21 students, eleven women and ten men participating in the course of Leadership. They were all about the same age, between 20 to 25 years old. The course was offered in Swedish. The students had participated in courses before this one where gender theory had been taught.

The course was built up of four workshops. The first workshop was practice-oriented and dealt with team building whereas the others were oriented towards leadership theories. In team building the students are tutored in investigating leadership and group membership and from experience based exercises to reflect upon assumptions underlying people's interaction as well as their own role in this teamwork. The innovative exercise took place during the first day of the teambuilding workshop in the afternoon, between 3 to 6 a.m., and was preceded with several teambuilding exercises since the workshop started at 9 o'clock in the morning.

#### *Students in visual methods*

The composition of students varied between the courses. The course *Organization, Management and Gender* (5 credits) at SSE is an optional course for third and fourth year students. There were ten students, six women and four men. The course *Gender and Management* is a mandatory course for fourth year students at the Royal Institute of Technology (RIT). There were 16 students, two women and 14 men. The mandatory course *Management II: Organizational Behavior* is given to first year MBA-students at SSE. The class consisted of approximately ten women and twenty men. Whereas the two former attracted students of 20-25 years of age, the MBA students were in their thirties.

The three courses had different dispositions. *Organization, Management and Gender* was built up by a number of lectures and seminars, accompanied by reading assignments, in the first part of the course. The second half of the course, after a literature exam, offered a number of guest speakers and the students were obliged to write a final

paper. The visual methods were introduced in the second half of the course. In the two other courses the visual methods (and gender theory) were introduced in the middle of the course.

### *Innovation in teambuilding*

Actors who participated in the innovation exercise were in addition to the students, the course supervisor, acting as a tutor in the group processes (woman), four external process tutors acting as observers (two women and two men), and two teachers from the pedagogical project (women). The external tutors acted as observers to small group exercises and were to give feedback on the group processes that developed in the exercises.<sup>1</sup> The teachers' roles were that one gave instructions to the specific exercise and the other teacher collected data to be able to evaluate the exercise. The innovative teambuilding exercise can schematically be described with the following parts:

- Introduction of the innovative exercise
- Part 1 of the exercise, in small groups (20 minutes)
- Reflections in the whole group
- Part 2 of the exercise in small groups (20 minutes)
- Students' dramas and reflections in the whole group
- Evaluation of the exercise in the whole group, students, tutors, supervisors and teacher together

The innovative exercise began with that the teacher introduced the background of the exercise in relation to the pedagogical project. Then, Part 1 of the exercise started with that the small groups of five students (one group consisted of six students) were given, firstly a written instruction of the exercise to the whole group to solve, and secondly, each student were given a two-pages text. The instruction said: "Read the text. Work with the questions. Formulate together in the group new questions, statements, contradictions and learning in relation to the text the group worked with". The text is from a working book dealing with issues of gender in organizations that is developed by participants in this pedagogical project (Wahl & Holgersson 2004). The text, in Swedish titled "The right experience" illustrates four situations where the definition of competence and gender is negotiated in an organizational context (Ibid, p 55). Three questions follow the text: "1. Discuss the themes that are recurring in the four scenes. Do you have experiences of any resembling situation? 2. Who defines competence in organizations? 3. How can one understand the relation between competence and experience?"

At the same time the students were given their exercise, the other teacher instructed the four tutors. In addition to the material the students were given, the tutors also got a written instruction that said: "Part 1. In what ways are the group members contributing in the work process? E.g. how can commitment to the exercise be described in the group (in speech and body language)? How is the time of the conversation distributed among the group members? Who asks most questions? Who is given superiority in the interpretation process (in the exercise)? The small groups worked with the exercise during twenty minutes. One tutor followed each small group, which they observed and gave feedback to from their instructions.

Then, the whole group was gathered again for instructions to Part 2 of the exercise. But before, they were requested to read a written eye-opener, picked from the same working-book as the text before (Ibid. p 57). Then, a written instruction to Part 2 was handed out which said: "Choose one of the four scenes in the text. Produce and formulate a continuation to the chosen scene. The continuation is supposed to change the direction so that the scene will take another turn. The continuation of the scene can take place in another time, in another context and with other actors." Dramatize the continuation of the scene. Be prepared to plat the drama of the continuation of the scene during five minutes in front of the whole group. At the same time the four tutors were given their written instructions, which said: "Part 2. In what ways do they come to decisions? Who does what? How is the agenda set? Note e.g. a) who asks questions? b) who asks tag questions, c) who gives so-called minimal answers (humming which can be used differently: e.g. to show support or lack of interest), d) who interrupts who, e) superiority in the interpretation process; who's suggestions are supported or disregarded and silenced. Also, note on a)-e) in what way it happens. Who is

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<sup>1</sup> The external tutors participated in an education to become supervisors in teambuilding. Their participation in this course and the teambuilding workshop was a practical training place for them.

identifying her- or himself with whom in the chosen scene?" The groups worked with Part 2 in the small groups during twenty minutes while a tutor observed and then gave feedback to each group from the tutor instructions.

The small groups were then gathered together. Each group played their drama of a continuation of a chosen scene in front of the others. Thereafter the students were encouraged to reflect on the work process and how they set about in Part 2 of the exercise. A so-called written deconstruction of the original text was then handed out, which the students were asked to read. The teachers had reformulated the text so that different indicators of gender were changed. The purpose was that the deconstruction would question such behaviors that people ascribe as natural to and typical of either men or women. Finally, the last part was devoted to a jointly evaluation of the exercise, students, course supervisor, tutors and teachers respectively.

#### *Innovation in visual methods*

The subproject "visual methods" includes two separate but related projects. Both explore teaching and learning issues when using visual methods in the classroom. However, the type and use of visual methods differ between the projects. In the first part, the photographic project, the use of participant photography was introduced in the optional, specialized course *Organization, Management and Gender*. The course spanned over 8 weeks, with two to three two-hour lectures every week. The photographic assignment was introduced during the third week. By then, the students had been introduced to the core concepts and theories in feminist organization theory. The students were divided into groups with 2-3 students in each group. Each group was given a disposable camera with 24 pictures and the instruction to take pictures of the gender order in the next two weeks. The regular classroom lectures went on parallel to the assignment. After approximately two weeks the cameras were handed in and the pictures developed. The students then got the pictures back and were asked to decide what pictures they wanted to share with the rest of the class. Each group was asked to make an exhibition out of the chosen pictures. At the finishing session of the course each group presented their pictures and discussed their ideas and reasoning behind the pictures with the teacher and rest of the class. The assignment was not graded, it was however mandatory, and had to be finished in order to pass the course and obtain grades.

In the second part of the project, the use of the documentary 'Men at Kastrup' served as a case study for using visuals in the classroom. This part focused on how a film, inspired by theory from the field gender and organization, can be used in different learning environments. In the course *Management II: Organizational Behavior*, the documentary was screened as a case study in a session called "Looking beyond the formal organization" and which, to a large extent, focused on service occupations. At the RIT, the film was screened in the course called Gender and Management, and which had then recently dealt with issues of leadership.

#### *The documentary 'Men at Kastrup' in brief*

'Men at Kastrup' is a 37-minute documentary made by Jenny Lantz and Nanna Gillberg. Focusing on traveling businessmen, attention is directed to the airport as a transnational arena for the construction of masculinities and leadership. In offering leaders a place for undisturbed networking, the airport lends itself to observations of the reproduction of hierarchies between men, and the conservation of these hierarchies by the numerous women (and a few men) who have front line service positions at the airport.

Organized along a number of themes, the film begins with exploring the topics of service, travel frequency, and lifestyle/consumption patterns. The film then moves on to focus on issues of male dominance, feminism, and businessmen's clothing – with the aim of challenging prevalent norms of hegemonic masculinity by asking 'unexpected' questions. Evidently, the businessmen do find the latter subjects more difficult; whereas they give ready answers to questions about their travel habits and service requests, they claim not to have given the male dominance at the airport much thought. Likewise, faced with the question of feminism, some men seem slightly provoked.

Evoking Hochschild's (1985) study of airline flight attendants, the passenger assistants testify to the emotional work that is required in their job. Every now and then, comments from the interviewees are juxtaposed with images from billboards at the airport. Taken collectively, these ads further reinforce the gender constructions at Kastrup. Not only are women often objectified in these images, but also, social class is repeatedly emphasized.

Moreover, complementary gender constructions are often manifested in the ads, portraying men as active and women as passive (i.e., caring). The purpose of the second part of the Visual methods project was to explore teaching and learning issues when using the documentary 'Men at Kastrup' in undergraduate as well as graduate courses. The objective was to develop teaching methods for students with varying background knowledge in the field of gender and organization. Students participated in the project by commenting, asking questions and reacting to the film.

#### *Procedures in teambuilding*

The procedures can be described that first; one of the teachers was a participant observer during the whole exercise and took notes openly. The observations focused on how the exercise proceeded, what happened and which actors were involved, and the way the interaction and dialogue between students, tutors, supervisor and teacher developed. Both the teachers then discussed their observations and experiences during the exercise. Second, after the exercise, one of the teachers made a group interview with the four tutors about their experiences from the exercise. The interview was taped. Third, the following morning one of the teachers was a participant observer during an evaluation of the preceding day. And fourth, a month later both the teachers and the course supervisor had a meeting where the exercise was evaluated and information about how the course had proceeded was shared.

#### *Procedures in visual methods*

The student learning in the photographic assignment was assessed in several different ways, firstly by the comments and reflections made by students while they were presenting their pictures. Secondly by the pictures themselves, that showed how the students had interpreted the assignment. The status of the photos in relation to the photographed objects was not discussed in this assignment. The pictures were treated as representations of the phenomenon the students wished to bring forward in the exhibition. Thirdly, the students commented on the assignment in a written course evaluation. The film was screened once to each one of these classes. Participant observations were made during the screening and of the discussion.

### **Results in teambuilding**

The innovative exercise was run as planned in the workshop on teambuilding. The students as well as the tutors understood their instructions to the exercise and they seemed to work hard and to be committed to do what they were encouraged to do. The expectation, that the content of the exercise, dealing with issues of gender, would influence the group processes, was confirmed. But the way the content influenced the group processes was not the same that had been expected in the planning of the exercise. What happened instead, and why the exercise proceeded as it did, will be discussed and analyzed below.

In our observations, as participating teachers, we noted patterns in the interaction in the students' work process in the small groups. E.g. we saw that in the beginning of the work, the women seemed to await and check out the level of understanding about the issue with the men in the group. Thereafter, when it seemed like they got a hold of the knowledge level, the women took the initiative in the exercise. The women were more active in giving suggestions and to follow up on each other's suggestions. The women seemed to have more fun in the process as they made jokes and laughed more, than the men did, and especially they laughed more to each other's jokes. A few men were rather quiet and they took the role of taking notes in the exercise. An interpretation of this particular pattern in the work process is that it seemed like that both the men and the women cooperated to retain a nice atmosphere in the group, as it was the first day of the course and just the beginning of the training in teambuilding. Regarding the women checking out the men's knowledge on the subject before they took the initiative can be seen as form of adjustment; they did not want to challenge the men. It could also be an explanation to why the men took less initiative and that some men were quiet. They did not want to challenge the women either, as they did not know much about the subject, or they thought it did not concern them, or they thought it was unimportant or just boring and not very interesting.

When the tutors then gave feedback on the work process in the exercise, some arguments appeared between them and the students. When one of the tutors gave feedback on the behaviors in the work process, she used several gendered stereotypes, which the students questioned and did not agree with. An interpretation is that also the tutors

were influenced by the fact that the exercise dealt with gender and felt obliged to give feedback on gendered behavior, but delivered stereotypes rather than problematizing them.

In Part 2 of the exercise, where the students worked on their dramas, a similar adjustment pattern was seen as was before. The women awaited and checked out the men's opinions before they then took the initiative in the exercise. Further, the students' dramas cannot be described to have challenged the gender relations in the situations, as they were neither radical nor likely. The situations portrayed conflicts about power in organizations in different ways, where e.g. one situation illustrated a recruitment process where a male candidate is chosen on questionable reasons. In one of the dramas the students solved the conflict by letting a man act as the "women's savior". The male candidate refuses an offer to become the CEO of a company only to make way for a female candidate. And the female candidate answers by showing gratitude to him. In another student drama, a woman who thinks she has been ignored in a recruitment process contacts the male boss and question the decision. The boss contacts the male manager and tells him that it was a wrong decision to make. The manager then has to apologize to the woman and as a punishment the manager gets a 2-years extension to service abroad. After the exercise, in the students' reflections on the dramas a woman says it mattered that the manager had to apologize. Another woman says it was a good thing that the woman stood for her opinions and questioned the decision, because otherwise it is common to give in.

About the group processes, the tutors brought forward that they thought it had been difficult to make observations. The tutors thought that there was at risk that they tended to emphasize their interpretations on behavior as gendered and to stereotype. A male tutor thought it was tricky to discuss gender both as content and as process in the same exercise, because the content spilled over on the process. In the following interview, the tutors were frustrated over the exercise. They thought the exercise was problematic because there was a mix between content and process. Also, the tutors thought that their instructions had been insufficient, concerning the purpose of the exercise and how to handle the feedback.

The following morning the students had to reflect on yesterday. About the exercise, one woman said that she was tired of discussions on gender roles and about being a girl was problematic. She said she hoped that there would not be anymore such things in the course. Another woman thought the subject was tedious. One man said that you tended to get stuck in the discussions and another man said that he thought that his generation had had to go through this so much so that now it had become very tiring. One woman though took a different view by saying that she thought it was important that the question was stressed. The supervisor tried to present several angles on why it is important to consider gender in organizations, as a manager or as an employee. Noticeable, only the content of the exercise was discussed. The work process, which was the main purpose to reflect on, was ignored by the students as well as by the supervisor.

A month later at the meeting, the supervisor informed the teachers that issues of gender had been a recurring theme in the course later on. A group of students had made an excellent project work on theories of leadership and gender. Concerning the exercise, her experiences were that she had lectured on the subject rather that tutored the group processes, which had not been what she, had intended. Also, in relation to the tutors' reactions, she suggested that in the future the exercise could be run without external tutors.

### **Results in visual methods**

The students' own evaluations of the assignment are overwhelmingly positive. All the students except for one described the assignment as fun and rewarding. Several students stressed that taking photos had been a good way of bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and everyday practices. The photos, they said, provided a way to learn how theories could be applied in everyday life. Several students also brought up that it had boosted their creativity to work with new methods. One student thought that the assignment was fun but did not bring anything new to the learning process. Two of the students commented on the timing of the assignment. One student thought it would have been more interesting to do the assignment in the beginning of the course. One student suggested that photos should be taken both in the beginning and in the end of the course. One student suggested that more work could be done to integrate the themes presented by the various groups.

The group presentations of the pictures displayed a wide variety of symbols and interpretations in relation to the gender order. It was also interesting to note that the

pictures represented the qualitatively different aspects of the gender order. Some groups focused on the processes of social structuring, both the reproduction and the contesting of structures. Other groups focused on the outcomes, or results of social structuring.

The film was screened as planned in all three courses. In the course *Organization, Management and Gender*, the discussion came to center on the gender order, the homosociality of the male passengers, and the male norm. The majority of students enjoyed the film and found it entertaining. Some added that they did however find it rather scary. They were stunned at how unreflected many of the male passengers seemed. The subordinated category, the service personnel, seemed to them a lot more reflective both regarding themselves and the passengers. A few students brought up the topic of "the free choice", and commented on how the film showed that it is a construction based on the male norm. There were generally a lot of comments regarding the body language of the male passengers when addressing questions of male dominance, feminism, and compliments. The students were able to link this to the construction of the male norm and, thus, these men's unfamiliarity with having to answer such questions.

Even among students that did not have an extensive knowledge in the field, the film brought about a lively discussion. Some of the students at RIT said that they found it funny. The lion share of students, and the male students in particular, did however consider the lack of women travelers and the gender order at the airport a non-problem. For example, they said they thought the bad behavior of passengers from the perspective of service personnel was understandable because passengers had paid for that service. Furthermore, they found the interviewees who made fun of the questions regarding feminism very likable. "We belong to a new generation", was an often-made remark. A Spanish woman who in the film denies being a feminist with reference to her Spanish citizenship was taken as a piece of evidence that lack of gender equality is a problem constructed in Sweden and its neighboring countries. In general, a lot of the discussion drifted away from issues of power relations. A woman did however point out that the service personnel seemed more reflected than the business travelers.

In the MBA class, the discussion was explicitly directed towards gender and service management. Just as in the class at the RIT, students did not reflect so much about power issues. Instead, they argued that your ability to pay should determine how far service offerings could go. Some of the students were surprised at the statements of the service personnel, as they found them "unprofessional". When they touched upon the topic of gender, it was mostly as fellow passengers. For example, they would think of ways to increase the number of female passengers.

## **Discussion**

The ambition with the innovative exercise was fulfilled as so far as conditions were created to stimulate students learning on gender in teambuilding. An innovative exercise was created. There were resources provided. The tutors were to make observations and give feedback from the material of instructions that had been developed to the exercise. And the supervisor was an additional resource. Also, a teacher participated to be a support concerning the field of knowledge on gender research. The ambition failed as far as that students, tutors and supervisors did not reflect much on the work processes in the groups during the exercise. The content of the exercise dominated in the discussions and reflections. The content influenced the group process so to speak that all the actors involved avoided discussing the process. The students, men and women, cooperated to retain a nice atmosphere in the small groups as well as in the class as a whole. The use of the photographic project and the film worked out as planned, although we failed to screen it to an undergraduate class.

## *Analysis*

As participating teachers/gender researchers, our view is that the exercise with its instructions was a fruitful device to work with gender in teambuilding. The instructions for the observations made us see patterns that would have worked as relevant points of entries in giving feedback to the students on e.g. how the agenda setting took place in the work process.

The criticisms the tutors delivered concerning the exercise and the instructions they were having, made visible the importance and significance of knowledge of the subject of gender theories for being able to make relevant and insightful observations in the group processes. The instructions were about the same as in any group process analysis. It was obvious that the tutors were influenced by the content of the exercise in a way that we as

teachers had not anticipated. And the students who questioned the tutors' feedback also noticed this.

From the teachers' point of view the photographic assignment was easy to introduce and rewarding to use. It evoked a lot of enthusiasm and creativity among the student. The students were also very positive as discussed above. The photographic assignment provided an opportunity for the students to bring representations of the world outside classroom to the lectures. The fact that the pictures showed a wide variety of motives and interpretations indicates that the students had grasped the complexity of the theoretical concept. Furthermore, the assignment provided a way for the students to reflect on their own personal experiences and how they could be related to theoretical concepts. In that sense the photographic assignment helped the bridging the gap between theory and everyday practices. The final session when the different groups gave account of their projects provided a learning opportunity for the students and an opportunity to discuss different aspects the concept.

The fact that the discussions in conjunction with the screening of 'Men at Kastrup' came to revolve around different topics in the three courses can be interpreted by reference to the different settings. First, the gender composition of the students in the classroom affects what issues will be brought up. Issues of power are difficult to bring up for women in minority positions. By commenting on the gender order they oppose the gender blind view that the male norm rests on. Second, the knowledge of the field gender and organization among the students varied considerably. The fact that the film worked best in the course where the students had had an exclusive focus on that particular field is not surprising: the students were then more trained to see the various expressions of the gender order. Among these students, the existence of a gender order was not controversial at all, and thus, they could focus on the gendering processes a lot more. Students in the class at the RIT were many times so focused on discussing whether there is a gender order at all. Third, the general context of the course affected the discussions. Whereas the course *Organization, Management and Gender* at SSE was relatively academic, the two other courses were more applied (for example, the reading assignments were less extensive). This difference may have made it harder for the students from the RIT as well as the MBA students to reflect on the content of the film from a non-business traveler's perspective. They seemed less inclined to reflect on the content of the film from the perspective of the service workers, or from women in general.

### *Implications*

Neither students, tutors nor supervisor were capable during the exercise to move focus from the content to the work process in the exercise. The criticisms that the students delivered about the content to the supervisor made her act as a lecturer more than a tutor. Rather than problematizing the feelings the content seemed to trigger the students with and its consequences for the relations between the students, the supervisor lectured on why knowledge of gender as a subject is motivated within management educations. An interpretation is that the students training, learning and capability to analyze the significance if gender in teambuilding was limited because of that we as teachers and gender researchers had underestimated the importance of knowledge of gender theories for being able to make insightful observations.

We believe that a prerequisite for the photographic assignment to work out well is the students can grasp the theoretical concept they are asked to depict. It is therefore wise to introduce the assignment after the students are familiar to the concept. On the basis of these three different screenings and learning experiences, we suggest that the film 'Men at Kastrup' is better suited to be used in teaching for students with a more profound knowledge of the field gender and organization. Then, the learning will not be hampered by the general resistance to feminist theory, so common to teaching in the field of gender and organization. If the film is to be screened to a group with good knowledge in the field, the discussion will most likely take off without intervention from the teacher. It is much more difficult to integrate this film and this kind of knowledge in a course which mixes gender blind material with knowledge from the field of gender and organization. However, if the film were to be screened to a group of students without the requisite knowledge, the best thing would be to include some readings that should be read before the screening. For instance, they could be assigned a couple of chapters in *Det ordnar sig* (Wahl et al 2001) or another basic textbook in the field. In addition, a number of prepared questions is advisable, to direct the discussion to topics of gendering

processes and issues of power. One question that points in the direction of power relations is "Who is the protagonist and who has a supporting role?"

### **Conclusions**

The exercise in teambuilding shows that it takes quite a lot of knowledge and awareness on gender in order to be able to observe and analyze gender in group processes in such a way that it contributes to students learning. As such it could be seen as an illustration on what has been put forward as pitfalls when trying to integrate gender in previously gender blind courses: the highlighting of gender power relations results in a reproduction of gender power relations. The less the supervisors and tutors know of gender power relations, the more they risk contributing to a contra productive learning, as they reproduce instead of challenge stereotypes and power relations. If we were to do this exercise again we would emphasize the importance of knowledge and awareness among tutors and supervisors even more. We would also have prepared them more severely, for instance by discussing possible scenarios, in order to make it easier for them to redirect their own and students focus on the processes.

We have also discussed whether to do this exercise again *at all*. Student reactions could be interpreted, as they were not ready for this kind of intervention. Maybe the exercise was too complicated and too psychologically demanding in such an early stage in the course. If doing the exercise at all, it should be placed later on in the course. Given that many student seemed defensive and hostile, we could have used an outside case (i.e. a video clip) instead of students own group processes, as point of departure for discussing gender power relations. Another suggestion is that we would not only have focused on gender, but other power relations as well. If we also had taken class and ethnicity into account many students would have been positioned both as privileged and subordinate. It would have become more complex but maybe more in line with students own experiences.

One way to develop the photo project further is to use the photographic assignment in different courses and different student settings. Using pictures in different ways, for examples by letting the students bring photos form magazines etc. to the classroom, could also develop the project. It is very difficult to integrate knowledge in the field of gender and organization in courses where a great part of the course and the course material is based on gender blind knowledge. Apart from course integration, the film has several advantages in that it lends itself to more impersonal reflections; students can reflect on the behavior and statements of the people on screen rather than relate all discussions and readings to their own experiences of being a gendered person, which is very common when teaching gender and organization. The film "Men at Kastrup" has been sold to over 30 different institutions in Sweden and Europe. One way to develop the project further could be to study how other institutions use the film in teaching.

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## **Author Note**

### **The Second Wave of Integration - Methods for Teaching Gender Theories in Business Schools**

The Council for the renewal of higher education, Stockholm, financed this project 2005-2006.

The project is conducted by the research group Fosfor, situated first at Stockholm School of Economics, and from July 2005 at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm.

Fosfor at Royal Institute of Technology  
Lindstedtsvägen 30  
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The project consists of three separate but related parts:

PART 1 Gender in Teambuilding

PART 2 Student reflections on gender in a learning process

PART 3 Using visual methods in teaching gender theories

This paper, edited by Anna Wahl, reports two of the projects; Gender in teambuilding and Visual methods in teaching gender theories.

#### **Gender in Teambuilding**

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#### **Visual methods in teaching gender theories**

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