

GEXcel – Centre of Gender Excellence

Theme 2: Deconstructing the Hegemony of Men and Masculinities

Linköping University Autumn 2008

WORK REPORTS FROM VISITING FELLOWS

Anna Boden, PhD Student

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I was given the opportunity to be a Visiting Fellow with GEXcel at Linköping University for five weeks, between the 15th November 2008 and the 19th December 2008. In this time I have had a fantastic chance to engage with research in my areas of interest, to work in an international context, and to meet scholars and doctoral students with a broad range of interests. I was warmly welcomed and consider it a great compliment and privilege to have been accepted to work with such a positive and high calibre group of academics.

Of particular value were the two presentations I was asked to give. These allowed me to make my own research ideas more accessible to others and to gain important critical and constructive feedback, comments and considerations for both my thesis and my future work. This was carried out in a very supportive and nurturing environment and allowed me to develop my communication skills. In the first paper, presented as part of the GEXcel Symposium on 'Men, Age and Embodiment: Power, hegemony and deconstruction', I was able to discuss my current PhD work which relates more generally to the main GEXcel Theme of Deconstructing the Hegemony of Men and Masculinities. To capitalize on this, I suggested ideas for future research in my second seminar paper which focused more specifically on older men as grandfathers at a GEXcel internal seminar. In my talk entitled 'Older men and ageing: gendered performance, intersectionality and gender' I presented the argument that understanding grandfathers from an intergenerational perspective might be a more relational approach to considering how identities are intersected by social signifiers of difference; in particular age, generation, space and masculinity. Consideration of my future work has allowed me to think seriously about my future prospects and of ideas for possible publications, something I have yet to do and feel is essential for a young scholar.

When not presenting my papers, I have had the chance to continue work for my thesis and to develop my ideas further. I have been provided with an office and other excellent facilities. In this time I have also been able to transcribe some interviews I carried out before the visit and to reflect upon them further. As a result of coming here, I have also been given access to a lot more relevant reading and writing that I couldn't access in Lancaster. This has

raised questions about my approach to my thesis as well as allowed me to clarify my research questions. Because I come from a geography department where there are few scholars in my research area, I have benefitted immensely from having conversations with leading scholars in the field of men and masculinities, and age and ageing, and other PhD students who are resident here who have similar interests.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to all that are involved with this GEXcel theme here in Linköping. It has been an extremely stimulating visit. All aspects have been well organized and carefully thought out and I look forward to future collaborations.

Professor Toni Calasanti

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

USA

From 28th November to 19th December, I had the opportunity to be a Visiting Fellow of GEXcel at Linköping University. During this time I engaged in a number of activities that have greatly enhanced my work in the areas of gender and aging.

On 2nd December, I presented a paper, “Aging bodies, constructions of masculinities, and the anti-aging industry” at the GEXcel Symposium, ‘Men, Age and Embodiment: Power, hegemony and deconstruction.’ Both the discussion on my paper and the exchange that resulted from the other speakers were quite fruitful and have given me ways to think about the interviews research I am presently conducting on middle-aged men and women. As a result of this session, I am also pursuing collaborative possibilities with Niels Ulrik Sørensen, one of the symposium participants.

On 4th December, I presented “Old age, masculinities, and care work” at the GEXcel internal seminar. This talk gave me the opportunity to think about my data on masculinity and care work in terms of how men negotiate masculinity in the context of female-dominated paid work. This turn in my thinking will help me publish an article that counters suggestions made by others that doing “women’s work” in later life serves to “de-gender” old men.

In addition to these two seminars, I also had the opportunity to visit the Norrköping campus twice, to present a paper (on 11th December), ‘Age relations, gender relations, and the anti-aging industry’, and visit with colleagues at NISAL (National Institute for the Study of Ageing and Later Life). I also attended a talk given by Neal King on 16th December, having to do with agency in older men. Both the presentations and the opportunity to talk with faculty and graduate students at NISAL were extremely helpful, and we have also begun to discuss collaborative opportunities. In particular, talking with Lars Andersson and Sandra Torres was quite fruitful.

Throughout my stay in Linköping I have had had the opportunity to interact with GEXcel scholars, both faculty and graduate students, including those who were also visiting fellows. The stimulating conversations with Jeff Hearn, Kjerstin Andersson, Linn Sandberg,

Anna Boden, Winnie Poster, Niels Ulrik Sørensen and Nina Lykke (among others) has encouraged me and as a result of this interaction I have solidified ideas on several research topics.

In addition, I had the opportunity to be the opponent for Linn Sandberg's 60% doctoral seminar, dealing with her dissertation research on masculinity, aging, bodies and sexuality. I think that both Linn and I benefitted from our discussion, and the many constructive ideas expressed by others in the room were stimulating and helpful.

In summary, my time at LIU has been among the most intellectually engaging and rewarding times that I have spent. I am grateful for the opportunity and energized for future work. I look forward to returning to the GEXcel conference in April 2009 with new research to share.

Dr Richard Howson

University of Wollongong

Australia

From 28th April to 25th May 2008 I had the opportunity to undertake a research visit to Linköping University and the GEXcel programme as a self-funded Open Position Fellow, as well as attend a GEXcel Conference on 'Gender, Sexuality and Global Change' at Örebro University. My one month visit to the GEXcel programmes was very enjoyable, intellectually stimulating and extremely productive. At Linköping in particular, I was given excellent office and computer facilities to undertake my work, as well as wonderful technical and administrative assistance and support throughout.

During this time I met with almost all the PhD researchers. As well I was able to attend many seminars at which these researchers and other invited academics presented their work. I found the ideas and arguments extremely diverse, interesting and challenging and I was able to share information and develop my own ideas from the following discussions in a very professional and open environment. It showed me the importance of the interdisciplinarity that GEXcel promotes, which has had an important influence on my own work in the field of gender studies.

During my stay I was also able complete a seminar paper entitled 'Deconstructing hegemonic masculinity' and present this work to the programme at Linköping. The feedback I received was both generous and instructive, in the sense that it clarified for me areas in which I could expand and elaborate my ideas. The work I presented leads into Theme 2 of the GEXcel programme that engages with Deconstructing the Hegemony of Men and Masculinities, and in particular the sub-theme that explores 'Theorising men and masculinities: On power, hegemony, deconstruction and related debates'. In addition, initial discussions at this time with Professor Jeff Hearn led to a collaborative work entitled 'Policy, men and transnationalism' also within the Theme 2 ambit and focused on the sub-theme 'Transnationalisation: Multiple aspects of globalisation and transnationalisation, such as multinational corporations, international finance and migration'. It will be published in the forthcoming (Routledge, 2009) volume *Migrant Man: Critical Studies of Masculinities and the Migration Experience* co-edited by Mike Donaldson, Ray Hibbens, Bob Pease and myself.

The experience of working in such an intellectually exciting, professional and enjoyable environment has been extremely instructive but also very productive. I would like to thank all at GEXcel for their collegiality and generosity.

Professor Sheila Jeffreys

University of Melbourne

Australia

My visit ran from 5th November to 26th November. The visiting scholar programme was a wonderful opportunity for me to do some thinking and writing, to present ideas and to network and develop ideas with academics and postgraduate students on the programme. I was made to feel extremely welcome and the visit was very well organized.

On my visit to the University of Linköping I wrote and delivered three different talks to four audiences:

i. I gave a presentation on ‘Outsourcing women’s subordination: Male buyers in business and leisure prostitution’ at a meeting of the three Swedish Centres of Gender Excellence (Linköping-Örebro, Umeå, Uppsala), held at Uppsala University on Thursday 13th November.

ii. I gave a GEXcel internal seminar at Linköping on Wednesday 19th November on ‘Transgenderism and male domination: Social and political implications of a harmful cultural practice’.

iii. I gave a presentation at the mini-conference at Linköping on Thursday 21 November, also on ‘Outsourcing women’s subordination: Male buyers in business and leisure prostitution’, as part of GEXcel Mini-conference on ‘Men and Masculinities in Transnational Contexts: Power, hegemony and deconstruction’.

iv. I gave a seminar as part of the course on ‘Sexualitet, identitet och samhälle’ at Linköping University on Monday 24 November on ‘Prostitution and trafficking in the global political economy’.

The talk ‘Outsourcing women’s subordination: male buyers in business and leisure prostitution’ will be published in short form in a publication from the GEXcel programme.

Networking with academics and postgraduate students on the programme: The visit provided valuable opportunities for networking and the development of ideas through less formal interaction with postgraduate students in the programme throughout my stay. This took place on the days I gave talks, but also in the form of lunches and coffees with interested staff and students about mutual interests in gender studies, animal rights, and the sex industry.

Interview: Through a PhD student I met at the Uppsala meeting I was interviewed for the magazine of Animal Rights Sweden which will be published in 2009.

Dr Neal King

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

USA

I visited GEXcel as a self-funded Open Position Fellow in December of 2008. I gave two talks, in Linköping at the GEXcel Symposium on 'Men, Age and Embodiment: Power, hegemony and deconstruction' on 2nd December; and at the Norrköping campus National Institute for the Study of Ageing and Later Life, at the invitation of Lars Andersson, on 16th December. I took advantage of the fine facilities to pursue my analysis of interviews with aging men and the ways in which they speak of themselves as agents. I benefited greatly from contact with such LIU scholars as Jeff Hearn, Lars Andersson, Sandra Torres, and visiting scholar Paula Fass (UC Berkeley). I was able to formulate a model of social control and oppression in which one can locate relatively privileged men at different life stages, and link data in the interview transcripts to elements of the model. I anticipate journal publication of the results in 2010 or 2011.

I also met with staff in the LIU Child Studies programme, including Bengt Sandin, Kjerstin Andersson, and Anna Sparman, forming valuable contacts for projects on age oppression and the study of childhood and violence on film.

I met a few other scholars with similar interests along the way (for example, Tiina Mantymäki, University of Vaasa, Finland), mostly due to the diligence of Kjerstin Andersson and Jeff Hearn in keeping their colleagues networked.

Lastly, I gave a seminal media interview with a local television station, during which I was able to wish Berit Starkman a very Merry Christmas.

In all, I am most grateful for the opportunity to share ideas with such a broad range of scholars working on so many projects of interest to me. The focused work time and frequent contact with fellow researchers advanced my own research far more rapidly than would ordinarily be the case. I anticipate benefiting from these new contacts far into the future.

Professor Robert Morrell

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Republic of South Africa

From 6th October to 5th November 2008 I spent a month as a self-funded Open Position Fellow in the GEXcel programme at the University of Linköping. I had not been to Linköping before and found the whole experience to be restorative and productive. For those who haven't visited Linköping, the city is very accessible and hospitable. Its scale makes it easy to reach most places on foot. The public transport is outstanding and the people very friendly, approachable and English-speaking! All of these public features were accentuated at the University itself. I have seldom been the recipient of such generosity and support.

I had modest hopes for my month in Linköping. Not everybody appreciates the fact that being an academic with a heavy load of supervision, lecturing and research as well as the ever-increasing amount of administration required, is fatiguing. Freed at least of the lecturing and administration, I hoped to be able to catch up with some writing in a friendly and intellectually stimulating environment. I could not have come to a better place for this.

During my month at Linköping I met many of the wonderful doctoral students. I was struck by the passion for their work, the energy with which they engaged in discussion and their openness to ideas. This speaks a great deal of the achievement of the Gender Studies enterprise at the University. Students from far and wide are attracted and forge strong bonds of friendship which are mutually supportive and contribute to the intellectual excitement of GEXCel. I attended student seminars and gave a seminar myself, 'Warrior culture, Zulu masculinities, and stick-fighting: Hegemonic masculinity, male violence and virtue in South Africa'.

My stay was facilitated by Jeff Hearn whom I have known and worked with for over a decade. As I write this, I have just received news that an application for a Sweden-South African Research Link, funded by South Africa's National Research Foundation and the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) has been successful. Jeff and I will work with a team of Swedish and South African researchers to explore and critique the contentious but critical concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' over the next three years.

I would like to end by thanking Jeff, Kjerstin Andersson, Berit Starkman and Ulf Mellström for their support and friendship during my stay.

Dr Winifred Poster

Washington University in St Louis

USA

What an amazing opportunity – my deepest appreciation for a wonderful visit at the GEXcel Center during four weeks in November and December 2008. My fellowship was an incredibly productive experience in many ways: for discussions and intellectual exchange, for writing and contributing to scholarly publications, and for collaborations and future joint projects.

A main purpose for my visit was presenting at two workshops for Theme 2 on the topic of Deconstructing the Hegemony of Men and Masculinities. The first event was an internal GEXcel seminar held on 19th November, and the title of my presentation was “Multi-level challenges by Indian professionals to U.S. ICT hegemony.” The second event was a GEXcel Mini-conference held on 20th November, entitled “Men and masculinities in transnational contexts: Power, hegemony and deconstruction.” The title of my presentation here was “Subversions of techno-masculinity in the global economy.” After these events, I also attended a GEXcel Symposium on the theme of “Men, age, and embodiment” held on 2nd December, and an internal seminar on held on 4th December.

Discussions at these events were rich and stimulating. I felt so fortunate to be able to discuss the themes with such renowned scholars, who are from many parts of the world and are doing such cutting edge research. We engaged in these discussions at the seminars and mini-conferences and then continued them at informal receptions, dinners, lunches, and in the hallways of the Tema Genus building. Given my interests in the masculinities of transnationalism, virtuality and technology, I was especially honored to spend time with Jeff Hearn and Ulf Mellström, and I hope to continue my collaborations with both these scholars in the future. I also really enjoyed my conversations with the doctoral students in Gender Studies at Linköping University, who are doing fascinating research in these areas as well, and I hope to hear about their progress in the future.

The general climate of the center has been particularly conducive to the growth and exploration in the field of gender studies. It’s truly a credit to the directors Jeff Hearn and

Nina Lykke for fostering an environment that is so welcoming to scholars, both local and international, and that is addressing such important and neglected areas of research, like those of *Deconstructing the Hegemony of Men and Masculinities*. It is very rare for scholars to have the opportunity to reside at a research institution for an extended period, with full resources and support at our disposal, with uninterrupted time to focus on our scholarship, and with such a thriving global community of scholars doing top-notch research.

Dr Niels Ulrik Sørensen

Aarhus University

Denmark

I spent 19th November – 3rd December at Linköping University as a visiting fellow.

The first day I attended a GEXcel Theme 2 internal seminar with Professor Sheila Jeffreys from University of Melbourne and Dr Winifred Poster from Washington University in St Louis. The day after I presented the paper “Detours for heterosexuality – Young boys viewing male bodies in pornography” at the mini-conference ‘Men and Masculinities in Transnational Contexts: Power, hegemony and deconstruction’. Apart from my presentation, there were presentations by Jeffreys, Poster and Professor Jeff Hearn from GEXcel.

The following one and a half week I produced the paper “Young, male and experiences of aging”, which I presented at the symposium ‘Men, Age and Embodiment: Power, hegemony and deconstruction’ on December 2. At the symposium, there were also presentations by Professor Toni Calasanti and Associate Professor Neal King, both from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and from Anna Boden from the University of Lancaster.

The stay provided me with a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas with the scholars already mentioned as well as with other scholars based at Linköping University and scholars coming to Linköping just for a day to attend one of the GEXcel arrangements. There were many opportunities to socialise and continue the exchange of ideas in more relaxed settings. Being part of GEXcel was both an academically and a personally rewarding experience. I would like to thank the organisers and the members of GEXcel for that experience.