**Age Agency Ambiguity - gender and generation in times of change**

August 27-30, 2017

Workshop: Generations of feminisms in activism and gender studies - how have gender challenges been conceived and met in different times and contexts?

Title of paper: ‘Generations’ and ‘waves’ in Nordic feminism”

“Nordic Forum” 1988, 1994 and 2014 – different generations of feminist activism?

Abstract:

This paper explores whether the concept of generations of feminisms is meaningful in relation to the development of Nordic feminist activism since the 1980s. The paper critically discusses the notions of “generation of feminisms” and “waves of feminism” as theoretical, descriptive and normative constructs in feminist theory (Evans 2015, Nielsen 1991, Walby 2011); their interrelations and their usefulness as frameworks for understanding changes and continuities, conflicts and consensus in Nordic feminist activism. We explore the contradictory claims that third wave feminism alludes to a generational shift; on the one hand to a conservative, highly individualized, post-feminist generation which takes feminism for granted, and on the other hand a radically new, inclusive, diverse and transnational generation of feminism (Dean, 2009; McRobbie, 2009; Widerberg, 2001). The empirical point of departure is a collection of interviews and documents related to three large public events: Nordic Forum in Oslo (Norway) 1988, Åbo (Finland) 1994 and Malmø (Sweden) 2014. These events mobilized thousands of feminists – professional and/or, organized feminist activists as well as grassroots activists and ordinary women (and some men). Examining the issue of generations of feminisms, we will look into empirical dimensions, such as type and strategy of mobilization, problem-representation and causes producing social bads, demands and strategies, goals and aims.

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