



# **A different kind of integration? School policies and young people's negotiations of gender-sex-sexuality in immigration societies**

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But in relationship to kids, you cannot stop gendering.  
It would be silly to even begin to try.

(J. Halberstam 2008)

# School policies and gender-sex-sexuality

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## Outline

- Introduction and aims
- Young people as disenfranchised social actors
- This is not an embarrassment of riches
- Interdependence – ethnicized gender/gendered ethnicity
- Policies in context
- Situated knowledge – Sweden, Canada, Germany
- Concluding questions

# Heteronormativity

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- Legitimizes specific identifications, relationship, relationship patterns and bodies as ,normal‘, ,natural‘ and ,healthy‘, and marginalizes others.
- Not only referring to sexual practices, but more generally to normalized behaviour and appearance.
- On everyday as well as legal level.

# „Non-heteronormative youth“

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Youth who appear to be or consider themselves

- not to fit heteronormative patterns of gender (regardless of sexuality)
- lesbian, gay, bisexual
- intersexed
- transgendered
- transsexual
- two-spirited
- questioning
- queer

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# Contextualizing homophobia

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It is not enough to say that antigay, sexist, or racist bigotry makes the lives of children and youth into hell on earth. The frequently quoted statistics on the disproportionate toll suicide takes on gay and lesbian youth [...] are as much an indictment of 'adultism' as of homophobia. Testimonies of queer youth can be heard as narratives of heterosexism and homophobia, as well as ageism and the technologies that police childhood.

Rofes, E., *A Radical Rethinking of Sexuality and Schooling* (2005), 68

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## **Egale Canada's National Survey on homophobia and transphobia in Canadian Schools 2007-2008**

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- 41% of LGBTQ part. had been sexually harassed (19% of straight part.)
- Over 25% physically harassed because of their sexual orientation.
- LGBTQ participants reported feeling unsafe on school buses, in the gym and changing rooms, in the cafeteria, under stairwells, and in hallways.
- LGBTQ participants much less likely to report harassment to staff
- Ca. 40% of straight partic. made homophobic remarks sometimes or frequently.
- 19% of LGBTQ part. made homophobic remarks sometimes or frequently, perhaps to fit in.

➤ Focus on LGBTQ youth (as victims)

Egale Canada, 1,200 participants from cities, small towns, rural areas, reserves, armed forces bases in every province and territory

# Sweden – Research with teachers

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- 58% of teachers (out of 500) say that they have little resources to handle issues of values, e.g. sexism in schools
- Focus on teacher education

# Germany – Maneo survey 2006-2007

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## Survey with gay and bisexual men

- Young men experience more assaults than adults
  - 62.9% of participants aged 18 and less
  - 56.4% of pupils
- Verbal abuse most common (all participants)
- Most perpetrators male and young
  - 15.9% migration background (spec. written in open category)
- Focus on police reaction and training
- Focus on ‚problem of migrants as perpetrators‘ (need to contextualize!!! – migrant youth make up up to 45% of urban youth))

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# Policies in context

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... the policy analyst needs to engage in historical and contextual analysis, setting out the social and political impetus for change. However, she/he must also unpack policy intentions through a careful and close look at the multiple and competing discourses which come into play, the policy genres in use, as well as a careful examination of the artefacts of such policy enactments; by this I mean analyzing how policy texts (oral, written, or visually conveyed) implicitly convey particular understandings, beliefs or values ...

(McGregor 2008)

# Act Prohibiting Discrimination and Other Degrading Treatment of Children and School Students

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Section 1: The purpose of this Act is to promote equal rights for children and school students and to combat discrimination on grounds of sex, ethnic origin, religion or other belief, sexual orientation or disability. This Act also has the purpose of combating other degrading treatment.

# Is it 'cultural rights' vs. 'gender rights'?

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'Immigrant men', we learnt, must be seen as more patriarchal and misogynist than Swedish men, and 'immigrant women', correspondingly, need to be seen as more oppressed than Swedish women. Under headlines such as 'cooped up' and 'threatened immigrant women', young immigrant women were depicted as severely oppressed – not by Swedish society and its inherent racism – but by their 'cultures' and families, foremost of their fathers.

Bredström 2003

# Wir sind Kanakistan!



Wir sind lesbische Töchter kurdischer Eltern, schwule türkische Fleischer, schwarze bisexuelle Arbeitskolleginnen, iranische transsexuelle Krankenschwestern. Wir sind geduldete Araber, arbeitslose Manager, Stricher, Arme, Reiche, Kranke, Gesunde, Alte und Junge... Wir sind überall, nicht nur in Deutschland, sondern auf der ganzen Welt. In jeder Hautfarbe oder Religion, an allen Ufern, perverts oder verlobt hierin, queer durch „Frau“ und „Mann“, „deutsch“ und „nicht-deutsch“.

**Zeig Dich und finde Deinen Platz.  
Egal wer, wie, wo – Gleichistan für alle!**

Informationen unter  
info@glbt.de  
www.kanakistan.com



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# Questions

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What is the role of gender and sexualities in schools, in interrelation with diverse aspects of belonging?

- Role of religion?
- Role of other groups in school?
- Role of age?
- Role of silence?
- Where does discrimination begin?

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**Thank you!**