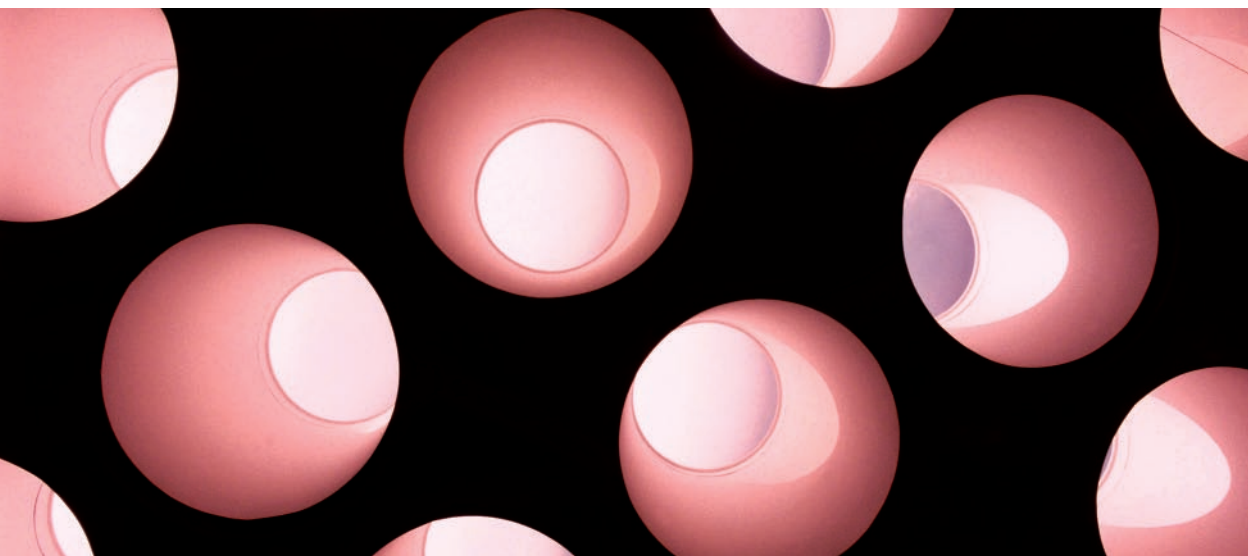![Vetenskapsrådet logo]

Vetenskapsrådet

INTERNATIONAL EVALUATION
IN EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

– Democratic Values, Gender and Citizenship

INTERNATIONAL EVALUATION IN EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

Democratic Values, Gender and Citizenship

Report from the Evaluation Panel

Madeleine Arnot, Stefan T. Hopmann, Bengt Molander

PREFACE

We were asked by the Committee for Educational Science to act as an evaluation panel. We were asked to assess a cluster of fifteen – in effect fourteen – research projects on democracy, values and gender. Our mandate was almost unlimited, both in topic – the evaluation of research quality – and in the freedom we had to fulfil the mandate. The source material was very limited, since it consisted of short progress and final project reports and short interviews with the project leaders and, on occasion, a few other members of the research team.

In the report we make some quite general observations on the material we received. We have tried to identify themes which were not only evident but also typical of *the material we were given*. Other research clusters may have led us to emphasize other things. The reader should bear in mind the fact that *what* we found, and report here, was dependent both on the actual material we received and the kind of researchers *we* are.

This report represents the *joint* effort of three researchers with different disciplinary backgrounds and (sometimes) quite different ideas about what constitutes good (or quality) research. We have had long discussions about what to say about the quality of research in general, and particularly about the cluster of projects. It has been an exciting journey.

We hope that what we say here is taken as a set of *challenges*. We take full responsibility for our judgements and any errors we might have made in interpreting the research foci and conduct of the various research projects. We apologise for any errors of interpretation. If we were forced to select one message as the main message of this evaluation it would be that, although the Committee for Educational Sciences can in various ways support the educational research community, in the end, it is *researchers themselves* who must take responsibility for providing an *explicit* focus and defining the quality of educational research. Our report encourages a debate on how that might best be achieved.

Cambridge, Vienna and Trondheim in February 2007.

Madeleine Arnot   Stefan T. Hopmann   Bengt Molander

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MEMBERS OF THE EVALUATION PANEL

Dr. Madeleine Arnot, *Professor of Sociology of Education*, University of Cambridge

- E-mail address: mma1000@cam.ac.uk

Dr. Stefan T. Hopmann, *Professur für Schul- und Bildungsforschung mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Bildungsgeschichte und des internationalen Vergleichs*, Universität Wien

- E-mail address: stefan.hopmann@univie.ac.at

Dr. Bengt Molander, *Professor of Philosophy*, NTNU Norwegian University of Science and Technology

- E-mail address: bengt.molander@hf.ntnu.no

Bengt Molander chaired and co-ordinated the panel.

PART 1 THE EVALUATION – TASKS, SOURCES AND PROCEDURES

In Part 1 we describe the conditions under which we conducted our evaluation of research on democratic values, gender and citizenship. We describe the terms of the evaluation, what was given to us in advance and our own choices with respect to the procedures we adopted. These related to our own aims and the ways in which we structured the task.

1.1 The Evaluation Task and the Sources Used

We were asked by the Committee for Educational Sciences (CES) to evaluate fifteen research projects funded by the CES. One project had not submitted a report and it was therefore excluded from the evaluation. This evaluation report therefore concerns only fourteen CES funded projects (listed in Section 1:2 below).

   The overall aim of this Evaluation of Research, according to the CES, is to offer the Committee a basis for its future funding policy as well as its procedures for the selection and support of research projects. [1] Further,

> The goal of the evaluation should be to shed light on the quality of the research performed and its significance for the scientific field concerned, in a national and an international perspective and in relation to the funding awarded by the CES. Questions that may be relevant include: the national and international status of the research, research profile and choice of methods in relation to the status of the research, the development and potential of the chosen field, the financial situation, and the effect of the support provided by the Swedish Research Council. [2]

As members of this panel, we were given more or less a free hand in terms of deciding how best to interpret its evaluation task, how to carry out its process of evaluation, and how to organize our evaluation report. However, there were certain limitations. The material we received in advance of the

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[1] According to a letter dated 22 June 2006 from Elisabet Nihlfors to the evaluation panel, referring to an "overall framework for the evaluation of research support" adopted by the CES in February 2005.

[2] Quoted from the same letter as referred to in footnote 1.

evaluation meeting consisted of a collection of individual summary reports from each of the funded projects. We also were provided with information from the half hour interviews which we conducted with one or more representatives of each project – although, in most cases, the interview was conducted only with the project leader. All the face to face interviews were conducted in Stockholm on the 29-30 August 2006.

The reports were organized according to the demands by the CES (Appendix 2). Project leaders were told that the report should not exceed ten pages (exclusive of the CVs of the Principal Researchers). The projects we were asked to evaluate had commenced in 2001, 2002 or 2003. Those projects which had started in 2001 and 2002, from the perspective of the CES, were completed. However, almost all of the projects had mixed funding, and in particular some included Ph.D. projects which would extend into a further period.

The majority of the projects in the list appeared to have adopted a particular approach to dissemination. Many had followed the same path which meant, roughly speaking, that the teams conducted their research and then published a joint report at the end of the project. They published first in Swedish and then, occasionally and certainly not always in English. This dissemination strategy meant that, in the case of most of the projects we considered, much of the planned (or hoped for) published results were not yet available. With a few exceptions, most of the project reports were reports of unfinished research – research that was not yet finished in the sense of having presented clear publishable scholarly outcomes. Given this, the evaluation panel found that it could not, nor would it be fair to, evaluate the quality of or likely impact of individual research projects. Far more information would be needed for this task to be completed satisfactorily. What we decided to do, therefore, was to try to discover, from the written reports and the face to face interviews, as much as possible about:

- how the teams of researchers understood their project *as* scientific or scholarly research;
- what each research team had accomplished so far in relation to their theoretical, methodological or practical development and findings; and,
- their plans (or hopes) for (further) publication, dissemination and impact.

Our goal in asking these questions was to form a view of the nature of the research field of "democratic values, gender and citizenship in education", the sorts of research which it has generated and how it could be developed in Sweden and internationally. We discuss our procedures in Section 1:4.

Our evaluation takes into consideration the responsibility of the Swedish Research Council and in particular of the CES. The Swedish

Research Council has three main tasks: funding basic research, providing expertise in research policy, and strengthening the position of basic research. The overall goal of the CES as it is described in a Government Bill, is to support high quality research in the area of teacher-training and professional pedagogic activities. [3] The funds are to be used to support on-going research in the area and to create new research programmes of relevance for teacher-training and professional pedagogic work; inter-disciplinary and multidisciplinary programmes are encouraged. [4]

The brochure *The Swedish Research Council – a guarantor of Swedish national basic research* describes the specific tasks of the CES which are to:

- distribute resources for research and graduate study that corresponds to needs within teacher-training and professional pedagogic activities;
- evaluate educational research and graduate study that has been partially or wholly financed by resources from The Swedish Research Council;
- follow the development of Swedish and international research within the field of educational science and to be responsible for the collaboration between research funding both internal and external to The Swedish Research Council.

The Committee for Educational Sciences, according to this brochure, is understood to support high-quality research projects in the fields of education and learning in their widest meanings. The following areas are amongst those that can be identified:

> Research into learning and the acquisition of knowledge:
> - within the school system (pre-school, compulsory school, upper secondary school and adult education)
> - within higher education (and teacher-training in particular) and popular adult education
> - within informal situations and in working life
>
> Research into aspects of the school and educational system:
> - development
> - history
> - interaction with social and political change

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[3] *Forskning och förnyelse* (prop 2000/01:3), as quoted from an attachment to the record of a meeting of the CES (Bilaga 1, Protokoll UVK nr 2001-2); see next footnote.

[4] "... främja forskning av hög vetenskaplig kvalitet på lärarutbildningens och den pedagogiska yrkesverk-samhetens områden. Medel bör användas för att förstärka pågående forskning inom dessa områden men också för att tillskapa nya (gärna tvärvetenskapliga och mångdisciplinära) forskningsprogram av relevans för lärarutbildningen och den pedagogiska yrkesverksamheten." (Bilaga 1, Protokoll UVK nr 2001-2)

This description of the task of the CES contains tensions that became evident during the process of evaluation. The most striking, from our point of view is that on the one hand, the Council shall, through the CES, fund high quality basic research; on the other, it should fund research that "corresponds to needs within teacher-training and professional pedagogic activities".

Other signals and constraints mentioned in the announcements of the CES are worth mentioning here. There were some differences in the formulation of the task of the CES in 2001, 2002 and 2003 although these did not affect our task greatly. [5] The following constraints were noted in all three versions:

- Both research and graduate studies shall be funded;
- Researchers who have recently completed their Ph.D. should be supported;
- The research ought to be carried out in a network with researchers from several institutions, including at least one university college ("högskola") and one institution with permanent research resourced in one or several fields of research; [6]
- There had to be "counter-funding" from the institutions, amounting to at least one third of the funding from the CES; and,
- Funding of (full) professors is restricted (though it is accepted as counter-funding). [7]

These specifications clearly do not emphasise the need for high quality basic research on education in the widest sense. There is a stronger emphasis here on addressing:

- The demand for building research capacity, both as regards individual researchers and as regards institutions (especially in university colleges – "högskolor" – without permanent research resources);
- The strong emphasis on co-operation built around and relevant for teacher-training.

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[5] Cf. Petter Aasen et al, "Utdanningsvitenskap som forskningsområde. En studie av Vetenskapsrådets støtte til utdanningsvitenskaplig forskning." Vetenskapsrådets rapportserie nr 5, 2005, esp. p. 37-41.
The materials we were given included: "Utbildningsvetenskaplig forskning" (Vetenskapsrådet, Utbildningsvetenskapliga kommittén, Protokoll UVK nr 2001-2, Bilaga 1), "Utlysning av medel för utbildningsvetenskaplig forskning fr.o.m. 2002" (Vetenskapsrådet, Utbildningsvetenskapliga kommittén 2001-06-19), "Utbildningsvetenskap" (Vetenskapsrådet, Utbildningsvetenskapliga kommittén, protokoll nr 2002-9, Bilaga 1), and "Sökanvisningar för ansökan inför 2004".

[6] The material from 2003 explicitly states that the funding primarily should be used for "research programmes in close connection to teacher-training within which universities and university colleges shall co-operate" ("forskningsprogram i nära anslutning till lärarutbildning inom vilka universitet och högskolor skall samverka").

[7] The reason is that (full) professors, and only such, are guaranteed research time as part of their work conditions. Cf. our comments in Appendix 5.

These signals and constraints as a whole make neither the work of applicants nor the funding process easy. It also suggests a complex agenda for this evaluation of research to address.

1.2 The Research Projects

We were asked to evaluate a cluster of research projects on "värdegrund" ("fundamental values" [8]) and democracy. In one of the classifications of the CES, the three terms *values*, *democracy* and *gender* are used. We find the notion of "research on democratic values, gender and citizenship in education" useful as an umbrella term to describe the cluster of fourteen funded research projects chosen by the CES as representing these three themes, even if this collection of projects does not necessarily represent all the elements expected of research on democratic values in education. We will come back to the question of whether this cluster of projects is, or could develop into, a reasonably well defined field of research (see 2:1 and 2:7 below).

Below, we list the fourteen projects that provided the basic material for our evaluation of this line of research funding. (Abstracts of the projects are presented in Appendix 4. An overview of the academic status and sex of the project researchers is given in Appendix 5.)
The research project titles and the named project leaders [9] are:

1 "Youth Learning Democracy – comparative studies in dynamic learning processes." Part of the "Young Citizens Program".
   • *Project leader*: Erik Amnå, Associate Professor in Political Science, Center for Public Sector Research, Göteborg University.
   • *CES-funding*: 3 380 000 SEK (01-07-2003 to 1-12-2005)

2 "Education as deliberative communication – preconditions, possibilities and consequences".
   • *Project leader*: Tomas Englund, Professor of Education, Department of Education, Örebro University.
   • *CES-funding*: 3 900 000 SEK (01-01-2002 to31-12-2004)

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[8] The concept of "värdegrund" is apparently an invention as part of school politics in Sweden. It is translated as "fundamental values" in the official English translations of the Swedish curricula: *Curriculum for the pre-school Lpfö 98* and *Curriculum for the compulsory school system, the pre-school class and the leisure-time centre Lpo94*. Both are available from the web-pages of The Swedish National Agency for Education: http://www.skolverket.se/sb/d/493 For excerpts, see Appendix 1.

[9] In some projects, there are several project leaders. However, one of them is to be named as responsible to the CES/the Research Council. Cf. Appendix 5.

3 "The Teacher as Moral Educator" and "Love as Core Value in Teachers' Professional Ethics and Moral Education" (the second project builds on the first).
   - *Project leader*: Roger Fjellström, Associate Professor in Practical Philosophy, Department of Philosophy and Linguistics, Umeå University.
   - *CES-funding*: 1 620 000 SEK (01-07-2001 to 31-12-2002 + 01-01-2004 to 31-12-2007)

4 "Questions Pertaining to Fundamental Values in the New Teacher Training Program: a study of ethical and moral dilemmas in a changing world".
   - *Project leader*: Gun-Marie Frånberg, Associate Professor, Faculty of Teacher Education, Umeå University.
   - *CES-funding*: 5 150 000 SEK (01-01-2002 to 31-12-2004)

5 "Shared values?"
   - *Project leader*: Sven Hartman, Professor of Education, Stockholm Institute of Education.
   - *CES-funding*: 5 850 000 SEK (01-07-2001 to 31-12-2004)

6 "The Meanings of existential issues in school practices".
   - *Project leader*: Lars Naeslund, Associate Professor, Stockholm Institute of Education.
   - *CES-funding*: 3 350 000 SEK (01-01-2002 to 31-12-2005)

7 "The Construction of Gender and Body Images in Physical Education".
   - *Project leader*: Håkan Larsson, Associate Professor, Stockholm Institute of Education and The Swedish School of Sports and Health Sciences (Stockholm)
   - *CES-funding*: 2 880 000 SEK (01-07-2002 to 31-12-2004)

8 "Doing Philosophy with Children and Youngsters".
   - *Project leader*: Ragnar Ohlsson, Professor in Practical Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, Stockholm University.
   - *CES-funding*: 1500 000 SEK (01-01-2002 to 31-12-2005)

9 "Value Conflicts in Primary Education".
   - *Project leader*: Jon Pierre, Professor, Department of Political Science, Göteborg University.
   - *CES-funding*: 8 000 000 SEK (01-01-2003 to 31-12-2006)

10 "Heteronormativity – School as a Space for the Construction of Sexuality and Gender".
- *Project leader*: Eva Reimers, Associate professor in Communication Studies, Linköping University.
- *CES-funding*: 1 539 000 SEK (01-01-2004 to 31-12-2007)

11 "Gender on Stage – A Gender Perspective on Actor Education".
- *Project leader*: Willmar Sauter, Professor of Theatre Studies, Stockholm University.
- *CES-funding*: 2 558 000 SEK (01-07-2001 to 30-06-2004)

12 "Learning Democracy".
- *Project leader*: Carl Anders Säfström, Professor of Education, Mälardalen University.
- *CES-funding*: 1 417 000 SEK (01-01-2004 to 31-12-2006)

13 "Changing Sex-/Gender Orders in School and Education. Policy, Perspectives and Practice".
- *Project leader*: Inga Wernersson, Professor of Education, Göteborg University.
- *CES-funding*: 6 000 000 SEK (01-01-2003 to 31-12-2006)

14 "Education, Work and Civic Agency in the Multiethnic City. A Project on Institutional Change, Local Citizenship and Social Inclusion"
- *Project leader*: Aleksandra Ålund, Professor, Department of Ethnic Studies, Linköping University.
- *CES-funding*: 3 645 000 SEK (01-01-2004 to 31-12-2007)

The total CES-funding of the projects amounts to 50 789 000 SEK. In addition there is the counter-funding from the universities and university colleges involved. About 93 researchers have worked or are still working on the projects (for more details, see Appendix 5). Of these, there are 41 senior researchers and 52 postdoctoral researchers and graduate students. There are in all 53 female and 40 male researchers. There are 11 female and 14 male project leaders. Among the named project leaders (responsible to the Research Council), there are 4 female and 10 male researchers.

The number of researchers and the research themes demonstrate the many-sided and lively Swedish research activities located within the field of democratic values, gender and citizenship in education. All projects, except one, involve several researchers and are inter-institutional. Most of the projects are interdisciplinary and several of them use a variety of

methods, both qualitative and quantitative. There are many young researchers (graduate students and postdoctoral researchers) in the projects, which indicate a strong emphasis on the building of research capacity in a wide range of universities and university colleges. The prospects thus look good for future research within the field.

There is also a wide range of research themes and research questions, both philosophical (in the broadest sense of this term) and empirical. Many projects focus on how various agents (and groups) interpret democracy, equality between men and women and other democratic values. The impact of the schools as regards the development (or deterioration) of civic skills and changing (or non-changing) identities is also investigated. Among the research themes we also find mention, for example, of such concepts as "ethnic networks", heteronormativity, existential issues, body images and identities.

Most of these themes are highly relevant for the different levels of education. Several projects are also relevant to government policy, and their relevance is not limited to a national Swedish audience.

Such a rich spread of research and the building of research capacity are to a large extent, we think, made possible by a Swedish tradition of funding educational research focused on democracy.

1.3 Assessing the Quality of Research from the Research Reports – Some Impressions and Difficulties

The preparation for the evaluation process and our choice of interview questions for the project leaders were heavily dependent on our impressions of the fourteen Research Reports. In the time available we could not explore the very many interesting themes and questions in the reports. Consequently, we will not go into detail into any individual project topic, nor refer to individual projects. The cluster of projects was selected for the purpose of the evaluation of the overarching theme. We come back to some of the sub- themes concerning democracy, citizenship and gender later on in our report (Section 2:6).

The CES instructions for the writing of the project report do not specify in detail what content is required. They only indicate headings for what should be reported. The first part, "Scientific progress", specifies that the report should include the following headings (for the full instruction, see Appendix 2):

1 Overall aim of the project
2 Specific research questions of the project (problem formulation)
3 Theoretical framework
4 Methods and project design
5 Results
   a) Contributions to the scientific field
   b) Significance for the practice field
6 Comments on changes in research plan or project design today as compared to that in the original application for funding

The major difficulty which our team faced was that despite these guidelines, the individual research reports were not structured in the same way. A range of different types of information was provided by project teams without much consistency in format or content. This makes comparison between projects particularly difficult.

Assessing research quality from the Research Reports therefore suggested that an alternative strategy was required. As stated in Section 2:1 above: "The goal of the evaluation should be to shed light on the quality of the research performed and its significance for the scientific field concerned, in a national and an international perspective and in relation to the funding awarded by the CES." We have already said that we did not intend to assess the quality of research of the separate projects. Our strategy was to collect evidence about the research from the individual project teams in particular from the project leaders and, on occasion, members of their teams. We conducted a sequence of fourteen structured interviews with the project representatives, asking them to talk about their own understanding of the scholarly contribution of their research. We also explored their methodological approach and research design and the ways in which they related to national and international research, scholarly agendas and publication requirements. We explored three aspects of research quality. These were:

• originality,
• rigour, and
• significance.

Needless to say, these aspects are context dependent and ultimately have to be judged from the point of view of the state of the art in the various disciplines. It is, however, possible for senior researchers to reach a very high degree of common understanding across disciplines. We had no problem reaching such an understanding in our panel consisting of three researchers from different disciplines and countries.

Our first (rather general) impressions of the ways in which the various research projects addressed these three aspects are listed below. In all cases, there were exceptions. However, a number of issues were raised by many of the projects which were worthy of attention. These were:

- In general, the reports say very little explicit about the theoretical framework, methodology, research design and data analysis or the links between them. There is relatively little reference to theoretical developments in the field of democracy, democratic education, gender and citizenship.
- There appears to be a strong emphasis on schools rather than other educational institutions, and there is very little on informal situations and working life. Moreover, much of this research has a strong emphasis on understanding ongoing educational practice in the field from the inside.
- A number of the projects appear to be committed to a notion of "normative research". The aim here is to help to establish the "right" understanding and teaching of democratic values in the Swedish school system. The underlying agenda is to "try and develop democratic citizens" – a normative agenda.
- Quite a few projects did not seem to have done a sufficient screening of the state-of-the-art of empirical research in their respective fields nationally or internationally.

Below we discuss these points in detail starting with the impressions we gained from our interviews with project leaders.

1.4 The Interviews

We met the project leaders, in a couple of cases accompanied by additional researchers at the CES offices. [10] The time allotted for each interview was half an hour, which on the whole was maintained. After having discussed our impressions from the project reports and with the notion of quality discussed in the last section above, we decided to focus the interviews on a small number of open ended yet nevertheless significant questions. The interviews may be described as semi-structured. All project leaders were asked the same questions and, on occasion, supplementary questions depending

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[10] From project (8) Ragnar Ohlsson met together with Ola Halldén. From project (11) Willmar Sauter met together with Karin Junefelt and Ulrika von Schantz. From project (12) Carl Anders Säfström met together with Hedvig Ekerwald. From project (14) Aleksandra Ålund met together with Susanne Urban.

on the issues raised in their Research Report or their response to particular questions. In all cases, the project leaders were given an opportunity to add their own insights or issues.

The seven questions which we asked of all project leaders were;

1 What is the major intellectual contribution of your project (so far)? (Sometimes adding "important result" if the first formulation did not elicit a response.)
2 What (empirical) or methodological challenges did you and your team face in carrying out the project. How did you meet them?
3 Did any of your findings (really) surprise you? (Or did you know the answer beforehand?)
4 What is particularly valuable/important about your research for the international field in which you are conducting your research? Why should anyone outside Sweden (for example in Britain or Austria) be interested in your results? (Often in connection with the next question.)
5 How do you intend to make your results accessible internationally?
6 What support would you have liked to have from the CES?
7 Do you have any recommendations for the Council/the CES about how best to support research (in this area)?

In most cases the representatives of the projects talked with curiosity and openness to the evaluation panel. Also, in most cases, the atmosphere was one of collegial conversation rather than of interrogation. We learned a lot from the interviews, much more than can be indicated in this evaluation report. We thank the participants for their willingness to share their experiences and thoughts with us and strongly recommend that such interviews are built into the evaluation process. The discussion appeared for some project leaders important in that they received some support and feedback for their work, which can be conducted in isolation. For others, there was a strong sense in which they had not expected to be asked questions about their research design and methods, purely about their aims and outcomes. Only some of the leaders of empirical projects seemed used to locating themselves within the language of research and, consequently, were able to address epistemological, methodological and theoretical debates about their project (see II:2 below). Of concern, therefore, were those project leaders who did not present their empirical project as having planned their research design (sampling frames, choice of method, limitations of the claims which could be made on the basis of their data collection).

The interviews were conducted in English and in some cases this perhaps created a reluctance to explicate. In other instances, the dynamics between

team members was not helpful for the discussion. Some project leaders were apologetic about the quality of their reports which may also have shaped our impressions of their work.

PART 2 IMPRESSIONS AND REFLECTIONS: THE PANEL'S VIEW

In this part we describe our impressions of the field of research on democratic values, gender and citizenship, impressions gained from the fourteen written reports and the interviews. We try here to describe the particular features that were manifested or typical of this field of research. There are in most cases, but not in all, exceptions. We are not able to discuss these exceptions, for the reason we have already stated, viz. that we cannot and do not intend to evaluate individual projects. We are also aware of the fact that the cluster of projects are chosen as "belonging together" by the CES – even though some projects were located within social science, others within education faculties and yet others in teacher education specifically. This cluster therefore brings together diverse projects which would not necessarily associate themselves with this theme, nor were they funded within a particular stream with democratic values as its focus. Not surprisingly therefore there is considerable diversity in how they conceptualise the issue of "democracy", "democratic values", gender issues, and citizenship.

The documentation of the research projects in the written reports had varied considerably in terms of quality and quantity. During the interviews with the project leaders and other researchers in the projects we tried to obtain an indication how they understood their research (the research process, main contribution, challenges, relevant public (readers) etc.), both in terms of *what* they mentioned, as response to our questions, and *how* they talked about it – their "language of research". It was surprising to us that several project leaders did not seem to have very much more to say about these projects in the interviews, except perhaps in relation to the findings in the project – a point we return to later. Below we summarise some of our impressions of these research projects under different sub-headings.

2.1 Intellectual Contributions – Findings

Quite a few of the researchers indicated a certain surprise when we asked about the main *intellectual* contribution of their project. In such cases, we asked what was the "main result or the most important result" of the project. Almost all project leaders in response to such questioning about the

importance of their project, talked about their (empirical) *findings* (*outcomes* rather than *process*), *although* there were one or two teams which had experienced difficulties in their project which became their most significant result. In no case was the main focus of the project reported to be methodologically innovative. Empirical investigations were also not part of, or at least not essential, to the projects in one or two cases; they could be described as (mainly) "philosophical". In these cases the researchers tended to talk in terms of conceptual investigations and conceptual developments.

Almost all of the main research problems and research questions appear to have been derived from the agenda of the Swedish government. There were some more critical studies. However most of the projects focused on schooling and the main research questions appeared to address, albeit in somewhat simplified form, an over-arching question: "What should be developed in Swedish schools in relation to democratic values? How are we to produce (young) people with democratic values?" The research problematics, or themes, chosen by project teams and funded by the CES, therefore, do not seem to have been derived from other research studies (whether national or international) nor were many research questions drawn from a critical literature review. Indeed some research reports had remarkably little reference to relevant research traditions and existing knowledge. Moreover, in most cases, the project teams appeared to have adopted, more or less, official versions of the problem of democratic values and the need to encourage this in schools. [II] This is especially so with regard to the notions of "värdegrund" (fundamental values) and "democratic values". This impression of the body of work we were presented with may have depended on the choice of area for evaluation and the choice of projects to be evaluated. None the less, it is very striking that only a very small number of the projects which we were asked to evaluate attempted to start from, or tried to build, an independent problematic. They did not treat problems and research questions as constructed by the research itself, but rather as given facts, emerging from, for example, practical experience or political discourses. This strategy can be regarded as a weakness in terms of promoting originality in research. It can also be regarded as a strength in that the research community has offered to assist government policy makers in their promotion of democratic values in the education system. The strategy ensures that there is a pre-defined audience and/or a recipient for the (published or unpublished) findings. The audience in most cases was likely to consist of school authorities, the Swedish government, and ultimately, teachers and schools *through* teacher

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[II] See the introductory sections in the Swedish curricula (Appendix 1) with a reference to the Swedish Education Act.

education programmes. The quality of the research, however, needs to be assessed in terms of the quality of the study – not only its relevance to particular user groups. There is a danger here that the emphasis on application and relevance may affect the quality of the investigation and thus the confidence which such user groups can have in the findings.

Apart from the project leaders who wished to contribute to broader "political discussions" and debates, those researchers who chose Swedish teacher education as the main target/client group for their research publications, tended to publish in Swedish – thus restricting immediately the international impact of their research. The underlying agenda for publication seems to be to publish first in Swedish for a Swedish audience, secondly to publish for a Scandinavian audience, and finally, at some distant future point, to publish internationally (in English), or at least to *try* to. This Swedish educational focus has consequences for the nature of the project and its priorities. It implies a certain style of research, writing up and publishing.

Many of the (planned) publications we were told about seemed to be addressing the teacher education community and/or the public at large, outlining the educational and/or political implications of the "findings", i.e. they were not research reports in the strict sense of reporting also the research process. We don't know whether there are any (planned) publications that will contribute to a research discourse, presenting and reflecting on the research experience with the aim of building or enhancing research capacity and knowledge amongst teacher educators, student teachers and practicing teachers. We did not get the impression that research findings would be presented in this format to teacher education courses. Many of the publications reporting the research associated with these projects were in effect doctoral theses (in progress), which of course limits how much the research reporting can contribute to the development of advanced research at an international level. Again it was unclear whether they would meet the criteria of internationally refereed journals in terms of theoretical and methodological exposition, reflexivity and critique.

In section 1:1 above we noted that part of the goal of the CES is to fund basic research that corresponds "to needs within teacher-training and professional pedagogic activities". However, it seems that most projects interpret (understand) this demand for relevance in a very direct and instrumental fashion. Our interviews with project leaders suggest that, despite CES funding, the research agenda of the various projects does not seem match the agenda of the Research Council/the CES, and its focus on basic rather than applied scholarship.

Many of the researchers working in the projects are teacher educators (based in teacher education institutions, departments or faculties). Some

of the younger researchers will probably be teacher educators in the future. Taking into consideration that the most important form of publication for the findings of most projects is a curriculum book (most often an anthology) for use in teacher education, one could well talk about a "closed world of teacher education" as dominating the cluster of research projects we were asked to evaluate. That there is an audience (readers, recipients, and policy makers) means that there is also a "high safety level" for these research projects. The readers are presumed to be interested, the curriculum space is available, and as long as a Swedish publisher knows that a book will be used in the school or teacher education curriculum, it will be published. We assume that there is little incentive to publish independently either with international publishers or to publish in refereed international education and scientific journals. In these contexts, the research projects funded by the CES would receive a thorough evaluation of the quality of research for its scholarly or scientific merits. It is of concern that there seemed to be little critical appreciation that doctoral research is not necessarily publishable research in these outlets – the smallness of scale and the fact that the researcher is still in training and not necessarily skilled in high quality writing and analysis makes it particularly difficult for such research outputs to be accepted in international peer reviewed journals. In many countries it is not as usual, indeed it is rare, for doctorates to be published by independent publishers for these very reasons. Only prize winning or exceptional doctorates are made available to the public. The rest are available to researchers in university libraries. In Swedish educational research, rather the opposite still seems to hold true. Doctoral work often appears to be seen as the most rigorous and research outputs of the projects. This might have been reasonable in former times when the doctorate represented the pinnacle in a long research career but not now when doctoral research is seen as part of the training stage for new researchers. We had concerns therefore that the outputs from the CES funding would be at a lower level than that normally expected of professional scholarship, thus endangering the long term reputation of Swedish educational research and teacher education curricular materials.

In conclusion, the strengths of the body of research are that they achieve a high level of relevance and have considerable impact given the government interest in promoting democratic values. However, this national relevance could easily be turned into a weakness with regard to the quality of the research, and its dissemination and reputation internationally. The originality of the research appears to come not from the theoretical and methodological aspects but from the Swedish political context.

2.2 The Language of Research

We have already noted that very few of the projects appear to be methodologically innovative. The methodological discussions in the research reports are truncated or sometimes not present. There are some exceptions to this rule – however, on the whole, many of the project reports failed to reveal much about the methodological approaches taken in relation to empirical research, the research design, sampling frames, conduct of the research, types and styles of data analysis and reflections on the ethical and validity issues. This, of course, may be a result of the brevity of the written reports which might have given a false impression of the expertise, planning, reflexivity and confidence of the team. As a consequence, we gave the projects an opportunity to talk about their methodological approach. The second set of questions in the interviews asked about the empirical or methodological challenges that the research team had faced and how they had addressed them. We wanted to hear more about the following (although not all are relevant to all projects):

- Any theoretical framework that might have been used in the choice of research questions;
- The choice of methodological approach (e.g. grounded theory, post-structuralism, action research);
- The overarching research design: levels, choice of sample, instrumentation, confidentiality, ethics etc.
- Data analysis (e.g. documentary analysis, qualitative software, narrative analysis);
- Reflections on the validity and reliability of the data;
- Theory building (models, patterns, concepts etc.) and major contributions to the field.

A few of the project leaders were willing to enter a discussion on these terms. Most of the researchers appeared not to be aware of any methodological challenges and several project leaders seemed a bit surprised to be asked such a question. In such cases, we talked instead about the challenges and problems in conducting their fieldwork. Most, however, did not seem to be accustomed to such discussions – i.e. they seemed not used to what we call the "language of research". This notion refers roughly to the language of methodology (epistemology, methodological perspectives), research design and data analysis. It was unclear whether the research teams have had (access to) such a language of research. If this is true, it means that the project teams will find it hard to publish their projects and their results in international journals and books.

The information we gathered from the fourteen projects suggested that methodological or epistemological grounds were not the reason for the choice of research methods. Many projects use both qualitative and quantitative methods, which in general mean uses of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews but there was little elucidation of research principles in the bringing together of such diverse data and their analysis. This stance suggests a privileging of the descriptive over the analytical. This is particularly true of research which collects interview data without consider-ation of what is required by way of analytic frameworks.

In many of the projects we reviewed, the methods of investigation which were employed to address the main research questions seemed to be con-sidered by project leaders to be highly appropriate. However this seemed, in most cases, not to be based on an explicit research design argument (what fits our research strategy and why), but rather based on practical reasoning on feasibility and practicality (who and what is easily accessible). That is, the researchers did not appear to be critically reflexive of the appropriateness, the quality and the effects of particular research instruments. Were these methods sufficient for the purpose? Had they been shown to be valuable, could they been adapted or could they be improved in the future? There were, of course, some outstanding examples of critically reflexive and methodological sophisticated research design and instrumentation. However, there were a number of project teams where the failure of the project appeared to lead to frustration on the part of the researcher rather than producing a critical engagement with the appropriateness of the instruments and their design. This is an unfortunate rather unprofessional research attitude; if a method or design fails, the researchers ought to use their, or other researchers', experiences to reframe or redesign their research or reflect in a more careful and sustained manner on how best to improve their professional practice. An uncritical approach to research methodology (i.e. the lack of a language of research and professional awareness of the processes of empirical research) can mean that there is insufficient awareness of the connection between research instrumentation and the types and quality of the data that is generated.

There are, of course, a number of exceptions to this pattern amongst the fourteen projects we were asked to review. In a few cases, the choice of methods and design reflected the strong methodological consciousness in the research team. Our impression is that the more methodological aware researchers have been trained and/or are located within the more traditional non-educational milieu and disciplines (for example within the various social science disciplines). They are more used to articulating and using the language of research, to address questions of validity, rigour, and generalisability. They are used to exploring the value and limitations of case study research, qualitative and

quantitative methods and are able to explore the interfaces between theory, methodology, research design and research findings. The social scientific research traditions that were used tended on the whole to be traditional rather than say poststructural or postmodern in style – nevertheless they provided a stronger base for the planning of and the carrying out of research projects, than the approach of some of the education researchers.

In the case of the non-empirical mainly philosophical projects, or projects which to a large extent are philosophical, the notion of research methodology appeared at first glance not to be particularly relevant. However some of these projects also tried to correlate (bridge) conceptual investigations, in one way or another, with empirical investigations or dialogical forms of validation. Empirical claims were sometimes being made without much empirical evidence or conceptual rigor. How such claims could be substantiated or validated was not clear. The operationalisation of concepts, if one wants to use that notion, or the establishment of clear criteria of the use of terms, was absent in some of these cases. Ideally the philosophically oriented projects could link to social scientific research teams and the two goals – of conceptual and empirical validation – could be brought together.

A number of projects referred to themselves as "normative research" which tended to involve the assertion that democratic values were appropriate and should be achieved. The research then proceeded to develop research on how to implement mainstream concepts of "democracy" and "democratic values". In several of the reports, and in the interviews, however when critical remarks were made about the unclear meaning of "democratic values" and "fundamental value" ("värdegrund") found in government and in central school policy documents, these remarks were not necessarily collaborated by deep and sophisticated analyses of the discursive framing of the concept of democracy being employed in government policy documents. Indeed there seemed to be few examples of more sophisticated forms of contemporary policy research such as that found in other countries. Yet despite this absence, some projects argued for the importance of developing alternative concepts of democratic values.

Many of the projects drew upon on one or another "grand theory" – in other words, a more or less comprehensive theory or frame of interpretation, often associated with some well-known international theorists – and tried to "apply" it to phenomena in the field of research (cf. also 2:5 below). [12] Such references to "grand theory" had the tendency to refer to a name rather

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[12] Here are a few examples of the names in the projects we have studied: Habermas, (Nancy) Fraser, Bachtin, Sartre, Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Julia Kristeva, Giddens and Beck. Sometimes quite general references to grand theory are made, such as "German hermeneutics, especially Gadamer", "discourse theory ... in line with poststructural and postmarxist discourse theory" and "post-structural notions of 'the presence of'".

than through a clear exposition of the chosen theoretical framework, conceptual apparatus, or a discussion of the possibilities and limitations of such theories. Grand theory therefore seemed to be a backdrop to projects rather than a tool for conceptual or research development. A more critical and reflexive approach to the use of "grand theory" and indeed the selection of which "grand theory" was relevant to the research question and vice versa would greatly strengthen the research on democratic values. The alternative, or supplementary task, could be to refer to the insights of the relevant research literature. However only a couple of projects referred to the research literature within a particular theoretical frame.

To sum up, it is unfortunate that such research on democratic values, gender and citizenship in education has not as yet developed a full fledged critically reflexive stance towards its own methodological and theoretical tools. On the international stage, only those projects able to use the language of research, to be self-critical about their own programmes, and to consider what is meant by research rigour and validity will be recognized. The international research community in education is now fully aware of different styles of research, the need for inter-disciplinarity, coherence, professional standards of investigation and rigorous argument and will only disseminate research which meets its new higher standards. This group of projects manifests far too great a trust, in our view, in methods, without methodological and epistemological discussions and reflections. There is also a sense of complacency about the value of the projects (having been funded and without any need to show evidence for such value by the end of the project), their research designs, the quality of investigations and methodological sophistication. Those research projects which have been completed or are nearly complete could by now have considered more critically those claims which they wished to make in light of the evidence collected. Yet, there was a lack of evidence of such reflexivity, and a seeming lack of concern about the need to go back to see how these findings came into being, what limitations the actual research process put on the validity claims of these findings and about the importance of demonstrating proof rather than claiming it. Here we see clearly what we earlier called the "high safety level". This is unfortunate position for Swedish research on democratic values, gender and citizenship since the history of Swedish concerns for democracy and democratic values in education, of gender awareness and social equality is internationally respected.

In conclusion, these assessments about the nature of the research we were asked to review, whilst appearing critical, need to be taken in context. The aim of all research is to achieve the highest standards of investigation and scholarly analysis. Whilst research findings are clearly important to

this process, they can only contribute to our knowledge if they are based on sound principles of investigation. What is research and how we understand the nature of the research is fundamental to any such assessment. In this review, we are aware that there are number of different approaches to research, and different languages. There is, for example: the language of social scientific research; the language of historical research; the language of philosophy (or philosophical research), and so on. Moreover, there is a variety of methodological approaches and "meta languages" within each of these disciplinary and epistemological traditions. In this report we have for the most part used the singular form, which we think captures what it is most important to stress, viz. *the* language which makes it possible for researchers with different theoretical and methodological stances (preferences) to discuss and even agree about what constitutes good and poor choices of theoretical frameworks, concepts, methods and so on. This language is also one of self-critical reflection, which is part and parcel of the ethos of good science and good scholarly work. This does not, of course, imply that there is a neutral or ready-made (super) meta-language of research (i.e. all theories, methods, stances etc.) but it does imply that certain common understandings about what constitutes quality research can be developed. This language of research offers a frame of reference for evaluating quality.

The absence of a common neutral framework for theoretical and philosophical discussions has considerable consequence which becomes clear when we consider examples of "normative research" – research that concludes that something is the *best* or *right* way of being, or the best or right way of doing or attaining something. Here we enter an area where the choice of a political (in the widest sense of this word) and ethical position is interwoven with scientific and scholarly choices. For example, the choice of particular definitions of "democracy" or "democratic" amounts to the choice of a normative and also a political stance. This normative framework can run counter to the demands of rigorous, high quality research when it fails to encourage critical reflection of the concept, the process of research and the interpretation of findings.

It is always possible to reflect on normative and political stances and choices – particularly if one has the assistance of good dialogical partners! The language of reflection is the language of ethics and political philosophy and the language of being a reflexive citizen. In light of our discussions, the seeming absence of a language of research and the lack of evidence of a critical reflexive stance to normative research caused us some concern. It seemed as if few of the projects in our cluster had addressed the many challenges connected with "good" normative research. (Cf. section 2:4 below)

2.3 Building Research Capacity

As we noted in Section I:1 above, there are several goals that CES funding aims to help fulfil. The CES specially focuses on young researchers and funding of professors shall be restricted. Interdisciplinary work is encouraged. Moreover, the CES expects there to be co-operation between units with permanent research resources (for example, the universities and the Stockholm Institute of Education) and units without such resources, mainly local university colleges. The model of research therefore that has been encouraged is cross institutional collaboration.

There seems to be, therefore, at least three agendas at work within the CES funding strategy. Research funding is expected to fulfil three objectives. These are to:

- build institutional collaboration;
- build research capacity (for example, of young people); and
- develop challenging research, with national and international impact.

It is clear that these three research agendas cannot easily be fulfilled simultaneously. Indeed one aspect may well override another. Let us start with the first research objective. It is not obvious to us why institutional collaboration is one of the three major research objectives. The most plausible reason is that funded research should build research capacity across various units. This could be a strategy to improve the quality of research in less research active higher educational institutions, some of which might be teacher education units. The implication is that high quality research will be disseminated across institutional boundaries. However the pressure to achieve such institutional collaborations means that considerable time and effort is expended on finding partners (some of whom may not be well prepared to conduct empirical research), of working with partners often at a great distance, of costing into the budget considerable amounts for such collaboration to be constant, ongoing and effective.

There were occasions in our discussions with project leaders and teams where such collaborations appeared to offer little added value to the coherence and quality of the research and to take over as the main goal. Some of the projects consisted of several elements which, connected researchers in different institutions. However, this structure makes it difficult to obtain and sustain conceptual coherence and clarity. Some of the project leaders indicated that a good deal of time, perhaps a year of the funded time, had been used to build a functioning research network and, a strong research

team. In those cases where researchers managed to write a joint application, but had no joint project or integrated research team, the research had suffered. Moreover, the researchers within one such partnership may have come from different disciplines. Research traditions vary from discipline to discipline, and sometimes from one geographic unit to another. Building good research collaboration in such circumstances is certainly possible. But it takes time, sometimes a very long time, and the promotion of such partnerships usually requires extra resources. What defines quality research when it is intra-institutional and when it is interdisciplinary could usefully be debated and made clear to project teams who are successful in their grant application for funding. The collaboration in our view should be judged successful less on the practicalities of working together and more on the research outputs and impact.

We were delighted to meet project leaders who had thoughtfully and successfully addressed this objective by establishing well integrated projects. These projects appear to have relied on strong pre-existing networks and had a very clear understanding of the role of partners, and also of the contribution of Ph.D. students' projects to the overall goals of the research team. A few interdisciplinary projects were outstanding in their innovative approach and their collective engagement in the same research question. However, only a few of the fourteen projects which involved wider collaboration seemed intellectually coherent and well integrated. Most projects looked more like collages, fitting together in some ways but not in others.

It also became clear to us that some of the research projects had similar or overlapping research questions. Regretfully we got the impression that there seemed to be very little interest in communication nor any signs of collaboration between the various research projects even though a number of them explored the nature of fundamental democratic values. Both the CES and researchers need to address this lack of contact and its consequences. In one case at least, two separate projects which address similar questions appeared to have contradictory findings although the researchers in question did not seem to notice this disparity. [13]

The second research objective listed above is that of building research capacity amongst researchers and particularly young researchers. Most if not all of the challenges and difficulties in building collaborations and partnerships that have already been mentioned apply to the use of Ph.D. students and postdoctoral fellows within a research team. We shall focus particularly on Ph.D. students since a number of projects had substantial numbers of Ph.D. students. There were a number of projects funded by the CES which

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[13] The topic is the (relative) importance of the school for the development of democratic citizens.

were comprised almost totally of Ph.D. research. In some cases, the number of Ph.D. students within a project was greater than the number of research officers. [14] The CES commitment to building research capacity has clearly encouraged the projects it has funded to build in doctoral research as part of the overarching programme.

When a cluster of Ph.D. projects was brought together under one heading within an overarching research programme, it seemed almost serendipitous. The connection between the doctoral projects, on occasion, appeared very loose and we were unsure whether the Ph.D. students involved worked together in any capacity as members of a team. The nature of these funded research projects and their success levels was highly dependent on the successful integration of disparate quasi-independent doctoral projects and the successful completion and publication of these projects (a notoriously unstable scenario). Ph.D. students in the social sciences and humanities tend to (and in fact have to) develop independent projects rather than being apprenticed to a senior researcher. They are directly responsible to their supervisor with whom they work closely rather than the research project leader. In line with the traditions of Scandinavian research, in most cases the Ph.D. students can use their rights to their own data to pursue their own thesis project in a relative autonomous way. These conditions for doctoral research, if used as the basis for a research project/programme, are likely to weaken substantially the consistency and coherence of the research, to a level which makes it rather misleading to consider the doctoral research within the same project frame to be part of an integrated joint effort.

The project reports that we saw had a variety of time frames, only some of which matched that of the doctoral students. The time frame of each individual doctoral project may only partially overlap with the planned duration of the research project. It seems more or less impossible to build conceptually and intellectually coherent research findings and outputs under such circumstances. Any project leader would find it difficult to report the research findings and conclusion of the research without clearly defined time limits. In some cases doctoral students complete their research after considerable delays, and even then, once finished, they have the right to publish independently of the main project.

In only one of the fourteen research reports did we find a project with what we considered to be well integrated Ph.D. based research programme. In this case, the areas of research were clearly identified and doctoral candidates had to apply to work on those topics, within the project team. This

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[14] The detailed statistics with comments are to be found in Appendix 5.

model of what is known in the UK as "linked" studentships can be especially valuable as a way of training young researchers in the conditions of professional level externally funded research. The model demands a strong and appropriate infrastructure in which the programme leader is responsible for the success of the research and the doctoral supervisor is one of the team members. The doctoral student maintains their independence but at the same time is able to co-present and co-author project publications. Our reading of these research reports is that this model is not being used to any great extent and that project teams are tending by and large to allow funded Ph.D. students to choose their own topics and methodological viewpoints with little apparent attempt to link them together. This is problematic if there is no awareness of this diversity in the design of the project frame as a whole, if it just happens as an unintended by-product of the larger project frame being divided into a number of more or less independent Ph.D. projects.

There are other consequences of funding Ph.D. students within mainstream CES programmes. Ph.D. students are learning how to do research while they are doing the research. At the same time, the scale of their research tends to be relatively small scale, often based on non-related case studies. Therefore, if a project contains a relatively large component of doctoral research in comparison with that conducted by senior researchers, it may be difficult to achieve the high quality and sufficiently challenging levels of data collection and analysis required by international refereed journals. The research outputs may consist of published doctoral theses (often the case in the projects we reviewed), but again these might not be comparable to the level of sophistication required by the international research community. Most of these doctoral outputs are also written in Swedish, which limits the impact of the research.

We were told little about the research training of the Ph.D. students included in the various projects. We met only one doctoral student during our interviews. In our discussions of the various projects, we noticed (as noted above) that most of the project leaders we met did not appear familiar themselves with the language of research. It was not clear to us that all the senior researchers we met had experienced a full training in social scientific or humanities research. We have reason to think that the CES objective of building research capacity in the fullest sense is unlikely to be achieved if senior researchers have not themselves had a rigorous training in research. Without this training, they cannot act as strong research role models for Ph.D. students.

In at least one case, it was obvious that neither the project leader, nor the Ph.D. student had mastered the research method to be used, in this case ethnographic research – a demanding methodology which requires careful reflection, preparation and the building of trust in the community under study. In this case, there appeared to be little familiarity with the rigours

of such anthropological/ethnographic traditions. It did not seem as if any expert had been consulted on how to proceed with the project. As a result, the project team found themselves confronting substantial problems that were personally and professionally damaging. Few project leaders indicated the need to hire supplementary expertise (whether methodological or theoretical) for their project design, qualitative data collection or analysis – a strategy that would be considered normal in other research environments and abroad. Some team leaders, however, suggested that they had found expert help in connection with quantitative methods and techniques.

We have already mentioned the fact that some of the fourteen projects we reviewed seemed to conceive of their major research outputs in terms of Ph.D. theses. In these cases, the primary goal of the project appeared to be one of building research capacity. There is a danger here that the activities associated with doctoral research replace the need for an overarching original and deeper intellectual contribution to the field of knowledge. If the goal of the CES is to fund good quality basic research, then the building of research capacity particularly of young people (and other institutions) should be in the service of this goal, not the other way around. Publications which result from projects should reflect the coherence and integration of the research programme not the diversity of doctoral projects.

Most of the projects are interdisciplinary, which means that the participants come with partly different languages of research. Each and every such project needs time and competence in order to build a common language of research – for Ph.D. students as well as for younger and senior researchers. A specific point of interest in the projects we have looked at is the need to create bridges between, on the one hand, education and, on the other, the humanities and the disciplinary social sciences. This has the advantage of strengthening educational research as a pure and applied field of study and also of bringing educational issues, such as the promotion of democratic values and citizenship into mainstream social scientific and humanities research. There are clearly advantages in terms of raising the standards of educational research communities in keeping a separate funding line, but this does not preclude the need for more research training in the educational community.

As we have seen there is strong focus on the building of research capacity in the projects on democratic values, gender and citizenship in education. This is certainly not surprising in view of the criteria for funding (Section 1:1 above). However, there is also a goal of *developing challenging research, with national and international impact*. [15] Our impression from a meeting

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[15] This seems to be a more challenging formulation than the more formal and abstract goal to develop (fund) "high quality basic research".

with representatives from the CES was that this is – or perhaps will be – the primary goal of the CES. [16] Given this it is to us surprising that funding of (full) university professors are restricted, to the advantage of graduate students and young researchers, because they are expected to have reached the highest research competence in the academic world. (We will come back to this as a challenge for the CES in Section 2:7).

Whichever the goal, research funding must also be sufficiently large, stable and predictable. Several of the project leaders we met complained about the unpredictability they had experienced when funded by the CES, because the criteria for extended funding had changed during the life of their projects. CES might reconsider funding projects which could not be completed within normal research time and resource basis available at the respective institutions. If the CES supports projects requiring a larger scale of funding, involvement and building research capacity than that which institutions could create on their own, then there is a danger that such projects (although initially coherent) might be broken up into rather independent small scale efforts with their own agendas, time frames, obligations etc. These latter designs probably do not go beyond what could be done with local money. There is therefore a risk that CES money will only produce a lot more of the same type of research. The mixed funding of many projects adds to this problem by adding different patterns and time lines of reporting, budgeting, organizing etc. Most of the projects which we were asked to evaluate were, in a sense, compilations of individual activities – they did not appear to be distributed activities which were part of an integrated research approach. What seems to be lacking is a clear and strong requirement for higher levels of explicit project integration and a mandate requiring strong and decisive project leadership. None of the projects seemed, for example, to work with explicit sub-contracts (including milestones, requirements, obligations) and clear cut leadership structures allowing for a real scientific steering of the project as a whole (comparable to that found for example in European Framework Programs projects or major science research).

2.4 Democracy as a Matter of Values?

Scandinavian societies consider themselves to be exemplary when it comes to standards of democracy and democratic processes. Gender equality and

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[16] We met the following CES officers at the Swedish Research Council in Stockholm 29 August 2006: the Secretary General Ulf P. Lundgren and the Deputy Secretary General Elisabet Nihlfors, assisted by Kerstin Nordstrand and Heléne Sundewall.

active citizenship are but two examples of relatively undisputed democratic values associated with this Scandinavian understanding of what democracy is about. There seems to be no doubt that democratic values are valid values under any circumstances, in the research field as well as in society. The research presented to us reflects this strong emphasis – either by affirming these values (how to sustain and further these democratic values in the here and now) or critically (where do we not yet meet the standards of our democratic society and need to think about what to do about it). But none of the projects appeared to start out with the question of how and why democracy could and should be a topic of educational research, what it means to view democracy/democratic values as an intertwined field of inquiry, if or if not the nature of the field requires a certain style of research and certain types of research tools and if and how democratic societies imply other than democratic values. One can, for example, argue that often other types of instruction – teacher-centred, drill, etc. – can help to develop knowledge and competencies, which might be important for democracy at large. Democratic education and democratic values as "researchable twins" appear to be more or less taken for granted, as *factum brutum* of educational research, which does not need an explanation or problematization on its own.

These problems become clearly visible if one looks more closely at how the subject of research on democracy is identified with research on the presence and absence of democratic values. Internationally these questions often are discussed within frames of reference preceding or moving beyond value questions (for example, research frames such as neo-institutionalism, governance theories, and neo-functionalism). In contrast, for this group of Swedish researchers, the first question seems to be whether or not the supposed values are in place or not. This reduction of the issue of democracy to the question of value implementation carries the risk that areas of concern which do not directly refer to value questions do not come into focus, even if they might have a major impact on the development of democracy as a whole. Structural, economical, and procedural issues, for instance, are not recognised as conditions and constraints on the promotion of democratic values. The most obvious example of this is that many of the projects we learned about conduct research on and discuss democratic education but not *education in democracies*, i.e. they deal with the question of how current educational systems and institutes constitute themselves as a part of the dissemination of democratic values. They do not appear to address questions such as: how and why educational processes themselves are or should be democratic; what it means to call an institution, a process, or an outcome of an educational or instructional process democratic; which indicators are able to prove that something is democratic or not; whether there are instances

where democratic societies need to rely on non-democratic values, even non-democratic education processes; and, whether democratic values can exclude or contradict each other within educational processes etc.

Other questions, for instance, might be to explore whether or not "deliberative" education reflects certain democratic values – and not whether or not it enhances a particular kind of democracy beyond education. The argument seems to be: if an educational act can be understood as an application of democratic values, it is *per se* part of and supportive of democracy – whatever the empirical impacts and outcomes of this activity may be. Thus, the normative embeddedness of "democratic values" in the chosen concepts seems to equivalent to a non-arguable pretext, a blind spot in the research itself. Accordingly, the chosen research methods which are applied tend to lead to one-dimensional approaches (how one argument becomes *the* argument), whereas advanced methods of research like multiple readings, multi-layered modelling, de-constructivist analysis etc., which could lead to unexpected or non-linear results seem seldom to be used or if used do not seem to have had much impact on the understanding of the concepts in use.

The normative commitment to democratic values as a good in itself demands the conscious and critical self-reflection of researchers in the field. One could even expect a high level of focus on democratic, participatory and collaborative research methodologies to complement the nature of the topic. One could and should discuss what the nature of the contemporary Swedish discourse around democracy is, and how it has developed, and what are the ways in which the concept might be explored empirically. There have clearly been many changes in the conceptualisations of democracy during the last decades in Sweden and indeed globally. The focus on "democratic values" is relatively recent and in the Swedish context, it is highly dependent on the use of the expression "demokratiska värderingar" ("democratic values") in the Swedish Education Act and in the school curricula. It is said that *all school activity shall be in accordance with fundamental democratic values.* [17]

A number of projects appear to take as their starting point the failure of these official versions to go far enough and to indicate their wish to develop through research more information and materials to help schools with their task. This is a valuable and much appreciated aim of researchers and it is important to recognise the need to employ research in the service of educational development. The audience for such research is clearly identified – teachers will find research outputs of this nature helpful and it is likely that the research will have national impact through the agencies of teacher education and professional development, through curriculum reform in the

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[17] See Appendix 1.

long run. Given this audience, it is even more important that the research is of high quality and that it can deliver what it hopes to achieve – a significant advance in the understanding of the nature of democratic values and their dissemination. The concern that we had is that we could not be confident from the reports which we received and our discussions that the empirical investigations could be accepted without critical assessment, that there was much that might need to be challenged in terms of the rigour of the investigation and the nature of the evidence generated. Teacher educators can encourage an intellectual research culture amongst student teachers and practising teachers by offering them examples of high quality research and indicating reflexive and searching research methodologies. This approach to knowledge is more likely in our view to promote democratic learning than the production of normative research that cannot easily be engaged with critically.

In the research projects we were asked to review, the emphasis on democratic values and the strategies on how to develop values overrode, it seems, an awareness of social inequalities particularly those associated with social class, influence, access and power. There were some excellent examples of research on social disadvantage and marginalisation but the overall impression was that, from an educational point of view, there appeared to be little recognition of the non-value obstacles which might affect the (the realization of) democratic values in education and in society at large – and as we noted before, democratic values in education may not always be the right way to democratic citizenship.

There are major research questions which are particularly important in the Swedish context. For example, how do we sustain democratic values in a time of social change? Could "democracy research" help working class children – or immigrants? Does globalisation or the emerging world society require other understandings of what democracy is about and how education can contribute to its development? What is the relationship between democratic values and the modes of pedagogy used in schools, with different groups? To what extent have democratic values shifted over time and how are they now understood by teachers, teacher educators, students and civil society generally?

Judging by the fourteen projects, very often these research initiatives have connected to the themes that are particularly relevant to Swedish schools, (formal) education and knowledge and less so to the impact of the school on Swedish society. In the light of the strong sociological tradition in Swedish educational research (Husén, Lundgren, Wallin and many more), it is somewhat surprising to observe that the reported research appears to have forgotten to investigate how the education relates to society and on which societal aspects educational institutions depends.

We saw no clear indication in the projects that the idea of a coherent Swedish society or the identity and validity of the democratic values may actually be at stake. The shortcomings of the social fabric of society are dissolved into a number of not yet solved inequalities, which may or may not have an impact on schooling, and are not seen as changing the ways in which society constructs itself as in transition. Our concerns do not dispute that some of the projects address important questions related to these issues. It rather reaffirms the impression that such research on democratic values tends to see itself as a part of a process which puts democratic values in place, and not as an independent, self-constructing and self-sufficient effort to understand what makes this task move forward.

2.5 The Dimensions of Quality

We will here primarily try to sum up some of the things already said, in terms of the three dimensions of quality we referred to (section 1:3), that is:

- originality,
- rigour, and
- significance.

Originality may come from the findings, from innovative methodology and from new theoretical and philosophical ideas. Originality is rarely planned and we cannot judge the originality of the projects given the restricted reporting of individual projects and the short interview. As we indicated earlier, most of the cluster of projects focus on *findings* (in the Swedish context).

The term *rigour* is intended to cover more or less everything that has to do with the *craft* of research (and scholarly work). This craft can be learned. This does not, of course, mean that it can be learned by being taught. Various ways of learning must be put into play. "Rigour" can refer to such things as a coherent and suitable conceptual framework, methodologically (epistemologically) based choice of methods and research design, the careful carrying out of the research, and a critical and clear way of communicating the results and challenges. Research reports should be *explicit* about rigour, in particular explicit about method, design and data analysis. We have talked about this as mastery of or competence in the *language of research*. Very few of the project reports are explicit about rigour. The

majority of the project leaders, who are senior researchers, did not seem to have a reflexive awareness of the importance of rigour.

Significance can refer to the significance of a project for research, as well as referring to its relevance to other practices. As we have already noted, the research funded by the CES was intended to be of relevance to teacher-training and professional pedagogic work. [18] In most cases the researchers interpreted this version of relevance in a quite instrumental way. However, all of the project leaders were very much aware of the importance of relevance and significance for educational practices and government policy.

All high quality research should also be conducted using a critical and reflexive stance and *coherence*, which here means conceptual or intellectual coherence. More than half of the project refer to "grand theory" (cf. Section 2:2 above). Such references can, at best, provide coherence. The problem is that the grand theories (interpretations frames, notions) are referred to uncritically with, it seems, assumptions being made about their transferability into educational research and used as the basis for the design of research instruments without it seems any critical reflection. We are critical not of the comprehensive theories and interpretative frames used in such projects but of certain uncritical *uses* of such theories and frames.

On the other hand, there are several project reports that seem to have no specific references to any (more or less) comprehensive theory or interpretation frame at all. Probably this is perhaps because the researchers assume that the use of their methods of investigation and their methods of data analysis do not require a theoretical framework, being empirically based or that their data cannot generate theory (given the scale of the enterprise). If the research findings are to have any impact in a more general way, then the project needs to address the theoretical challenge. Without a theoretical engagement, a lifting off the local, the specific and the descriptive, it will not be easy to publish findings from such investigations in international journals.

The uncritical strategies mentioned, the uncritical references to grand theory and even the absence of references to theory can serve, and probably do serve, the aim of keeping up what we have called "the high safety level" of research.

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[18] We suspect that the expression "professional pedagogic work" does not include, but could very well include, the "professional" practices of pupils and students. Now there seems to be a top-down bias.

2.6 Research on Democratic Values, Citizenship and Gender in Education – International and Future prospects

Theoretical Developments

There are a number of interdisciplinary teams within the group of project which cross the divide between philosophy, sociology and history. This inter-disciplinarity could be encouraged especially as they bring to bear a range of European theoretical traditions. The strongest projects have the potential of moving forward the theoretical frameworks offered by leading European and North American researchers and international philosophical debates.

The overall impression of this slice of Swedish research which focuses on democratic values and citizenship is that it addresses the needs of a nationally focussed agenda with a national audience and one where the demand for theory development is understood to be less strong. The desire to reform education, although worthwhile, can if taken too far margina-lise deeper more sophisticated engagements with international scholarship even though such scholarship has much to offer any interpretation of the changes occurring in Swedish society and the challenges facing the Swedish education system today.

We believe it is true to say that if such research generated a new theore-tical/philosophical school of Swedish thought around the tensions associated with educating for democracy within a globalised knowledge economy, this would have international appeal. The CES could encourage a reputation of high quality scholarship on this theme by supporting more theoretically focused larger social scientific studies and support the opportunities for Swedish educationalists and social scientists interested in education to present their scholarship on democracy and citizenship in a wider range of international conferences, and to publish their findings in international refereed journals and international publishers.

Citizenship Spaces and Values

Swedish government policy on democratic citizenship has opened up the role of schooling as a "public space" in which values are formed. This public place is particularly important for youth – it complements but also challenges other public spaces in which definitions of citizenship are created,

where civic agency is exercised and where civic identities are formed. One of the most interesting research questions is the relationship between schooling and these other public spaces. The tension between the civic values and virtues taught by schools and those found in civil society could provide a valuable research theme. One group of project reports which we were given sought to define what are the common, fundamental values which they consider should or could be taught in schools. The assumption that appears to drive research in this area is that a consensus can be reached. Moreover, it is assumed that such values are desirable and can be delivered through schooling. There is another group of projects which aim to explore at a more empirical level what values are indeed being transmitted by teachers and teacher educators, what modes of teaching, subject content might aid the transmission of such values as critical thinking or democratic competence, and what young people value. In both these strands of research, there could be more of an attempt to relate the values found within the educational world and those outside of it. Schooling in democratic values cannot be divorced from the civic agendas in other public spaces.

The depth of such research on democratic values and education could, for example, be greatly improved with, on the one hand, the encouragement of more systematic and challenging research on the teachers' political understandings and values, the curricular materials used in schools in a range of subjects, social class family and community values, the definitions of young people's citizenship status contained in social policy and the actual practice of citizenship by young people. We appreciate here the attempt in a few projects to start from the community rather than the school in terms of understanding the ways in which citizenship is framed and experienced. Educational research benefits greatly from being positioned and contextualised within such broader political, economic and social analysis. Some of the most theoretically and/or methodologically innovative projects we have seen focuses on the impact of globalisation, shifting national identity and multi-ethnicity. These themes are very important in the context of increasing cultural diversity, social and geographic mobility, and changing economic conditions in Sweden and in Europe generally. The links between this macro context of social change, youth identities and values, and schooling in Sweden could be of international interest and have an impact on European and global thinking.

Pedagogic Research

The theme of democratic values, gender and citizenship could usefully develop innovative research methodologies and insights into classroom pedagogy, teacher-pupil relations, and value transmission. However, there

appears to have been little systematic methodological development in the study of teaching and learning and even less theoretical development. The project reports we received appeared to focus largely on teachers with a range of small-scale studies of different samples of children rather than pedagogies and classroom learning even though the projects are often aimed to inform teacher education and teachers' professional knowledge. There are a few examples of pedagogic research on citizenship, gender and democratic values using small-scale action research or experimental models but these seem to be "tried out" rather than systematically evaluated. This is surprising given the extensive literature on democratic action research. There is also a powerful tradition on democratic learning in Nordic countries and yet this was not evident in the research reports we were asked to assess, nor in the discussions we held. The CES could encourage the development of such traditions in Swedish educational research through conferences, and thematic funding. If there were larger more focused projects which offered critical, in-depth ethnographies of contemporary Swedish classrooms and the teaching of the curriculum, this would establish educational research on democratic values and education more firmly on the international stage. There is little evidence that this style of research has been developed amongst educationalists in a comparable way to that developed in Finland (e.g. the work of Tuula Gordon and her colleagues) and in England. This would complement the studies of youth and social change referred to above and focus on the ways in which the variety of educational institutions define inclusive participatory democratic pedagogies at the same time as achieving high educational standards and opportunities to excel. This is the challenge that Western European educational systems are currently addressing. The tensions between individualised learning and the teaching of collective even consensual notions of citizenship are central to this debate. The history of Swedish education offers excellent opportunities to lead on this theme.

Social Inequalities

Gender research is clearly an important strand of work on the relationship between social inequality, power and democratic values in Sweden. It has received more attention in this group of projects than the exploration of ethnic diversity and issues of race. Intersectionality linking issues of social class, ethnicity, sexuality and gender is referred to in a very small number of projects but, on the whole, there is little evidence that this international focus on multiple identities and identifications, and of cross linking of social inequalities and power relations has been seriously addressed.

The discussion of democratic learning and values does not appear to have been informed by feminist/gender theories of citizenship. There are rarely references to the strong international debates about gender and democracy (e.g. the work of Iris Marion Young, Nancy Fraser, Carol Gilligan, Marta Nussbaum, and Anne Philips). The Swedish interest in democratising the private sphere, the role of affective equality and caring which is associated with social democratic principles in Scandinavia seem to be largely absent from the philosophical, the educational and even the sociological and political projects that we received. This would seem to be an extraordinary absence given the strong welfare agendas in Swedish society. Citizenship values, democratic values were associated it seems with humanistic concerns largely within the public sphere. Gender very often is included in projects as an aspect of sampling. Yet the gendering of citizenship and citizenship education is an important international line of research.

It is encouraging to find some interesting examples on heteronormativity within this group of educational projects. This theme is of international interest especially when the focus is on the teaching of the civic "body", not just the mind. The notion of civic embodiment as an aspect of schooling is contemporary and here is an opportunity for the Swedish research community to explore this theme more systematically and in an innovative way. This theme will require sophisticated systematic research if it is to have any impact. The reports of some of the gender projects give the impression (which may be false) that the research designs are not sufficiently robust to meet international social scientific standards. Only some of the gender projects we reviewed appeared to meet the standards required of refereed journals in terms of research methodology, knowledge of relevant literature and an appropriate level of sophistication expected of gender research today. In this field it is very important that assertions about power, oppression and silencing are supported by strong research designs and methods and a critical/reflexive approach, if they are not be marginalised or rejected out of hand. The international collaborations described here are to be welcomed and suggest that this strategy will bring the Swedish research on gender into the international mainstream.

The few projects which engaged with the themes of immigration, ethnicity and social inclusion are very important in moving the field of democratic citizenship forward. The concept of citizenship, of democracy and equality are often not just abstract but also exclusive. We welcome projects which take up the challenge of exploring the inclusivity of democratic values and education. There are suggestions of important new agendas such as the concept of the "imagined intolerant other", ethno-landscapes and "second string citizenship" particularly those associated with asylum

seekers, migrants and immigrant groups. The research also raises interesting questions about the concept of Swedishness, the challenges of pluralism and social inequality in Swedish society. These Swedish research projects would be welcomed by European educationalists and social scientists and inform the international debate about citizenship and nationhood. There is also a lot of mileage in encouraging research on the changing concepts of national identity, nationalism and xenophobia in relation to citizenship and democratic values and the role of education in relation to such issues. The examples of in-depth research on particular immigrant or migrant or ethnic communities which we received are innovative and could be disseminated through high status international outlets. Similarly research on the relationship between democratic values and religion (e.g. Islam) could usefully be promoted in the context of increasing interest, for example, in non-Christian European identities. The research focus on young citizens could be extended to include more rigorous explorations of the political socialisation processes offered by educational institutions, particular communities, and the state and the challenges which need to be addressed in an increasingly diversified society.

Democratic Values

The various projects on democratic values which we received offer a plethora of concepts and foci. They explore for example: the concept of deliberative democracy, the role of the teacher as moral educator, notions of philosophy with a practical intent, fundamental values, ethical and moral dilemmas, shared values, existential issues, the role of religion, the promotion of tolerance, solidarity, and civic agency, the dilemmas of value conflicts, developmental/emotional trajectories associated with democratic values. The conceptual list is quite long. At the same time the projects highlight a wide range of "sites" for their research: for example, the role of language, orientation, values, attitudes, experiences, pre-conditions, and socialisation processes. Although the various projects encourage the promotion of democracy, it is not at all clear how these aspects relate together, if at all. In order to build something both (more) coherent and challenging, several things may be attempted. The first step might be to make the various projects on democratic values take account of and engage with another, carving out and focusing research on specific problems concerning democratic values – we have so far seen very little of that. The second step – which we also have seen little of so far – is to set the Swedish research in motion towards an international context, which means establishing references to international research on democracy, citizenship and values as well as references *from* that

international research. As research on democracy, citizenship and values in a sense always *is* political, there is also a need for a broader public debate on the values of the research for democracy.

2.7 Challenges for the Committee for Education Sciences

In this concluding section we focus on the role of the CES. Our appreciation of the potential of the research field in conjunction with the critical point we have underlined so far in the report may be formulated as a number of challenges for the CES. We will however not offer specific recommendations as to what the CES should do to "get more and better research for the money".

The field of "Democratic values, gender and citizenship in education" is a research field with a great potential for original Swedish educational research of international interest. It is also a field where international researchers may work, both independently and in partnership with Swedish researchers. The specific Swedish tradition of equality and democracy and its transformations is one reason for this. Moreover, some blind spots seem to come as part and parcel of that tradition, as far as can be judged by the educational research we have been invited to evaluate. The main one being what we call the "normative embeddedness" of the concepts used, which implies a dominance of a kind of normative research: certain democratic stances and values are taken as given and the main problem seems to be how to actually make democracy in school and in society better. Researchers with other cultural backgrounds – covering both ethnic backgrounds and research cultures – may be very important to explore the field, including its blind spots.

The main challenge for the CES, as we judge it, is to *develop the field* in such a way as to realize its great potential and at the same time *develop research quality* to a high international level. Certainly, this is not something the CES can make on their own, but we are convinced that CES has an important strategic role to play. We turn first to the development of research quality.

In assessing the quality of research the CES, reviewers, applicants and researchers need some criteria and benchmarks. In a recent instruction for a review of a major research project [19] for the Economic and Social Research

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[19] Joint DFID-ESRC Scheme for Research on International Poverty Reduction: specification of second call for applications, issued 3 May 2006.

Council (ESRC) in the UK, the goal is to find "the **most appropriate** and **innovative** research proposals that will deliver **new** understanding, insights, advice or solutions to a wide range of academic and non-academic stakeholders":

In assessing whether applications meet the world-class quality and impact benchmarks established for the scheme, the ESRC commissioning panel looked for:

- critical analysis of the problems or shortcomings in the current state of knowledge;
- intellectual innovation in the identification of problems and formation of research questions to address those issues;
- specificity, clarity and coherence between research questions, research methods and anticipated intellectual outcomes;
- clear and rigorous articulation of appropriate research methods and data analysis regime;
- how the anticipated intellectual outcomes will provide new understanding, insights, advice or solutions to the problems under consideration;
- clear articulation of how and why those intellectual outcomes have the potential for impact on the [... [20]] agenda;
- the engagement strategy to be deployed for academic and non-academic stakeholders to maximise potential for impact.

In the same document, there are also some remarks on the building of research capacity as part of a proposal. From our point of view, this is one of their most important statements:

Any inclusion of capacity-related issues should be addressed in the context of the intellectual agenda of the research proposal. **Capacity building elements** (including people such as students or fellows, or research resources such as datasets and new methodologies) **should be sub-ordinate to the main intellectual focus of the research project.**

There are some additional remarks on doctoral students, from which we quote the following:

Doctoral students may only be included in research applications from established and qualified research teams, and they must be based in ESRC-recognised outlets [*i.e. Universities recognised by the ESRC as having enough research training skills, and Master's degrees in research training*]. Any support for standalone doctoral research should be sought from

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[20] In the original "poverty reduction".

alternative sources. The research conducted by a doctoral student must represent a discrete piece of work which is clearly of a standard to be submitted as a doctoral thesis, but *the synergy and added value with the main research project also needs to be demonstrated.* [Our insert in italics]

These UK guidelines, whilst not set in stone, clearly focuses on quality and in particular what we have talked about as rigour and coherence. Here the educational research community as a whole is challenged by the Research Council to focus more explicitly on quality and the language of research. The CES equally could play a major national role encouraging the provision of high quality sustained research training initiatives and the promotion of high quality educational research based on such training, bringing educational research in Sweden in link with international demands.

The task of developing educational research about democratic values, gender and citizenship could be greatly strengthened if the following were achieved:

- Strong research guidance and feedback could be given to grant applicants which focus on the need to achieve significance, rigour and originality. These guidelines should indicate the need to indicate how the research addresses existing research, is innovative and significant within international and national contexts.
- Successful applicants are also a particularly important target group since it is this group that might assume that their research methodology, design and forms of data analysis have been accepted as satisfactory. Systematic research evaluation could focus specifically on the need to address, for example: the appropriateness of theoretical and conceptual frameworks, the quality of research design and methods, the conduct of the research, strong explicit modes of data collection and analysis, an analysis of the intellectual significance of research results and findings, and reflections on the impact of the research.
- Support for research groups through the hiring of external expertise (to carry out part of the research or for supervising young researchers) and hired research steering groups made up of qualified and experienced researchers.
- Initiate specific research methodological courses and seminars, especially for Ph.D. students and inexperienced researchers. This is now common practice within large scale research programmes. In particular, there seems to be a need for developing the quality of normative research.
- Demand an explicit focus on research capacity and research quality in the research groups and in particular in reports to the CES. This also

means reconsidering the appropriate forms for reporting to the council and appropriate forms for evaluation. (We will come back to this at the end of this section.)

- Demand explicit publication plans and expect – or encourage – (planned) publication (in English) as part of the research process.
- Distinguish, with regard to funding, between the building of research capacity (research training, team building etc.) and actual research. Demand such a distinction from research groups in applications and reports.
- Individual scholarly works are common in the humanities and exist also in the social sciences, especially scholarly work that represents philosophical or conceptual (and/or theoretical) innovation. We suggest that the conditions which are used to select projects are changed so that it is possible for academics to submit individual applications to bring their work to "scholarly completion". The onus here will be to encourage individual authors to demonstrate strong publication outputs (e.g. research monographs).
- If the main goal for the CES is to produce high quality basic research, then the research committee needs to consider their restrictive policy towards funding the research of professors who are expected to be the most qualified researchers.

Turning from the question of research quality and research training, we recommend that some action is taken to develop further the field of "Democratic values, gender and citizenship" towards an even more challenging and internationally interesting field of research. Some of the above points are relevant, in particular those about publishing and developing quality according to international standards. Some supplementary challenges need however to mentioned here:

- Several of the projects have overlapping agendas/themes. The CES could create and maintain communication and co-operation between projects and between researchers across projects. This could be in the form of seminars and conferences, or in the form of funding of "bridge builders" and travel money for the researchers. There is obviously also a particular need to connect individuals and groupings across the (disciplinary) social sciences and education. With the strong emphasis on normative research, there also seems a particular need for bridging philosophy and education.
- Sustain and develop larger and more integrated projects (programmes) that extend over longer periods than the normal funded project time (3-4 years). This requires more stability and predictability in the requirements for successful proposals than what seems to be the case at present.

- Most Swedish researchers write reasonably correct English, but the texts should at best also be good (scholarly/research) texts. We recommend that the CES develop a more active publication policy as part of their research funding and their building of research capacity. More language support for writing in English, more awareness of the publication outlets and more attention to research dissemination strategies at the application stage would be beneficial.

We have judged the field of research only on the basis of fourteen research projects. Other clusters or choices may have led to other conclusions. Two of our observations concern primarily the choice of research topics and research perspective. However, both observations are to us so striking that we want to record also these as challenges for the CES:

- There appears to be a strong emphasis on schools rather than other educational institutions, and there is very little on informal situations and working life. Moreover, much of this research has a strong emphasis on understanding ongoing educational practice in the field more or less pragmatically from the inside. Schools and schooling need to be investigated from broader and more comprehensive perspectives.
- Almost all projects focus on the production of more democratic citizens through education, by improving teacher education. This also means that textbooks for teacher education are seen as the most important output from the projects. The applied nature of this research means that it is difficult to assess in terms of traditional standards of research quality. Also the assumption is made that research only has national internal relevance. The challenge is, as we somewhat provocatively have put it, to open out "the closed world of teacher education" to quality research agendas and international audiences.

It was not part of our evaluation to go into the review and selection procedure after the applications have reached the CES. However, we would like draw to the Committee's attention the fact that, if we focus on *quality* of research according to international standards (the language of research), we judge that there are three to four projects that in our view would not have passed this test. It is unclear why they were funded. In these cases the project reports revealed that not only was the language of research not present but our interviews indicated that these weaknesses were not detected in the applications even though they went through a critical review process. One of the project leaders even expressed surprise for having been successful with such an application. We cannot and should not try to

go further into this matter, but we would strongly recommend the CES to have a critical look at its application guidelines, project review strategy and selection procedures.

After the various research projects were funded, there appeared to be no evaluation of the actual research outcomes, if any, of the projects. We could not evaluate the projects because most of them, even those who were complete (from the funding perspective) thus far had published relatively little. Most of the reports indicated that the team had planned publications or at least hoped for such publications. However, without active encouragement, these publications may not be achieved. Final evaluations of all funded projects have clear advantages in terms of assessing the quality of the work and such outputs. There is a view that the normal (peer) review process in the publication process should be sufficient. This needs further discussion and we suggest that the CES may try out various forms and methods of evaluation.

Evaluating Research

Finally, we would like to say something about evaluations, first about our evaluation and then about the use of evaluations – including this one.

Our basic material was "reports" – "progress" reports and "final" reports – a text genre that does not make the text very inspiring, neither for the authors, nor for the readers. They are in most cases written purely out of duty and not because the authors have something connected to research (challenges, results or whatever) that they really want to communicate to a public. We think that the CES should consider the worth (for whom) of such texts. Reports should, from the point of view of the researchers – and the evaluators – consider both the importance of their results and the challenges they met; they could also be encouraged to adopt a reflexive stance in relation to the research process and the conduct of the research. If researchers are encouraged to offer real critical reflections, this will have a positive effect on the research-learning-process that is a part of good research.

Finally, an evaluation exercise of the sort that we have conducted represents an important strategy in itself for developing research and research policy. However good evaluations are not the end goal of any piece of research, whether by "peer review" or by any other means. The goal rather is to offer "new understandings, insights, advice or solutions" to all persons with interests in the area. We are pleased to have been part of that process on such an important thematic agenda as the promotion of research on democratic values, gender and citizenship.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the Swedish Research Council's Committee for Educational Sciences, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the members of the expert panel, professor Madeleine Arnot, Cambridge University, professor Stefan T. Hopmann University of Vienna and professor Bengt Molander The Norwegian University for Science and technology in Trondheim, for all the time and hard work they have devoted to their assessment of the programme under evaluation.

The evaluation subject was Democratic Values, Gender and Citizenship. An area of research in educational science that has a central position in research on school and curriculum development. Thanks to the integrity and collective expertise of the international expert panel, we are confident that this report will aid and stimulate further development of this field of research in Sweden.

The aim of the evaluation has been to shed light on the quality of the research performed and its significance for the scientific field concerned, in both a national and an international perspective. Questions that have been relevant for the evaluation include: the national and international status of the research, research profiles, choice of methods, the development and potential of the chosen field, the financial situation, and the effect of the support provided by the Swedish Research Council.

We would like to thank the researchers under review for assembling the material required for the review process, and for their participation in the meeting with the evaluators.

Stockholm, March 2007

Sigbrit Franke
Chariperson
Educational Sciences

Ulf P. Lundgren
Professor
Secretary General
Educational Sciences

APPENDIX 1

"Fundamental" values in the Swedish curricula and Education Act

The first section of both the following two curricula (LPFÖ 98 and LPO 94) is entitled "Fundamental values". Both sections are quoted in full below. (Quoted from the web-pages of The Swedish National Agency for Education: http://www.skolverket.se/sb/d/493)

CURRICULUM FOR THE PRE-SCHOOL (LPFÖ 98)

Fundamental values and tasks of the pre-school

Democracy forms the foundation of the pre-school. For this reason all pre-school activity should be carried out in accordance with fundamental democratic values. Each and everyone working in the pre-school should promote respect for the intrinsic value of each person as well as respect for our shared environment.

An important task of the pre-school is to establish and help children acquire the values on which our society is based. The inviolability of human life, individual freedom and integrity, the equal value of all people, equality between the genders as well as solidarity with the weak and vulnerable are all values that the school shall actively promote in its work with children.

The foundation on which these values rests expresses the ethical attitude which shall characterise all pre-school activity. Care and consideration towards other persons, as well as justice and equality, in addition to the rights of each individual shall be emphasised and made explicit in all pre-school activity. Children assimilate ethical values and norms primarily through their concrete experiences. The attitudes of adults influence the child's understanding and respect for the rights and obligations that apply in a democratic society. For this reason adults serve an important role as models.

Upholding these fundamental values requires that the attitudes from which they are derived are clearly apparent in daily activity. The activities of the pre-school should be carried out democratically and thus provide the foundation for a growing responsibility and interest on the part of children to actively participate in society.

CURRICULUM FOR THE COMPULSORY SCHOOL SYSTEM, THE PRE-SCHOOL CLASS AND THE LEISURE-TIME CENTRE(LPO 94)

Fundamental values and tasks of the school

Democracy forms the basis of the national school system. The Education Act (1985: 1100) stipulates that all school activity should be carried out in accordance with fundamental democratic values and that each and everyone working in the school should encourage respect for the intrinsic value of each person as well as for the environment we all share (Chapter l, §2).

The school has the important task of imparting, instilling and forming in pupils those fundamental values on which our society is based.

The inviolability of human life, individual freedom and integrity, the equal value of all people, equality between women and men and solidarity with the weak and vulnerable are all values that the school should represent and impart. In accordance with the ethics borne by Christian tradition and Western humanism, this is achieved by fostering in the individual a sense of justice, generosity of spirit, tolerance and responsibility.

Education in the school shall be non-denominational. The task of the school is to encourage all pupils to discover their own uniqueness as individuals and thereby actively participate in social life by giving of their best in responsible freedom.

The first paragraph in the Lp094 refers to the Swedish Education Act (Skollag (1985:1100), which is available in Swedish but not in English from the same web-pages as referred to above. However, the lines in the curriculum are an accurate translation of the most relevant words in the Act, in Swedish (1 kap. 2 §):

"Verksamheten i skolan skall utformas i överensstämmelse med grundläggande demokratiska värderingar. Var och en som verkar skall främja aktning för varje människas egenvärde och respekt för vår gemensamma miljö."

Both in the Act and in the two curricula there are some further descriptions of what is more specifically the nature of these tasks with regard to gender equality and non-discrimination.

APPENDIX 2

Progress Report

to the Committee for Educational Science, Swedish Research Council

The report (part I and II) should be limited to a maximum of 10 pages and be written in English.

Deadline for submission is June 1, 2006.

The report should include the following headings:

Part I: Scientific progress
1 Overall aim of the project
2 Specific research questions of the project (problem formulation)
3 Theoretical framework
4 Methods and project design
5 Results
   a) Contributions to the scientific field
   b) Significance for the practice field
6 Comments on changes in research plan or project design today as compared to that in the original application for funding

Part II: Organisational matters
6 National collaborations
7 International collaborations
8 List of doctoral students working on the project, with the starting date and the date of the planned or implemented public defence of the thesis
9 Financial situation – summary of funding from the Swedish Research Council as well as other sources
10 Plans for dissemination of results

Part III: CV and publication list
11 Short CV for the main researcher
12 Publication list, containing journal articles, books or book chapters, conference contributions etc., in context with the project

APPENDIX 3

List of participating projects* (including grants per year)

File ref. no	Last name	First name	
2001-3779	Amnå	Erik	Youth Learning Democracy – Comparative Studies in Dynamic Learning Processes
2001-5433	Englund	Tomas	Education as Deliberative Communication – Conditions, Possibilities and Consequences
2001-3757	Fjellström	Roger	The Teacher as a Moral Educator
2003-4227	Fjellström	Roger	Love as the Core Value in Teachers Professional Ethics and Moral Education
2001-5466	Frånberg	Gun-Marie	Questions Pertaining to Fundamental Values in the New Teacher Training Programme: a Study of Ethical and Moral Dilemmas in a Changing World
2001-5525	Hartman	Sven	Shared Values?
2001-5571	Naeslund	Lars	Meanings of Existential Issues in School Life
2002-3329	Naeslund	Lars	Meanings of Existential Issues in School Life
2001-5595	Larsson	Håkan	Construction of Gender and Body Images in Physical Education
2001-5600	Ohlsson	Ragnar	Doing Philosophy with Children and Teenagers
2002-2596	Pierre	Jon	Value Conflicts in Primary Education: Governance, Democracy, Ethnicity
2003-4442	Reimers	Eva	Heteronormativity – School as a Place for Construction of Sexuality and Gender
2001-3955	Sauter	Willmar	Gender on Stage: Gender Perspectives in Actor Education
2003-3885	Säfström	Carl Anders	To Learn Democracy
2002-2644	Wernersson	Inga	Changing Sex/Gender Orders in Schools and Education? Policy, Perspectives, Practice
2003-3976	Ålund	Aleksandra	Education, Work and Agency in the Multiethnic City: A Comparative Project on Institutional Change, Local Citizenship and Social Inclusion

* The two projects led by Fjellström are regarded as one single project in the Evaluation Report, because the second is a continuation of the first. The two projects by Naeslund are also and for the same reason regarded as one project.

University	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Göteborg University	910 000	1 690 000	1 690 000			
Örebro University		1 300 000	1 300 000	1 300 000		
Umeå University	221 000					
Umeå University				540 000	540 000	540 000
Umeå University		1 650 000	1 650 000	1 850 000		
The Stockholm Institute of Education		1 950 000	1 950 000	1 950 000		
Linköping University		650 000				
Linköping University			900 000	900 000	900 000	
The Stockholm Institute of Education		580 000	1 140 000	1 160 000		
Stockholm University		500 000	500 000	500 000		
Göteborg University			2 000 000	2 000 000	2 000 000	2 000 000
Linköping University				1 320 000	1 320 000	1 320 000
Stockholm University	450 000	983 000	1 037 000	538 000		
Uppsala University				945 000	945 000	945 000
Göteborg University			1 500 000	1 500 000	1 500 000	1 500 000
Linköping University				1 215 000	1 215 000	1 215 000

APPENDIX 4

Abstracts of the Evaluated Projects*

2001-3779
Erik Amnå, GU

Youth Learning Democracy – Comparative Studies in Dynamic Learning Processes

Project:

Democracies rely on a rising generation of democrats. But democracy learning cannot be taken for granted. Even within a democracy, young people can develop into very different types of citizens with different democratic core values. Research into these learning processes has been neglected however. Central importance is attached to "democratic education" in schools, though this democracy mandate is both imprecise and unproblemised. The conditions for laying a foundation of democratic values have changed.

We want to examine the environments in which young people form their democratic values from a democratic theory perspective. The young people are analysed in a multidisciplinary way in their political, social and cultural situations: their different "schools of democracy" in qualitative and quantitative studies at different levels. The IEA's Civic Education evaluation in 29 countries is used for comparisons between countries, between nine-year compulsory school and upper secondary school, between different types of formalised youth influence, between municipal and independent schools and between the schools and the different outside environments of young people. The network consists of Örebro University's multidisciplinary democracy research environment, religious sociologists in Uppsala and Nordic educational researchers.

The study involves pupils, head teachers, teachers and teacher training. In "democracy workshops", student teachers carry out systematic tests on discussions of fundamental values in educational environments.

The results are continually documented on a website and in textbooks about schools and democracy, primarily for teacher training.

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* The two projects led by Fjellström are regarded as one single project in the Evaluation Report, because the second is a continuation of the first. The two projects by Naeslund are also and for the same reason regarded as one project.

2001-5433
Tomas Englund, OrU

Education as Deliberative Communication – Conditions, Possibilities and Consequences

Project:
The aim of the project is to analyse the future role and potential of the education system (nine-year compulsory school, upper secondary school, teacher training and adult education) to preserve, develop and strengthen a deliberative democracy. The project thereby focuses on the educational policy and institutional conditions for the extent to which teaching and learning processes can be developed towards what can be described as deliberative discussions and a practice that can otherwise be related to deliberative democracy. There are analyses of the relation education – (deliberative) democracy within the project based on a number of different approach angles but with a common emphasis on education as a potential public room characterised by political, social and cultural diversity. The project approaches are held together by the following issues: 1) to develop and define the basic ideas of deliberative democracy theory in relation to education as a public room, 2) to analyse the educational policy conditions, in a wide sense, for schools and other education as a deliberative democratic environment, 3) to analyse opportunities and limitations to change the inner workings of schools and education towards deliberative democracy.

2001-3757
Roger Fjellström, UmU

The Teacher as a Moral Educator

Project:
The aim of the project is to establish the ethics of the teaching field as a new field of research in Sweden. The schools' work on so-called fundamental values has an unclear status and meaning. Knowledge and skills still make up the operating targets. There has been no deliberate work on the schools' moral education task in teacher training either. The ethical dimension of schools and moral education has attracted attention in international research, though very little in Sweden. The central issue is the normative ethics, i.e., formulation and validation of norms, values and attitudes. The work that has been carried out in Sweden relates primarily to descriptive

ethics. There is currently no discipline that systematically deals with ethics in the teaching field. The task of moral education can therefore hardly be described in other than vague terms. In my study, I focus on the ethical work of schools. The question is how precisely the moral education task of pre-school, nine-year compulsory school and upper secondary school teachers should be interpreted. Moral philosophy research problemises; it consists of analytical and constructive reflection and any answers are tentative. The idea is for my work to contribute to a new role for teachers and to better schools. Its contribution is to refine the analytical tools and deepen ethical reflection on the schools' work on moral education. This can be important to the new teacher training for which it is intended that fundamental value issues play a greater role.

2003-4227
Roger Fjellström, UmU

Love as the Core Value in Teachers' Professional Ethics and Moral Education

Project:

The idea that all people have the same value is fundamental in our culture, our form of government, the Education Act and teaching plans. Teachers should respect it and convey and establish it among pupils. It is about a special and absolute ethical value that is inherent in us, independent of personal qualities and actions. This idea is unclear and philosophically controversial. In the utilitarian tradition, it is rejected totally. The project should support the idea of a general, equal and absolute human value in an ethical education context. It has three parts. One part is the formation of a theory on human value, which is important for the moral education curriculum. Another part is to define respect for human value, based on the theory, as part of teachers' professional ethics. A third part is to draw up implications for the work on moral education. The project hypothesis is that every human has the same inherent ethical value based on the fact that they are equally worthy of love. There is a reliable basis for this idea in a model with a hypothetic, ideal observer whose reactions to people and their lives determine what is valuable. This person would see people as tangible individuals and envelop them in unconditional love. This theory avoids criticism aimed at other formulations. Children and people who are mentally retarded to a greater or lesser extent are given full human value. The theory is original in relation to national and international philosophical debate. It has great importance to the professional ethics of teachers and the didactics of moral education.

2001-5466
Gun-Marie Frånberg, UmU

Questions Pertaining to Fundamental Values in the New Teacher Training Programme:
a Study of Ethical and Moral Dilemmas in a Changing World

Project:
The Education Act and curricula put strong emphasis on the socialisation of fundamental values by schools. In terms of teacher training, education in fundamental values is therefore a central task. The research programme Questions Pertaining to Fundamental Values in the New Teacher Training Programme: a Study of Ethical and Moral Dilemmas in a Changing World focuses on the ethical and moral dilemmas of the schools' fundamental value socialisation, which has come to the fore through increased globalisation, changing gender roles, biomedical innovations, refined information and communication technology, and the new regulations on democracy and citizenship education in schools. On a more tangible level, the aim is to study how the ethical and moral dilemmas from a view of fundamental values are handled in the new teacher training in Sweden and how student teachers interpret their training.

The project is conducted as a three-year study into how the training of student teachers in fundamental value issues has been built up at different universities with teacher training. Written documents will be studied, and teachers at training universities and student teachers will be interviewed. Student teachers will also be given questionnaires. The theoretical starting points for the project are educational, gender scientific, educational historic, political scientific and sociological. The result will be analysed against the background of the underlying socioeconomic and political processes of change.

2001-5525
Sven Hartman, LHS

Shared Values?

Project:
The aim of the project is to illustrate and analyse the conditions for forming what has been called the schools' fundamental values through a number of substudies. During the 1990s, there were sweeping changes within schools and the living situation of young people: a new and varied education system and new youth trends arise; an increasingly multicultural Sweden emerges.

What have the consequences of this been for the way school staff and pupils see fundamental values? How do these views relate to the values proclaimed at different levels of the education system? Different values are manifested through words and actions by both teachers and students every day. How do the values of the individual vary with the environment and situation – what can be linked to clear goals and what comes from places? Which theoretical bases can be given for different views? The project will try to problemise the publicly declared fundamental values and contribute to knowledge formation for future education ethics.

The project will be run in cooperation with different seats of learning and disciplines to create an interdisciplinary research context with representatives for anthropology, ethics, immigration research and education.

2001-5571
Lars Naeslund, LiU

Meanings of Existential Issues in School Life

Project:
What we can learn from the committed meetings by school children and adults in education with literary texts, religious traditions and people of different cultures. The issue will be illustrated through inventories of the type critical incidents and through field research in the classroom. The empirical material will form the starting point for circles where teachers and researchers meet to develop knowledge about these committed meetings, and about the qualities found in texts, myths, etc, that are capable of rousing and interpreting existential issues. The study is based on the assumption that the debate on fundamental values ought not be tied one-sidedly to normative ethics of duty and consequence. Here, tradition and existential issues form an indispensable complement for the development of contemporary virtue ethics.

2002-3329
Lars Naeslund, LiU

Meanings of Existential Issues in School Life

Project:
This study is based on the assumption that the work on fundamental values ought not be tied to one-sided normative duty and consequence ethics:

traditions as expressed in religious myths and fiction embrace subject matter with the help of which young people can work on existential issues and develop a personal stand on ethical issues. So far in the project, empirical material has been gathered through field research in the class-room, interviews with teachers and an analysis of student work. The preliminary result shows the potential of schools for youth development, and the importance of the tangible formulation of education. This both confirms and challenges our understanding, but, above all, we are convinced of the inherent potential of the project.

2001-5595
Håkan Larsson, LHS

Construction of Gender and Body Images in Physical Education

Project:
The main goal of the research project is to highlight gender construction and body image in physical education in schools. This is done through two substudies, the first of which is a historical analysis aimed at mapping Swedish physical education from Ling gymnastics through sport for exercise to competitive sport during a central part of the 20th century. This development will be analysed from a gender perspective. The body will be at the centre and the following questions will be asked: What should a girl's and a man's body look like, what should it be used for and what should it achieve? The second substudy focuses on current physical education and practice. Three common practices, namely competition and ranking order, play and recreation, and outdoor life are illustrated from a gender per-spective. Important issues to throw light on in the context are: What con-trols development of what is considered normal feminine and masculine in practice? How are femininity and masculinity handled in practice? How do we talk about gender? What symbol production for gender takes place in practice and what is embodied through practical action? A further and more general aim of the project is to also link knowledge production on gender within the three practices to the teacher training itself. The aim of the project is therefore also to start the development of a research environ-ment linked to the practical part of teacher training and for this to be able form a gateway to further training.

2001-5600
Ragnar Ohlsson, SU

Doing Philosophy with Children and Teenagers

Project:
The project aims to shed light on the following issues: 1. What does participation in philosophical discussions mean to concept development? In what way is concept development affected with regard to specific philosophical questions and what does it mean to concept development in other areas? Is there any transfer effect and, if so, what does it look like? 2. What does participation in philosophical discussions mean for the development of critical thinking, rationality and wisdom? 3. Does participation in philosophical discussions lead to students tending to develop relativistic attitudes with regard to concepts such as "truth" and "reality"? Preliminary results from an earlier investigation led by the principal investigator (Malmhester & Ohlsson 1999) points to this maybe being the case. If so, what does this connection look like and how should it be perceived? Two groups from each of the preschool, junior, intermediate and senior levels of compulsory school, and upper secondary school are given philosophical teaching twice a week for two years. One group is taught by a teacher with a real background in philosophy, the other by an ordinary teacher who has completed a special course in philosophy with children. The lessons are recorded and a selection of the tapes is transcribed for analysis by two researchers (one in philosophy and one in education), and by the two principal investigators. Observations are made in the classroom and a few individuals from each group are chosen for discussions aimed at shedding light on the issues mentioned above.

2002-2596
Jon Pierre, GU

Value Conflicts in Primary Education: Governance, Democracy, Ethnicity

Project:
The research programme studies how three central value conflicts in decentralised schools are handled at municipal and at school level: the balance between policy and profession, between integrity and special treatment of different ethnic groups, and between a collectivist and individualistic view on democracy. The value conflicts examined by this research programme are not

new, but in state schools they were handled on a central level, and individual municipalities, schools and teams of teachers were able to lean on state rules and norms when deciding on attitudes to them. In municipalised school, however, municipalities and individual schools have been given much greater responsibility to handle these value conflicts while, at the same time, the state authorities formulate irreconcilable goals that the schools have to try to implement. The aim of the programme is to analyse how these value conflicts manifest themselves on a local level. We also investigate the variation in these practices and attitudes between different municipalities and individual schools and clarify which political, institutional, social and other factors explain this variation. The investigation is based on an extensive collection of material, from an analysis of all the municipalities' school plans for a questionnaire to teachers of social studies to series of information interviews.

2003-4442
Eva Reimers, LiU

Heteronormativity – School as a Place for Construction of Sexuality and Gender

Project:
The aim of the project is to illustrate how heterosexuality is made the norm in schools. The study also aims to develop strategies for ways of talking, thinking and acting on issues of gender and sexuality without marginalising homosexuals and bisexuals or making them invisible. The project consists of four substudies that analyse texts, speeches and documents from a discourse perspective. A text analysis of the schools' regulations and teaching material on the schools' fundamental values will form a common background for the substudies. Through text analyses, in-depth interviews and participants' observations of teacher training and school activities, we will focus on how heteronormativity is made in different contexts and the consequences this can be assumed to have for understanding sexuality, gender, class and ethnicity, with the emphasis on the first. The contexts we have chosen are teacher training, school as a working environment, young students, and strategies for teaching fundamental values. Results from the project will be able to have importance for school activity and for teacher training. For the schools' part it is about creating awareness and about providing a basis for strategies that lead to less discrimination and a better school environment for non-heterosexuals. For the teacher training part, it will be possible to use the results for development work on courses on fundamental values and gender.

2001-3955
Willmar Sauter, SU

Gender on Stage: Gender Perspectives in Actor Education

Project:
Gender on the stage investigates the relationship between women and men on and behind the scenes. The starting point is actor training at the Stockholm University College of Acting. Three subprojects analyse gender construction and equality in drama, changing gender roles, student étude work and interaction between male and female teachers and students in different contexts of the activity. It is a cooperation project between the Stockholm University College of Acting, the Department of Theatre Studies and the Department of Scandinavian Languages at Stockholm University. There is a double aim: teaching will be analysed from a gender perspective, and the insights gained will be implemented and tried in new teaching elements.

2003-3885
Carl Anders Säfström, MdH

To Learn Democracy

Project:
Why do fewer young people vote today than 20 years ago? Why does an increasing number of young people turn to extremist political movements instead of the established political parties? Do facts like these point to a failure by Swedish compulsory school to educate democratic citizens? This project tries to answer these questions by turning to strategically chosen groups of young people: young working-class women who do not participate in organised collective activity and young working-class men who show a comparatively greater attraction to collective behaviour by joining a music band. The project cooperates with a project that investigates the involvement by middle-class youth in non-parliamentary organisations such as Attac. A picture is developed through observations and interviews and related back to the young men and women who were interviewed. This way, the dialogue between researchers and research subjects regarding this picture can contribute further knowledge. A

central aspect of the project is a critical analysis of how the democracy-teaching role of Swedish schools is perceived by the young people. Theoretically, this project brings together youth research theory and educational theory by linking to new research on social movements that focus on feelings. The project gains an international and comparative quality through its collaboration with a parallel study in England. The aim is to contribute to an empirical and theoretical basis for reforming democratic teaching in schools.

2002-2644
Inga Wernersson, GU

Changing Sex/Gender Orders in Schools and Education? Policy, Perspectives, Practice

Project:

The project looks at students' and teachers' views and attitudes to sex/gender orders that emerge in schools and preschools today. The most important starting point is that the last decade has involved such revolutionary changes on an overall and, in some cases, global level that previous empirical descriptions and theoretical understanding of sex/gender cannot automatically be assumed to be valid. One starting point is relevant theoretical formulations by, for example, Giddens, Beck, Bauman and Castell describing changing conditions for work, consumption and communication. The project studies the importance such understandings have/have had to the way gender and equality as a policy and practice are perceived in schools today. In the project, "policy perspectives" are related to "practical perspectives", ie, the political normative is contrasted with everyday experience. The project consists of five substudies that form the basis of a main study in the form of a nationally representative questionnaire. The substudies look at:

1 Young People's everyday school life from a gender perspective – varying conditions and identities.
2 Equality and gender order in multi-ethnic preschools and schools.
3 Sex/gender order, social practice and teacher professionalism.
4 "Equality" as a policy, discourse and practice – international comparisons.
5 Gender and equality as goals and tools in school-related policy.

2003-3976
Aleksandra Ålund, LiU

Education, Work and Agency in the Multiethnic City: A Comparative Project on Institutional Change, Local Citizenship and Social Inclusion

Project:
The project highlights how institutional changes and school reforms (compulsory school/upper secondary school) affect social exclusion/inclusion of young people with an immigrant background from a national and international comparative perspective, with Stockholm as a case study. Questions relate to the interplay between school reforms, local social development, citizenship action and individual social mobility. What role do educational efforts and local institutional strategies play in changing a segregated urban ethnoscape and an ethic and gender-segmented labour market? What do local movements and associations mean to inclusion in the education system and the labour market? How are educational and professional careers represented from an ethnicity and gender perspective? Are alternative educational and working life strategies conveyed through transnational ethnic networks?

The study is carried out by a multidisciplinary research group at Linköping University, the University College of South Stockholm and the National Swedish Institute for Working Life. The theory frame combines attempts within ethnicity, education, welfare and urban research. The method attempt is complex: registration data, document analysis, interviews, ethnographic case studies. The research team has a good name within the study field and has all-round quantitative/qualitative method competence. International cooperation: Partner 6. Framework Programme; networks in the EU, Australia, the USA. The project relates to the committee's research field: 1) the interplay between social/political/economic change, and 2), normalisation, integration and marginalisation.

APPENDIX 5

The Project Researchers – Some Statistics

The tables below show some data about the researchers and the project leaders in the fourteen projects. The office of the CES collected the data from available sources at the CES – from progress reports and final reports, supplemented in some cases with data from the applications.[21] The data collected are about all researchers in the projects, irrespective of the funding sources. There is mixed funding in all cases and sometimes it is impossible to see exactly what comes from the CES and what comes from other sources. However, all the projects have the CES as the main funding source and from the point of view of research, the composition of each research group is more important than how they are funded.

We had originally hoped that we could collect data on age, sex (or gender), academic position, ethnic background, educational and professional background. However, the sources did not allow us to extract much information; therefore we only have data on sex and academic position. Geographic distribution of research groups and networks would have been interesting to investigate, but it was not possible within the limits or our work.

The data are at least reasonably accurate. In some cases the reports did not supply full and updated information about all researchers in the projects. Therefore the data were in some cases supplemented from data from the applications, which then mirrors the aspirations of the projects rather then what could actually be realised. In one or two cases the academic status of an individual has changed during the project period, in which case we counted the higher one (for example, one person turned from Ph.D. student to post doc researcher, and is therefore counted as post doc researcher). In a few cases it seems that Ph.D. students have interrupted their work and in one case a project researcher died (in fact so early in the project that he was not counted).

After the office of the CES had collected the data, the review panel checked all data against the reports we had as our basic information material. The data are according to our judgment accurate enough for the observations we make.

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[21] We are grateful to Kit Nilheim for having done this job.

We could not get complete information about how much research each researcher was funded to do for their respective projects, nor of course how much research time they actually have spent within the respective projects. The source material shows however rather clearly that almost all Ph.D. students and post doc researchers (sometimes called "younger researchers" irrespective of age) all fully funded, from one or several sources. On the other hand, only a few of the senior researchers have had 100 % funded research time within their respective project. The percentage varies very much: not many senior researchers have more than 50 % funded research time; rela-tively many have 20-40 % and a few have even recorded no funded research time at all (at least from CES, not all reports give full information about funding from other sources). The few cases where no funded research time is reported are where full professors acted as project leaders; they are supposed to do research and research supervision within their ordinary work time. In the tables are therefore recorded only the *number* of researchers of different kinds.

In Table 1 (below) we can see that there are 41 senior researchers, 14 post doc researchers and 39 Ph.D. students. Given our remarks about funded research time above, it is clear that *the Ph.D. students dominate much of the funded research time*. This is research time that, to a large extent, is the building of research capacity and research-in-training. One may also wonder about possible explanations of the varying proportions of women (F) in relation to men (M) in the projects. However, our material does not provide us with any firm answers.

Table 1. The Project Researchers: Sex and Academic Background

Project number (responsible leader)	Number of senior researchers		Number of post doc researchers		Number of Ph.D. students		Total number of researchers		Total number of researchers	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	Senior + post doc	Ph.D. students	F	M
1 (Amnå)	1	1	1	1	5	1	4	6	7	3
2 (Englund)	2	4	0	1	3	3	7	6	5	8
3 (Fjellström)	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
4 (Frånberg)	3	1	1	0	1	0	5	1	5	1
5 (Hartman)	1	2	0	2	3	3	5	6	4	7
6 (Naeslund)	1	3	0	0	1	1	4	2	2	4
7 (Larsson)	2	1	0	0	1	0	3	1	3	1
8 (Ohlsson)	0	2	0	0	1	0	2	1	1	2
9 (Pierre)	1	2	2	0	0	2	5	2	3	4
10 (Reimers)	2	0	1	0	1	0	3	1	4	0
11 (Sauter)	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	2	3	1
12 (Säfström)	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	2	2	2
13 (Wernersson)	5	0	0	0	4	0	5	4	9	0
14 (Ålund)	1	1	2	3	2	2	7	4	5	6
SUM	21	20	7	7	25	13	55	38	53	40

We now turn to Table 2 (below), which records the distribution of (formal) leadership between women and men. Research leadership may mean many things. The projects have reported up to five "project leaders". On the basis of the material we received, we cannot say whether the leadership, in the projects with several project leaders, means integrated project leadership or leadership distributed among relatively autonomous subprojects. We can see from the material that men, not surprisingly, are clearly dominant as named/responsible project leaders.[22]

Table 2: The Project Leaders

Project number (responsible leader)	Project leaders		Named/responsible project leader	
	F	M	F	M
1 (Amnå)	1	1	0	1
2 (Englund)	0	1	0	1
3 (Fjellström)	0	1	0	1
4 (Frånberg)	1	0	1	0
5 (Hartman)	1	2	0	1
6 (Naeslund)	0	1	0	1
7 (Larsson)	0	1	0	1
8 (Ohlsson)	0	2	0	1
9 (Pierre)	1	2	0	1
10 (Reimers)	1	0	1	0
11 (Sauter)	0	1	0	1
12 (Säfström)	0	1	0	1
13 (Wernersson)	5	0	1	0
14 (Ålund)	1	1	1	0
SUM	11	14	4	10

[22]Only one person can be named as responsible to the CES.

APPENDIX 6

Background of the experts

Madeleine Arnot

Madeleine Arnot is Professor of Sociology of Education and Fellow of Jesus College at Cambridge University; She is also Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences and has held appointments at the Open University and Visiting Professorships at the University of Porto, Portugal and Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, in Greece.

Her primary research focus is on the relationship between gender, social class and ethnicity, the development of equality policies, and the link between democracy, citizenship education and the creation of learner citizens in contemporary society. Her current research investigates ways of improving educational outcomes so as to reduce poverty in developing countries, and the politics of educating asylum-seeking and refugee children in the UK. Recent publications include: *Challenging Democracy: international perspectives on gender, education and citizenship* (ed. with J. Dillabough, 2000); *Reproducing Gender? Selected essays on educational theory and feminist politics* (2002); *The RoutledgeFalmer Reader in Gender and Education* (ed. with M. Mac an Ghaill, 2006).

Stefan T. Hopmann

Stefan T. Hopmann is Professor of School and Education Research (Schul- und Bildungsforschung) at the University of Vienna. He is also Professor II at NTNU in Trondheim and has held appointments at the University of Kiel, the University of Potsdam, the University of Oslo, NTNU at Trondheim, the University College in Kristiansand and various visiting positions in Germany, Denmark, and in Switzerland.

His main research focus is on comparative didactics, the history and present state of teaching and schooling in a comparative perspective. His publications include *Lehrplanarbeit in der Schweiz und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Curriculum Change in Switzerland and the Federal Rebublic of Germany, ed. with R. Künzli 1998), *Didaktik as Reflective Teaching* (ed. with I. Westbury and K. Riquarts, 2000), *Hvordan formidles læreplan* (How a Curriculum is Implemented, with K. Bachmann et al. 2003), *Didaktik and/ or Curriculum* (ed. with B.B. Gundem, 2004-2).

Bengt Molander

Bengt Molander is Professor of Philosophy at NTNU, Norwegian University of science and Technology, in Trondheim. He took his Ph.D. at Uppsala University and has held appointments at Uppsala University and Göteborg University before he took up the chair in Trondheim 1997.

His main research interest is such kinds or aspects of knowledge and learning that manifest themselves primarily through what people can do and carry through. Many labels are used for such kinds of knowledge, like "practical knowledge", "tacit knowing" and "skill". He is also interested in various conceptions of knowledge in society and the relation between knowledge (learning) and art. His main work is *Kunskap i handling* ("Knowledge in Action", 2nd ed., 1996, in Swedish).

APPENDIX 7

Abbreviations

CES	Committee of Educational Sciences
GU	Göteborg University
LiU	Linköping University
LHS	The Stockholm Institute of Education
SU	Stockholm University
UmU	Umeå University
UU	Uppsala University
OrU	Örebro University

SAMMANFATTNING

Internationell utvärdering inom utbildningsvetenskap – demokratiska värderingar, genus och medborgarskap

Material från fjorton forskningsprojekt utgör basen för evalueringen. Inget av projekten var helt avslutat vad gäller forskning och publicering. Underlag för evalueringen var korta projektrapporter och den information som panelen fick genom en halvtimmes intervju med varje projektledare. Intervjuernas främsta mål var att ta fram projektens perspektiv på forskningsplaner, forskningsprocessen och forskningens förväntade effekter samt bidra till fortsatt reflektion över dessa perspektiv.

De fjorton projekten visar en mångfald av spännande och intressanta forskningsproblem och panelen mötte engagerade forskare med olika ämnesbakgrund. Flera av projekten är eller skulle kunna utvecklas till projekt av internationellt intresse. Området har en stor potential för vidare utveckling.

Kriterierna för tilldelning av medel från Utbildningsvetenskapliga kommittén (UVK) ger enligt panelens uppfattning flertydiga signaler. Ett huvudmål är "att främja forskning av hög vetenskaplig kvalitet på lärarutbildningens och den pedagogiska yrkesverksamhetens områden", vilket uttrycker både ett krav på grundforskning med hög (internationell) kvalitet och relevans för de nämnda praktikområdena. Vidare understryks uppbyggnad av forskarkompetens genom, å ena sidan, en prioritering av medel till forskarutbildning och tjänster på postdoktor-nivå, och å andra sidan ett krav på forskning i nätverk mellan enheter med fasta forskningsresurser och högskolor utan sådana resurser.

Kravet på relevans tolkas ganska snävt och instrumentellt av de flesta projekten, nämligen så att resultaten relativt direkt skall kunna föras in i den svenska lärarutbildningen. Ett sådant relevanskrav kan medföra lägre krav på forskningskvalitet. En satsning på forskarutbildning och nätverksuppbyggnad är svår att förena med utförande av forskning av högsta kvalitet. I ett internationellt perspektiv räknas en doktorsavhandling i första hand som en redovisning av en utbildning, inte som ett självständigt forskningsarbete.

Den instrumentalistiska uppfattningen av relevans i kombination med att många forskare och utforskade har anknytning till den svenska lärar-

utbildningen leder till något som panelen, något polemiskt, har valt att kalla "lärarutbildningens slutna värld". Denna bör öppnas upp.

Många av projekten har en normativ agenda: Forskningen skall bidra till att skapa, främst genom skolan, demokratiska medborgare, vilket gärna uppfattas så att de demokratiska värderingarna ("värdegrunden") skall vara på plats. En sådan normativ forskningsansats reser särskilda metodologiska frågor, som inte i tillräcklig grad problematiserats inom ramen för forskningsprojekten.

Många av de forskare panelen mötte verkade oförberedda på frågor som rör teoretisk ram, metodologi, forskningsdesign, val av undersökningsobjekt/-grupper, dataanalys, reliabilitet och giltighet. Detta kan bero på att forskare valt att "forska säkert" i meningen att metod och objekt främst valts efter vad som är praktiskt och näraliggande. Med några undantag fann panelen en låg reflexivitet över den egna forskningen, dess förutsättningar och vad resultaten säger och inte säger. Till förutsättningarna hör olika "självklarheter" om svensk demokrati och om vad som krävs för att skapa (mer) demokratiska medborgare. UVK bör bidra till att reflexivitet och metodologisk medvetenhet fokuseras mera. Detta är en förutsättning för internationell vetenskaplig publicering.

En utbredd publiceringsideologi är att man först skall forska och sedan publicera, i första hand för en svensk publik (främst lärarutbildare, lärarstudenter och myndigheter). Enligt panelens mening bör publicering vara bättre planerad och ske också under forskningens gång. Högre grad av internationell publicering bör eftersträvas.

Enligt panelens uppfattning bör UVK bidra med (förmedling av) kvalificerat stöd till de projekt som tilldelats medel. Större och bättre integrerade projekt bör eftersträvas. Svensk utbildningsforskning kan med en mer internationell inriktning och vidare utveckling av kompetensen att hantera frågor om teoretisk ram, metodologi, design och dataanalys väsentligt bidra till internationell forskning. Ansvaret för detta vilar i sista hand på forskarna själva, men UVK bör uppmuntra och ekonomisk stödja en sådan utveckling.

Within the Swedish Research Council an overall framework for the evaluation of research support was adopted by the Committee for Educational Sciences (CES) in February 2005.

As areas to be evaluated in 2006, the CES chose Democratic Values, Gender and Citizenship In April 2006, a panel of three experts was appointed by the Secretary General, Educational Sciences, and the result of their work is presented in this report.

The goal of the evaluation should be to shed light on the quality of the research performed and its significance for the scientific field concerned, in a national and an international perspective and in relation to the funding awarded by the CES.
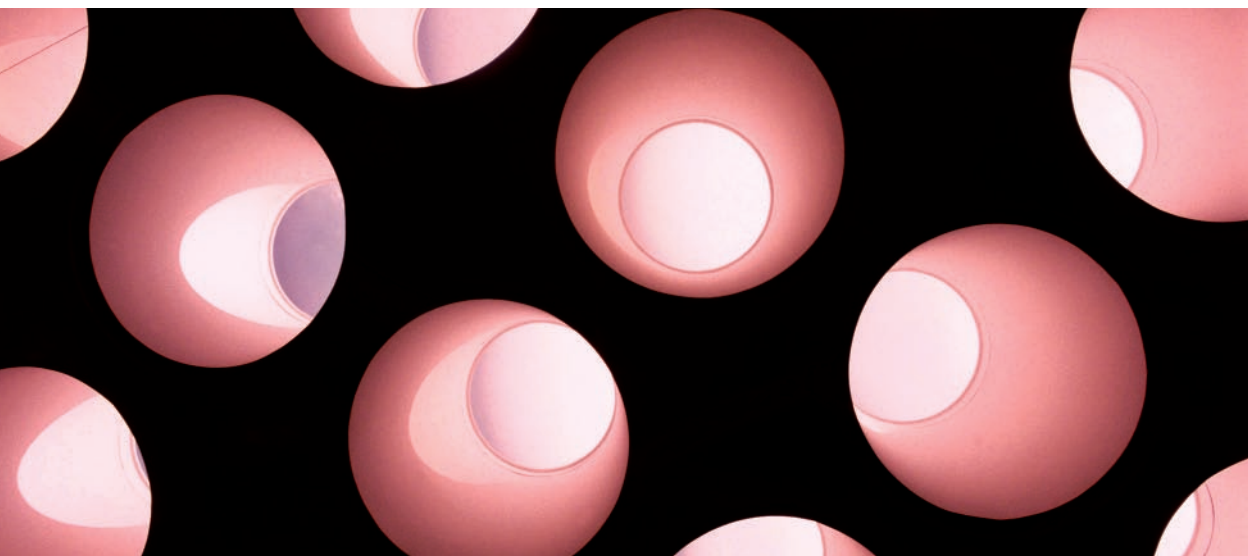
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