ABSTRACT

PERSPECTIVES ON ‘RACE’ / ETHNICITY AND CLASS IN FEMINISM
(IN AN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT)

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This paper will primarily deal with the concepts of ‘race’/ ethnicity but also class in feminism from mainly Swedish (/Nordic) perspectives. I will be concentrating on the issues of, and interrelatedness of, ‘race’/ethnicity, class and gender generally, and more specifically in the context of education which is my primary field of research. As it is I find it more or less impossible to consider ethnicity or gender in isolation, it is necessary to take other notions and categories into account. An interrelated perspective, however, is a relatively new and largely neglected field of research in Sweden as well as in the other Nordic countries. There is a lack of research and theory that attempts to explain and understand how gender, ethnicity/’race’ and class interrelate.

I have specifically looked at Swedish adult high school education where I have conducted semi structured interviews and done participant observations, but my discussion stretches further than that. The concept of ‘race’ is discussed and I try to show how, and that, this notion can be useful also in a Swedish context. I give examples from my research, and discuss processes of racialisation that I mean take place in education, while at the same time trying to keep the focus at also the notions of gender and class.

Finally I also consider some methodological and epistemological issues. Most importantly in this case is how and what I as a researcher contribute with in the research process. Especially concerning my own background and what I might represent when it comes to issues of e.g. ‘race’, racism and ‘othering’, when talking to students who often on routine basis are categories as ‘others’.