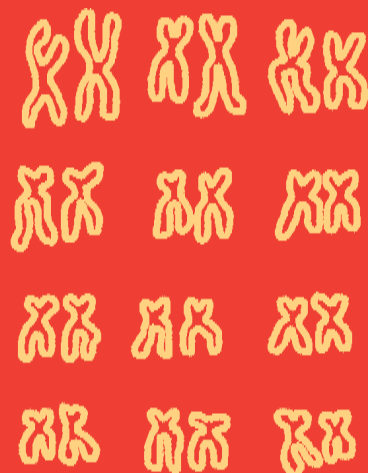




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REPORT 2003:10



THE SWEDISH NATIONAL  
BOARD FOR YOUTH AFFAIRS  
[www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se](http://www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se)



# Shortcuts to gender equality

Methods and strategies regarding young  
people's leisure and associative activities



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Methods and strategies regarding young people's leisure and associative activities



# The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs

**is a governmental authority working within four activity fields.**

We allocate public funds and work with method development within young peoples' Leisure and associative activities, as well as within International Youth Exchanges.

We support the development of Local youth policies and follow-up the National youth policy.

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# Preface

Leisure and recreational time is an important arena for young people's involvement and identity development. It is important, therefore, that recreational environments do not contain structures, attitudes or values that marginalise or exclude due to gender, class, religion, sexual preference, disability or ethnic background. Several studies, however, indicate that girls are less satisfied with their recreational situation but also that they are often unfairly treated in public ventures within the recreational field.

If equality policies are to be put into practice it is important that the work to develop methods and identify good examples continues. Here authorities, associations, clubs and other organisations have important obligations and challenges ahead.

In *Shortcuts to gender equality*, we have chosen to highlight the work being done to develop gender equality and improve conditions for girls. In the publication there are tips and ideas, theories and methods for young people as well as for those who work with and for young people, on a professional or volunteer basis. Fritidsforum- Swedish National Association of Youth Clubs and Neighbourhood Centres (Riksförbundet Sveriges fritids- och hemgårdar), Young Folks Association (Förbundet Vi Unga) and The Swedish Red Cross Youth Society (Röda Korsets Ungdomsförbund) have worked together for two years in projects to develop the work for gender equality. Material has been gathered and developed by Mia Hanström and Ulrika Eklund who both work with youth and gender equality issues for various organisations, district councils and educational associations. Their experiences and other gender equality work in various youth organisations form the basis of this publication.

The material for the publication has been collected and compiled by The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs (Ungdomsstyrelsen). Interviews were carried out by Jenny Morelli.

We hope that *Shortcuts to gender equality* will inspire those of you who wish to tackle the issues of gender equality in your district or in your association!

The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs has been commissioned by the Government to allocate funds from the Swedish Inheritance Fund (Allmänna arvsfonden) to projects for the improvement of conditions for girls (Ju2002/7574/U). This publication is produced within the framework of this governmental commission.

Leif Linde  
Director General  
The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs

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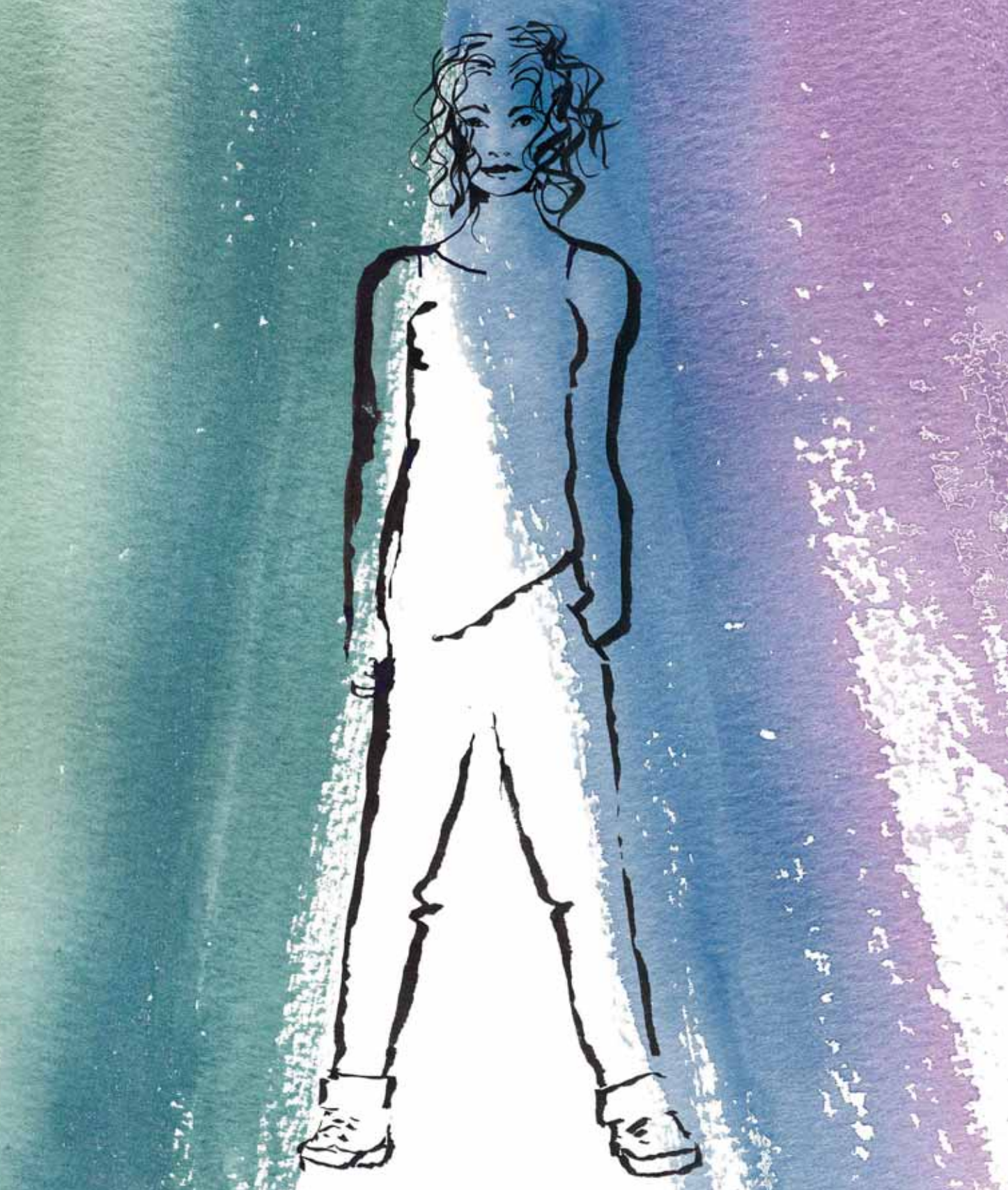
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### Literature and further reading



# Youth and gender equality

Everyone in Sweden has the same rights, opportunities and obligations regardless of gender. This is the objective of Sweden's gender equality policy. Among other things, this means an equal distribution of power and influence, and the same opportunities for economic independence.

In Sweden the preconditions for reaching equality are good; we have laws and regulations that govern equality; in 1995 we were chosen by the UN as the country with the best record of equality; we have a relatively good economy and we have the ambition to offer education and employment indiscriminate of gender.

Unequal conditions exist today within several categories and areas, not least within that of youth. In view of this the Government has, in its bill on youth policy (1998/99:115), pointed out that equality between the sexes must improve in the younger generation. Among other things, the issues regarding the conditions for girls in associative activities and other youth organisations have become more urgent. Many organisations have also initiated projects and ventures to improve conditions for girls and to find methods for developing gender equality.

## Gender and power

If we want to promote equality, it is important to discuss and analyse how relationships between the sexes can be linked to power. These power relationships can sometimes be linked to the term *gender structure*. By taking this into account we can understand better how we can work for gender equality. In feminist literature it is discussed how the concept of gender equality is sometimes disassociated from a perspective of power, and how that can conceal the girls' subordinate position.

The work on promoting gender equality in various youth organisations shows the importance of applying a power perspective. This requires a constant questioning of on whose conditions decisions about priorities and activities are based, and what consequences this has for boys and girls.

There are many factors that affect our possibilities for having power and influence in society. Gender is one of them, but ethnicity, class, age, sexual preference, religion, where we live and disability are others that should not be underestimated. In *Shortcuts to gender equality*, we focus on inequality between girls and boys. The actual power and influence of young people within different arenas is obviously determined in an interplay between many factors, but gender is a fundamental category that in many ways also permeates all other categories.

## Gender as a social and cultural construction

The term gender is used to describe how the sexes are constructed in social and cultural contexts.

In this publication both terms, sex and gender, are used, although emphasis is placed on *gender* and its above definition.

Generalisations are also used as a method for revealing gender patterns and structures, even though this sometimes creates a problem, as all individuals are unique and generalisations can contribute to boys and girls being perceived as homogenous groups.

## Analyses of the relation between power and gender

The exercise of power between the sexes occurs on different levels, both on the individual level and on what is usually described as the *structural level*. Professor Yvonne Hirdman is of the opinion that there is a basic gender structure in society. She has described this as a contract between the sexes that is based on the principles of separation and valuation. The *principle of separation* is about women and men being kept apart and performing different tasks. The *principle of valuation* explains how the tasks that men perform are valued more highly and become the norm that everything is compared to.<sup>1</sup>

Men's power over women has historically even been regulated in laws. It was, for example, only the men who had the right to vote, and women could according to the law, not be raped by their husband as sex was a male marital right.<sup>2</sup> Today there are laws that aim to ensure the rights of everyone but inequality still exists in many areas of society.

Ulrika Eklund and Mia Hanström are consultants in youth and gender equality work. They have discussed how different power structures affect our opportunities, by using the term *life-space*. With this they mean the possibilities that each individual has, and the space within which each individual can move physically and mentally. From a gender perspective it may mean that young girls are hindered in freely choosing their own company, that they avoid a certain place due to fear of threats or violence, that they have less space to speak and be heard in school, or that their sexuality is controlled.

These power structures create norms and values for what gender is and these affect us through attitudes, language and actions. Power structures are found everywhere in society which means that girls' and boys' opportunities for power and influence are also affected within recreational and associative activities.

## Compensation, single-sex groups, integration and gender quotas

In *Shortcuts to gender equality* we present experiences from young people's recreational and associative activities, and various methods that are adapted for work on developing gender equality. However, there are also other methods worth knowing about – like the compensatory method, single-sex groups, integration and quotas. They can be used for different occasions and in different contexts, depending on situation and objective, but can also be used in combination. Here they are only briefly presented.

•

**The Compensatory method** can involve deliberately compensating shortcomings, aspects that the individual has not had an opportunity to develop earlier. One example may be that boys communicate feelings and experiences, another that girls make themselves heard in public arenas. One risk with this method is that it conserves gender roles by not problematising the relationship between power and gender.

•

**Single-sex groups** is another popular method. Within youth organisations this has often meant giving girls the possibility to create a space for and by themselves, without having to consider the boys. In this they can express themselves or just rest in a togetherness that can strengthen them as a group. Working with single-sex groups it is important to think about what purpose the group has and what it is meant to be changing. Otherwise, single-sex groups may become just cosy get-togethers or a breathing space that in fact preserves a power structure between the sexes.

•

**Gender quotas** can give the under-represented sex priority in places and positions. One type of quota is *positive discrimination*. A risk with the method is that those benefiting from quotas feel they are chosen not because of their competence but because of their sex.

•

**Integration** is an objective of gender equality, where a mix of individuals creates diversity and solidarity in the group regardless of gender. Integration can also be seen as a method where boys and girls are placed in the same group. Without a gender power perspective there is a high risk that integrated public activities still take place on men's terms – automatically giving them precedence.



*"Grynet is an important role model for young girls"*  
*Lena Levin, Vi Unga*



# Methods and strategies

To better understand how power structures and norms are created and maintained in organisations and activities, a number of methods have been developed. The methods can be used for improving gender equality.

In the following section an account is given of Berit Ås' analysis of domination techniques. They can be used to better understand how the relationship between the sexes can be linked to power. We also discuss the significance of the leader role in gender equality work and the importance of involving both boys and girls in bringing about change.

The conditions around us while growing up contribute to forming our values and attitudes. How different these conditions can be is illustrated by the story about Patrik and Maria – a tale of the sexes. The story originates in the project "The inventor's seminar" ("Uppfinnarseminariet") run jointly by Fritidsforum- Swedish National Association of Youth Clubs and Neighbourhood Centres, Young Folks Association and The Swedish Red Cross Youth Society. The project was headed by Mia Hanström and documented by Ulrika Eklund. The aim of the project was to develop methods for, and an improvement of, gender equality work.

We also present in the following section the so-called 3R-method developed by Gertrud Åström.<sup>3</sup> It shows how, through the statistical analysis of actual conditions, one can measure and chart the distribution of power in organisations and activities.

The statistical section can be used as fuel for discussions around gender equality.

## Domination techniques

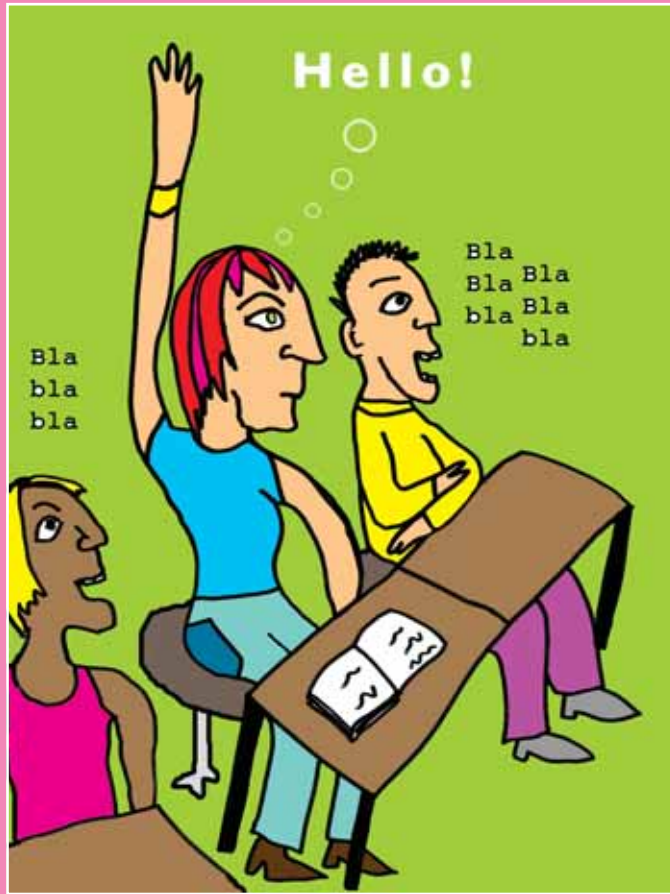
”You’re not stupid, but someone is making you stupid”, says Berit Ås. She is a social psychologist, Norway’s first female political party leader, and has devised an analysis of various domination techniques. Sometimes it is difficult to understand what is taking place in a meeting or between people in a workgroup. A sense of feeling stupid, unimportant or uncomfortable can surface. In these situations, knowledge of the various domination techniques can be helpful in understanding whether the experience can be linked to structures that serve to maintain power relationships. What Berit Ås has done is to simplify, refine and thereby clarify how structures surrounding gender and power are maintained. Ulrika Eklund and Mia Hanström have applied her analysis of adults on a collection of young people’s experiences.

There are several theories on how power is created and maintained. Through an analysis of domination techniques girls can make their situation visible. The analysis can also be used in other contexts to show how power is reproduced. Knowledge of domination techniques is therefore important for both boys and girls. It is also important to know about them in order not to subject others, either consciously or unconsciously, to them. Below follow the seven domination techniques that Berit Ås has identified.<sup>4</sup>

### Fact box

Seven domination techniques identified by Berit Ås:

- 1 making invisible
- 2 ridiculing
- 3 withholding of information
- 4 double punishment
- 5 placing of blame and guilt
- 6 objectification
- 7 violence and the threat of violence



graphic: Jenny Morelli

1

### **Making invisible**

Making someone invisible is a way of shutting them out and belittling them. It can be difficult to identify as it is often done without the use of words. It is often expressed through body language, that is to say through gestures or the lack of them, as, for example, at a board meeting. The environment or situation can also make a woman who is trying to make her voice heard feel that she is being a nuisance when she is trying to act or say something.

*Examples of making invisible:*

- A girl says something but the meeting continues as if her contribution were never made.
- Girls' interests and concerns are regarded as less exciting than boys' and are afforded less coverage in the media.
- In children's books, children's films and children's programmes, girls hardly ever have leading roles. Even animal characters are boys: Moomin, Donald Duck, Simba, etc. "Girl animals" are often those who maintain morals.
- Girls' sexuality and gender are made invisible in different ways. There are no positive names for the female sexual organ. For boys, the situation is different – there are many established words. Most people know that erection is a boy's hard-on – few are aware that lubrication is the equivalent for girls.

**Strategy:**

By recognising this domination technique, girls can avoid feeling insignificant and make others conscious of the patterns so that change may occur. When we notice that a girl is being made invisible, we can actively support her and counteract the phenomenon.



*"People who don't give up  
are my role models"*

*Anna Elgh,  
Fritidsforum*

## Methods:

### The organisation's signals

What unspoken signals are there in the organisation's material?

1. Who appears on pictures? Boys or girls?
2. What are they doing in the pictures? Who are active? Who are passive?
3. Analyse what signals are being sent.

**Objective:** To reveal the organisation's unspoken messages about gender.

---

### Speaking time

Who actually speaks at meetings?

Examine the reality by timing individuals.

1. Choose a person to time the speakers at meetings.
2. Compile results. Add together the total speaking time for girls and for boys. Take into consideration who the chairman was and who the speaker was, if such roles existed.
3. Analyse results. Who speaks and for how long?
4. You can also develop this by noting who agreed with whom, who took up which topics, and which topics were discussed the most. You can choose either to do this openly or by not disclosing which meetings you have investigated.<sup>5</sup>

**Objective:** To reveal who gets to speak in the organisation.

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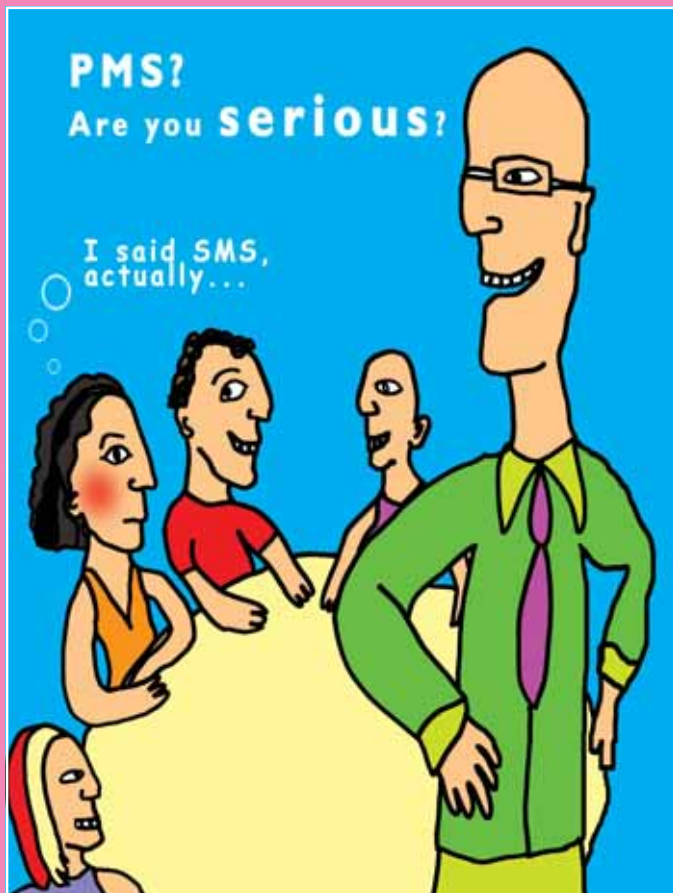
### Go-rounds

Try to give each participant in a group the same opportunity to take part in discussions.

There are various methods for making meetings more democratic. The simplest is go-rounds, whereby each person in a group is allowed to speak uninterrupted. Either participants can comment or pose questions after each person has finished, or each person is allowed to speak only when it is their turn. Go-rounds can be used to begin or end a meeting or a topic. To make it even clearer who has the floor, one can use an object, a symbol, which is held by the speaker and then passed on to the next speaker in turn.

**Objective:** To give everyone space to speak.

---



graphic: Jenny Morelli

## 2

### Ridiculing

Being ridiculed is an unpleasant experience. Ridiculing as a power strategy can be manifested by stating or insinuating, in one way or another, that girls are ludicrous, incompetent and inadequate. Ridicule can also be expressed in comments, insults and jokes. The person using the technique gets those who laugh on their side. Those who are subjected and say nothing and those who try to react are perceived as having no sense of humour and dull. To avoid the risk of being the subject of ridicule, girls can unconsciously play along.

*Examples of ridiculing:*

- When a girl stops talking in the classroom in order to avoid looks or comments about something she said that the boys thought was stupid.
- When a girl has an idea that is met with: you can't do, think or say that.
- When a girl gets a pat on the head or is called, for example, darling, honey or sweetie.
- When a girl receives comments like: have you got your period, you haven't had any lately, etc.

**Strategy:**

When a girl has learnt to recognise ridiculing as a domination technique she can more easily point out violations and demand that they stop.

---

**Method:**

**Take charge**

There are many ways of protesting.

1. Define what you are being subjected to: "You are ridiculing me when you speak to me like that." "Your whispering is disturbing me."
2. Criticise: "I don't like you whispering while I talk."
3. Say what you want instead: "I would like you to stop whispering and listen to me."

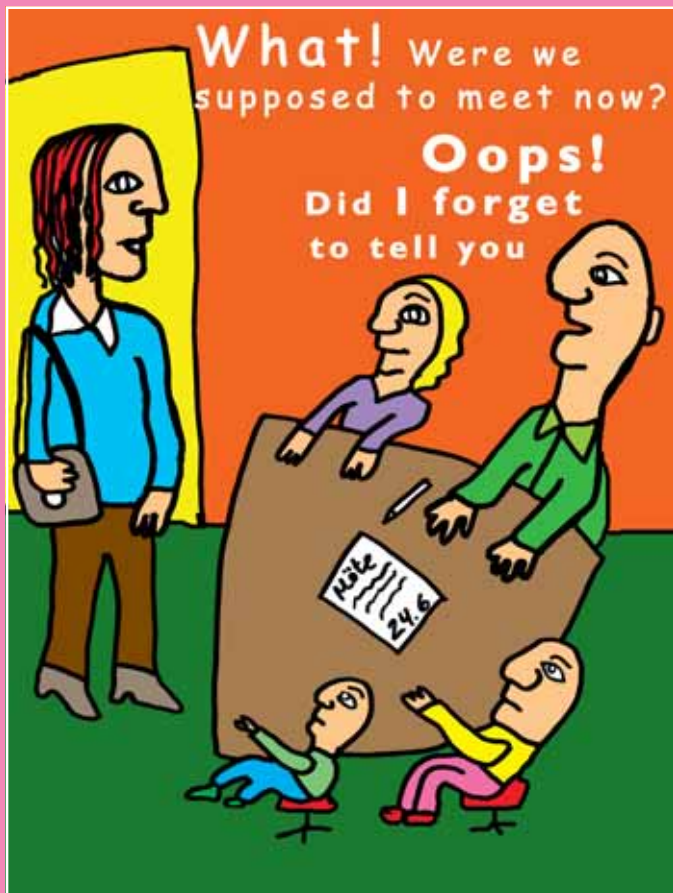
**Objective:** To take the power of definition into your hands in an abusive or objectionable situation.

---



*"Split men and women up  
and let them discuss gen-  
der equality separately"*

*Sandra Dahlén,  
lecture and trainer*



3

graphic: Jenny Morelli

### **Withholding of information**

Knowledge, facts and information bestow power. Believing that others have more information can be unpleasant and the feeling that decisions have already been made elsewhere can be confusing. There are many occasions when girls end up on the outside when boys exchange information and build loyalties. Such occasions occur informally.

Having the opinion that assessing gender equality is not important can be an expression of the desire to withhold information, of concealing girls' and boys' circumstances. The structure of meetings can also be a part of the withholding of information. The set-up may make it awkward to pose questions, and suggesting other forms may be met with incomprehension or ridicule.

*Examples of withholding information:*

- At a meeting everyone has received preparatory material but it becomes obvious that some boys have got together before the meeting and are now intent on getting those proposals through that they have agreed on and prepared arguments for. When a girl makes counterproposals she is told that they won't work and as she doesn't have sufficient prepared material, she won't be able to argue her case anyway.

### **Strategy:**

By learning to recognise the techniques of withholding information, the rights of girls to demand better facts and information are made visible. It can also result in girls realising that they need to organise themselves in order to gain the power to achieve things they find important.

---

### **Methods:**

#### **High and low status activities**

Are there differences between how various activities are valued within the organisation?

1. List the areas of activity in the organisation.
2. Let the members of the organisation's committee individually evaluate each area of activity on a scale where four is very important and one is unimportant.
3. Compile results. Separate into what boys think is important and what girls think is important.
4. Analyse to discover whether a gender difference exists in what boys and girls value respectively.
5. Discuss the result.
6. Decide how you should proceed!

**Objective:** To make visible if the organisation's activities are unconsciously perceived as having different status, and if so whether there is a link to gender.

---



*"Do your homework before you discuss gender equality with men"*

*Sandra Dahlén,  
lecture and trainer*

### Contact map of informal power

Formal power can be supported or overturned.

Informal power is harder to control.

It's there and affects us, but is not as visible.

1. Let the committee members document who contacts them and who they themselves contact, both within and outside the committee. Keep a record for a week, for example.
2. Compile results. Separate contacts into male and female, and maybe even officials, members and elected representatives.
3. Let the committee members present their results.
4. Discuss the results. Who contacted whom?
5. Decide how to proceed!

**Objective:** To make visible what form some of the informal power takes in the organisation.

---



*"Fittstim' is still valid"*  
Sandra Dahlén,  
lecture and trainer

### Which members are seen and heard?

Some take more space than others. Some receive more space than others. Who really gets the attention?

1. Let the committee list the members they know by name. Alternatively: let the leaders list the names of the young people they work with.
2. Compare the results with respect to gender.
3. Discuss the results. Usually the names of boys are more often recalled than those of girls. Is this the case? Discuss.
4. How do you proceed?

**Objective:** To make visible who is seen and heard in the organisation, or to make visible who most often attracts the leader's attention.

---



4

graphic: Jenny Morelli

### Double punishment

If a girl actively gets involved in something, she's taking too much space. If she doesn't, she's passive, boring and avoids responsibility. The feeling of powerlessness and that whatever she does is wrong, is debilitating. Double punishment is a reality for girls, due to the historical invisibility and ridiculing of girls, and it capitalizes on a constant bad conscience among women for not doing enough.

It can be difficult to make visible when girls are being subjected to double punishment, but for many women the experience becomes more apparent after having children. They are then expected to be "good mothers", devoted to the child and home, as well as working full-time and pursuing a career.

*Examples of double punishment:*

- Girls should stand up and speak their mind in the classroom but should not be too talkative, rowdy or noisy.
- Girls should be popular with the boys and play on traditional femininity, but not be too active and especially not sexually active. Girls should not be bores but should at the same time avoid labels such as loose, easy and sluttish.
- In society there are clearly defined gender roles that entail that we are expected to act in a specific way. Girls are, for example, expected to be gentle but risk, as a consequence of this, being seen as weak. If a girl rebels against the traditional gender role and acts tough, then she is seen as unfeminine.



*"Someone has to be there to put their heart into this"*

*Lena Levin, Vi unga*

**Strategy:**

More knowledge of power and gender allows greater possibilities for tackling double punishment. Awareness gives the ability to step back and see what is really going on.

---

**Method:**

**Reward and punishment**

Unconsciously, certain behaviour is rewarded in the organisation.

Unspoken systems exist for what is valued as good or bad and what is more or less important.

1. What is rewarded in the organisation? If you are a girl? If you are a boy?
2. What is considered as competence? What merits are required for positions?
3. What is punished in your organisation? What counts as not so good? If you are a boy? If you are a girl?
4. Is parenthood considered a problem or an asset in your organisation? If you are a woman? If you are a man?
5. Is there anything else?

**Objective:** To make visible unconscious values that exist in the organisation.

---



## 5

### Shame and guilt

A feeling of shame and guilt can appear without one really knowing why. It can help then, to point out that the prevailing structure is such that blame is automatically placed upon girls. A reason for girls, more often than boys, taking the blame and feeling guilty can be found in the daily practice of making girls invisible and ridiculing them.

### *Examples of placing shame and guilt:*

- Girls who have been raped or abused are often seen by society as being to blame or partly to blame. They often feel deeply ashamed and co-responsible for what happened. Even court sentences seem influenced by this view when they question the victim's choice of dress, earlier sexual habits, level of intoxication, etc.<sup>6</sup>

- Girls' interests are often seen as private or trivial. Boys' interests are not seen in the same way. Boys' activities also receive more public funding. Constant invisible-making can be a contributory factor in girls taking upon themselves shame and guilt.<sup>7</sup>

### **Strategi:**

När en tjej lärt känna tekniken kan hon se de orättvisa mönstren. Hon kan hitta styrkan i att tillhöra det så kallade andra könet och kräva rättvisa. När en kille identifierat orättvisor som tjejer utsätts för kan han problematisera strukturen och engagera sig för en förändring.

---

### **Strategy:**

When a girl has learnt to recognise the technique, she will see the unfair patterns. She can find strength in belonging to the so-called "other sex" and demand fairness. When a boy has identified injustices that girls are subjected to, he can problematise the structures and involve himself in changing them.

### **Method:**

#### **The power of words**

What unspoken signals does language send? Is the use of language independent of links to gender, in other words is it gender neutral?

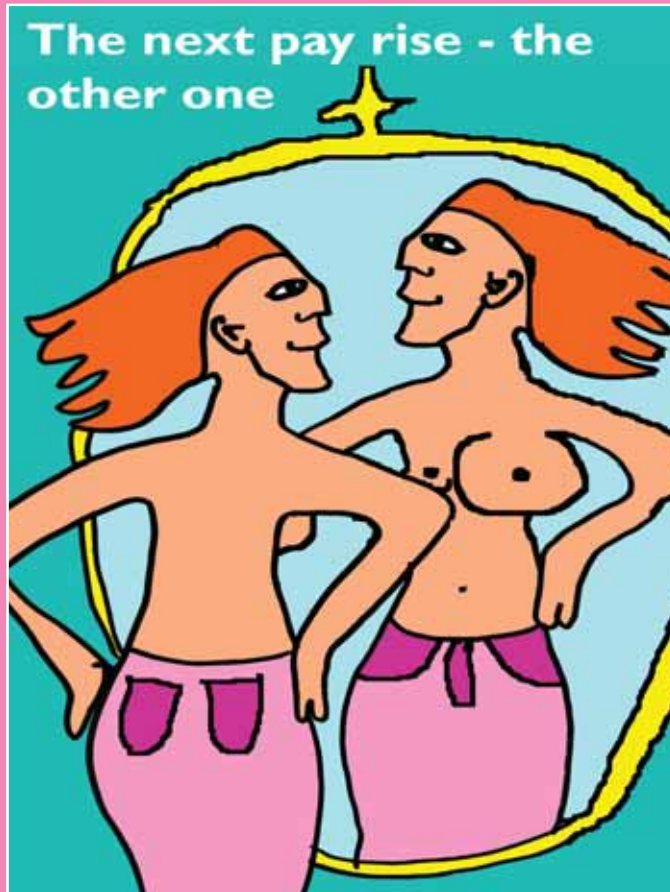
1. Write up the word "talk" on the board. Add the word "girl" in front of it.
2. Brainstorming – ask the participants to list synonyms for "girl talk". Write the suggestions directly on the board.
3. Ask the participants to also list synonyms for "boy talk". List these beside the previous list. You now have two lists.
4. Indicate the words on the girls' list with + if they are positive and - if they are negative. Do the same with the boys' list. Discuss the result.
5. Is there a pattern? Decide how to proceed.

**Objective:** To make visible that language is not always gender neutral.

---



*"Reckon with opposition"*  
Lena Levin, Vi unga



graphic: Jenny Morelli

6

### Objectification

Daily, in various ways, girls are made into objects, for example within the media and in advertising. Every year The Trades Ethical Council against Sexism in Advertising (Näringslivets Etiska Råd mot Könsdiskriminerande Reklam – ERK) receives between 100 and 200 official complaints. Between 20 and 25 are judged as discriminating.<sup>8</sup>

*Examples of objectification:*

- When Yves Saint Laurent (YSL) was to renew its perfume Opium, they used an advertisement with a woman, naked but for high-heeled shoes and jewellery, lying on dark velvet. ERK has stipulated previously that in the case of perfumes and other body products, it may be warranted with lightly clothed bodies, but YSL's advertisement was judged to overstep the limits. ERK's verdict was that the advertisement is an example of women's bodies being used as an eye-catcher of a sexual nature, devoid of justifiable association with the marketed product – a blatant objectification of women.
- A girl who wants to change her appearance by, for example, enlarging her breasts with implants.

### **Stategy:**

When girls become aware that they are being objectified, they can make themselves subjects, thereby increasing the possibilities of affecting their situation. Boys can actively think about the fact that both girls and boys are more or less affected by the perspective of objectification, and can actively work on their own attitudes as well as reacting against objectification.

---

### **Methods:**

#### **Media portrays gender**

What is the situation really like in the media?  
What image does the media give of boys and girls respectively and of the traditional gender roles?

1. Have a look in a mail-order catalogue or a weekly magazine.
2. Count how many pages of clothes are dedicated to girls and boys respectively.
3. Look at the pictures – how is each sex portrayed and how practical are girls' and boy' clothes respectively? Imagine what kind of instructions the models were given when photographed.
4. Is the current fashion for young girls, with thongs, tank tops, make-up and short skirts, an expression of objectification?
5. Are eating disorders and anorexia a result of objectification?
6. Let the participants work in groups. The exercise is to find images that deviate from the traditional images of girls and boys and the relationship between them. For example; boys holding hands, boys in skirts, girls boxing.

**Objective:** To examine how girls and boys are portrayed in the media.

---



*"Boys have much to gain  
by being freed from their  
gender roles"*

*Lena Levin, Vi unga*



graphic: Jenny Morelli

7

### Violence and the threat of violence

The fear of being raped or being subjected to other violence is widespread among girls. Violence and the threat of violence is a feature of many girls' daily lives, even if it isn't something that they constantly think about – it's normal.

Male strangers are often regarded as a potential danger for a girl or woman alone. Young girls can feel that males in a group are unpredictable and may be a danger.<sup>9</sup> The threat of violence can constitute a hidden factor contributing to girls being subordinated. The reason why girls in Sweden

choose low paid jobs in the care sector, prioritise being with children and working part-time, is not because someone forces or threatens them. However, in a broader perspective, we can see that violence and the threat of violence to girls are actively used to repress women. Despite Nordic countries having made progress toward an equal society, male violence against females is still a big problem.<sup>10</sup> Rapes are common, males who buy sex are not few, and sexual harassment is a problem in the workplace, in schools and in recreational situations.

*Examples of the consequences of a perceived threat of violence:*

- A girl carefully reflects over which way home she takes.
- Many girls feel threatened by boys in school corridors and playgrounds.
- A girl doesn't dare invite a boy home on the first date.
- A girl refrains from saying something specific to her boyfriend in order to avoid his anger.

### **Strategy:**

Find out the facts. Studies have shown that violence against girls is seldom carried out by unknown boys. A course in feminist self-defence can enhance self-confidence and the ability to deal with violent situations. Give support to girls who are afraid or feel vulnerable. Boys can be aware that they may be perceived as a potential threat if they are unknown to a girl. Take an active stand against male violence and those who use it.

---

### **Methods:**

#### **Feminist self-defence**

In Sweden there is The Feminist Self-defence Network (Nätverket för feministiskt självförsvar)<sup>11</sup>, which teaches this method of self-defence. Feminist Self-defence is based on the right to defend yourself and your body. Not only in situations when being attacked but also in everyday situations where abuse is involved. The method aims to strengthen girls. It is a method of self-defence that doesn't involve attack but is based upon mental, verbal and physical defence.

1. Mental self-defence is about teaching girls that they have value and are worthy of defending. Training includes, for example, discussing similar experiences in groups.

2. Verbal self-defence is based on the right to verbally protest and set limits. Training can take the form of role-playing.
3. Physical self-defence concentrates primarily on an attacker's eyes, throat, groin and knee.

**Objective:** To strengthen girls' right to defend themselves.

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Feminist Self-defence also involves a dilemma. Training girls in self-defence can help them handle an attack, but it is not a guarantee. It can lull girls into a false sense of security. It can also send the message that it is the girls' responsibility to protect themselves and not the boys' responsibility to not beat, rape and abuse. A basic rule in Feminist Self-defence is to emphasise that it is not the girl's task to defend herself, it's the boy's responsibility to stop abusing. At the same time there is strength to be found in the knowledge that one can defend oneself, and that can empower girls.



*"Sorry, we already have a girl band this year"*  
Anna Petterson, Rockrebellor

## Leadership and gender equality

Awareness and knowledge of gender equality is important for a democratic leadership regardless of whether you are chairperson, group leader, camp leader or head of recreation. Every leader of an association or youth organisation has an important role in the work for gender equality. Mia Hanström and Ulrika Eklund have identified three commonly occurring attitudes that a leader, consciously or unconsciously, can have and what the consequences of these can be.

### Denial

Some leaders believe that structures that marginalise girls do not exist and claim that everyone has the same opportunities. According to these leaders, it is up to each individual to ensure that he/she is heard or seen. These leaders often believe that they treat everyone equally.

Often, the results of such an attitude is that girls get less time to speak, that the leader learns more of the boys' names than the girls', and that more boys get greater opportunities to progress and develop.

### Acceptance

This attitude is shared by leaders who believe that there are differences between what boys and girls do, but that these differences are natural.

This can contribute to the maintaining or strengthening of gender roles and to the subordination of women as a group.

### Identify the problem

These leaders see that girls are subordinated as a group and want to counteract this. This can strengthen the possibilities of developing gender equality in activities or organisations.

### Being in the minority can create problems

Girls and women make up the majority of the world's population but in many formal situations they are often in the minority, for example on committees, in leading positions and managerial groups. Organisation and leadership researcher Rosabeth Moss Kanter,<sup>12</sup> has revealed the consequences of being in the minority. In the case of boys, they become more highly valued, they are assumed to be in charge, they progress faster in their careers and they feel well taken care of in the group. For the girls, the very structure of the organisation limits their opportunities. They have less chance of mobility or development within the organisation, less power and less possibilities to influence. Moss Kanter points out that those with less power behave more authoritarian whereas those with a lot of power find it easier to be generous and co-operative.



*"Take it easy in the beginning, so you don't alienate people"*

Sara Folke,

*Elevorganisationen*

For women who are in the minority, there is also the pressure of becoming visible and of representing your entire sex. When a girl fails, she becomes the evidence for the inadequacy of females, whereas when a boy fails, he does so as an individual.

Another consequence of being in the minority is that a girl is judged by the current popular stereotypes and generalisations. For example, a woman is automatically assumed to be the secretary or the assistant. It's also easy to place women into stereotypical roles; mother, seductress, mascot, ice princess. It may often be easier for girls to take on the stereotype/role than to fight against it. For example, the "mother", who is always at hand, who listens, understands and resolves personal conflicts.

When a girl enters a group that was previously comprised only of boys, the male culture, which earlier had been the norm, becomes visible. This has the effect that the majority begins to emphasise its own culture. An informal isolation then takes place; the girl is allowed to be present in formal situations but not in informal ones. She is subjected to a test of loyalty. For example, ridiculing other girls or sexist jokes about girls. She shows her loyalty by joining in. A "loyalty test" is like acting "gate-keeper". In other words, preventing other girls from entering the group or achieving positions of power. This can go on unconsciously.

Researcher Anna Wahl emphasizes that it is both trying and an honour to be the only girl or girls in a group of boys. Over time though, it becomes a strain. The person is visible and becomes the representative for a whole group. This restricts the possibilities for her to act as an individual. She is recognised within the organisation but is easily forced into stereotypical roles. Furthermore, her minority position is fixed and she becomes the representative for her sex. Her behaviour becomes confused with that of girls in general. Above all, if something considered bad happens, there will be comments such as: see, that's what happens when you have a female in charge.<sup>13</sup>

### Discuss:

- As a leader it is important to know about the consequences of being in the minority within an organisation. It is also an important task to make the consequences clear to everyone in the organisation. How is this achieved in your organisation?
- If someone from the minority group has a position of leadership, it is important that there is a supportive structure present. Is there?
- How can a supportive structure be created?



*"One often has to do double mental somersaults"*  
Mia Eriksson Fritidsforum

## Leadership and self-esteem

We all have a need to be liked and seen both for who we are and for what we do. As a leader it is important to find ways of showing affirmation and giving appreciation. This may take the form of supporting, encouraging, and coaching those within the organisation in order to strengthen their self-confidence and self-esteem. It is also important for the leader to work with strengthening his/her own self-esteem.

Based on the experiences that Ulrika Eklund and Mia Hanström have of the socialisation of boys and girls, a clear pattern emerges. Girls seek affirmation by pleasing others and being there for others, and by, to a large degree, identifying themselves with and judging themselves by their achievements. Boys do not judge themselves in the same way, by their achievements. They may place the blame elsewhere for any failures that occur or find excuses in the circumstances.



*"Once the lenses are on,  
you can't get them off"*  
Mia Eriksson  
Fritidsforum

### Fact box

It can be important to discuss the meaning of the terms self-esteem, self-confidence and self-reliance. This is a way to define the terms.

**Self-esteem** is our own perceived value of who we are. The feeling of being accepted and loved for who we are, with both our good and not so good sides. Self-esteem is nothing permanent but something to constantly work on.

**Self-confidence** is connected to tasks and performance. It is about how we are affirmed in relation to what we do. Faith in ones own competence.

**Self-reliance** is about having both self-confidence and self-esteem. Then you are able to accept both yourself and others.

## Self-esteem is one of the keys to change

If a leader has low self-esteem there is a risk that she/he focuses on her/his own need to be considered competent, be seen or maintain power instead of seeing to the needs of the group. It is easier to promote gender equality if leaders have good self-esteem. When this is the case, the leader doesn't have to be accommodating in order to have his identity or value confirmed; neither does he have to be heard or seen all the time. This means the leader can take a greater responsibility for the group and show more consideration for others, which is a good start for the development of gender equality.

### Method

#### The way to be a non-discriminating leader/lead without discrimination is through self-reflection

To be able to work with others, it is important to consider your own attitude towards gender equality, and the importance of leadership for the development of self-esteem and self-knowledge.

If you are a group that works together or are involved in a leadership development course, you may want to think about the questions individually before discussing them together.

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### Gender equality

Gender equality is often defined as girls and boys having the same rights, duties and opportunities. What is your starting point with regard to equality?

- 1. Your own gender** – How has your sex influenced who you are today? What does it mean that you are a girl or a boy? How does this affect your work and your leadership? Does your sex matter in different groups? What would the difference have been if you had been of the opposite sex?
  - 2. Gender equality** – what does gender equality mean to you? What has influenced you to become involved in gender equality? Is it voluntary? How will you achieve gender equality?
  - 3. Fairness** – How do we treat boys and girls fairly from a gender equality standpoint?
- 



*"Remember, you don't have to do everything yourself"*  
Katarina Bivald, Röda Korsets ungdomsförbund

## Leadership

Power is a central issue in the work for gender equality. As a leader you are in a position of power.

**1. Leadership** – What is it? What is good leadership? How would you describe your leadership? What is a non-discriminatory leadership?

**2. Organisation** – how does a non-discriminatory organisation look? What characterises the behaviour of individuals in such an organisation? What are the advantages of a non-discriminatory organisation? What obstacles have to be removed – formal and informal? How should the organisation change in order to become gender equal? How do you personally have to change your behaviour and thinking so that you can be involved in this process?

**3. Power** – Make associations to the word power: Are your associations positive or negative? Think about what lies behind these associations. How do you deal with your formal and informal power, in different situations? Can you see any differences in how you use your power as a leader compared to how a leader of the opposite sex uses power? How can you avoid using domination techniques?

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## Self-esteem and self-knowledge

In work with individuals and gender equality, we ourselves are the tools. Therefore, it is important to work with your own self-esteem.

**1. Self-esteem** – what strengthens your self-esteem? What weakens your self-esteem? How can that be avoided?

**2. Triggers** – Triggers are things that cause you to react emotionally, things that "set you off". What triggers you? What causes you to lose focus? Triggers can be positive as well as negative. What effects does this have on your leadership? How does it affect the group? How do you handle your triggers? Are there areas you should not work in because they trigger you too easily?

**3. Fears** – List your fears associated with leadership and gender. Look at them and think about what they are all about. How do you react when you become afraid? One way that you hide your fear is ...? What can you do about it? How does this affect your leadership in relation to the issues of gender equality? How do the fear of violence and the threat of violence affect your leadership?

**4. Prejudices** – what is that? What is the difference between prejudice and opinion? Think about prejudices and expectations that are associated with gender equality.

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*"Men become members and  
like corks float up to the board"*  
Katarina Bivald, Röda  
Korsets ungdomsförbund





## The story of Patrik and Maria

Two children are born around the same time somewhere in Sweden: Patrik and Maria.

On their seventh birthdays, they open their presents. Maria gets a box of Lego entitled *Queen and the Little Prince*. In the box there is a queen, a dress, a little baby, a crib and a few other pieces with which to build a home. Patrik also gets a box of Lego: *Spider-Man Action Studio*. This contains 244 pieces with which you can recreate a bank robbery scene with police, a web for webbing up the robber, a camera crew, Spider-Man in full action and more.

Patrik plays football, trains two evenings a week and has a match every other weekend. Membership in the football club costs SEK 200 per year. The trainer is one of the dads. He's kind, loves football and tries to be fair. Still, Patrik doesn't think it's much fun when he stands and shouts "Come on lads, stop playing like a bunch of sissies!" during their matches. Maria goes to a riding school. The membership fee is SEK 200 per year. One lesson a week costs SEK 160, which adds up to around SEK 4000 a year, over and above the membership fee.

When Maria's pony club wins a jumping competition not a word is mentioned about it in the local newspaper. When Patrik's football team wins a local tournament there's a huge article with pictures of the boys in front of the goal.

When they are ten years old, Maria and Patrik have started playing floorball in the same club. Patrik trains on Thursdays between four o'clock and half past five, and Maria trains on Saturday mornings between eight o'clock and half past nine. When it's time for the floorball tournament, Patrik's team gets new jerseys and Maria's team inherits the boys' old ones.

*The idea for this story developed during an "inventor's seminar", where "The Gender story" was presented by equality expert Kicki Scheller and project leader Katrin Rindlaug. Here the story has been rewritten with a leisure and associative activities' perspective. The story can be used to fuel discussion on how girls and boys are socialised into different gender roles.*

When they are thirteen, they start going to the youth centre. There, about 70 percent are boys and the language is pretty rough. Patrik notices how some of the older boys are groping some of the girls without any reaction from the leaders. Maria avoids the TV-room. There you never know what could happen.

The staff at the centre organises a boys night and a girls night. Maria goes to the girls night. A beautician is invited and demonstrates how make-up is applied, and a woman from the Youth Clinic (Ungdomsmottagning) informs them about contraception and protection from sexually transmitted diseases. Patrik attends the boys night. They have competitions to see who is fastest, strongest, who can eat the most marshmallows in the shortest time, etc. To round off the evening an overall winner is declared.

At the youth centre, Maria and her friends mostly sit in the cafeteria and chat. Patrik often takes part in the various activities that the centre arranges, tries bowling and wall climbing. He has also tried playing bass guitar at the centre's rock-music activity.



In the summer between eighth and ninth grade, Patrik and Maria take summer jobs for the first time. Maria looks after her neighbour's children – Leo, one and a half, and four-year-old Jessika. She works six hours a day and is paid SEK 50 an hour plus lunch. Patrik mows lawns and paints fences for some neighbouring families. He works six hours a day and is paid SEK 100 an hour.

There's a concert in the park. Maria is going with some friends and their parents will pick them up afterwards. Before Maria leaves, her mother complains about her short skirt and her, according to her mother, vulgar make-up. Her mother thinks she's asking for trouble, dressing like that. Maria gets upset, after having put such a lot of effort into looking as good as possible. Patrik is going to the same concert. He dresses the same way as usual, and then takes his moped to the park.

Patrik and Maria have just turned sixteen and are both invited to a big party. Maria has already "warmed up" with a couple of bottles of wine together with a few friends and is quite drunk. At the party a boy she is quite interested in starts flirting with her. He offers her some alcohol and they neck. Maria is in two minds, until he tries to get her to go with him to an upstairs bedroom. She then pulls herself together, says she has to go home and leaves to find her friend. The following week, in school, there are rumours circulating that she is a whore and would sleep with anyone.

Patrik and his friends also get ready for the party, with beer and a bottle of homemade alcohol. They are all very drunk before the party has even started. On the way to the party, one of Patrik's friends vomits in the entrance to a house.

The party is in full swing and Patrik staggers about on the prowl. He enters a room where a group of boys and a few girls are watching a porn movie. The scene is of a woman being raped by several men. One of the boys in the sofa starts pulling on one of the girl's jumpers, saying "Come on Annika, now you know how it's done. Let's go!"

Patrik feels sick and disgusted, backs out of the room, gets to the hall where he finds his jacket and goes home.

When they are seventeen, Patrik and Maria get together. Their relationship is secure and loving. Maria organises things so they can be together as much as possible. Patrik considers himself a lucky guy to have found such a wonderful girlfriend. She always understands when he wants to spend time on his recreational interests.

Five years later they are expecting their first child. They both hope it's a boy.



### Discuss:

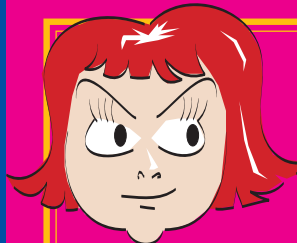
1. Is this realistic?
2. Are children today brought up to fulfil different gender roles?



## CRIB

1. Does what you do apply as much to girls as it does to boys?
2. Describe the situation for girls and boys regarding: representation, rights, obligations and responsibilities.
3. Explain the different conditions that exist for girls and boys.

graphic: *Christián Serrano*



## Pocket resistance

## The 3R-method

The 3R-method is an instrument for cataloguing, analysing and discussing gender equality in different organisations. It identifies who the representatives are, who receives the resources and under what conditions, as well as whose needs are catered for. The method reveals how distribution of power, structures and norms affect gender equality in an organisation – an insight that increases the chances of change.

The three R's stand for Representation, Resources and Realia. Representation deals with who makes the decisions, implements them and uses them. Resources refers to how time, space and funds are distributed. Realia refers to the governing norms and the conclusions that can be drawn from the Representation and Resource parts. These conclusions create a good foundation for the understanding of the contents of the organisation, in other words, the Realia.

The method is a way to map and analyse the organisation. Local authorities, clubs and even youth centres have tested the 3R-method<sup>14</sup>. The descriptions and questions presented below are designed for clubs and associations and should be regarded as an inspiration for ideas.

**Objective:** To analyse an organisation from a gender perspective.

### Suggestions for set up and procedure:

1. **Schedule meetings so leaders can answer questions undisturbed.**
2. **Appoint someone to compile the answers.**
3. **Present the results.**
4. **Consider how the answers relate to the objectives and to your own ideas of how the organisation should be run.**
5. **Discuss what should be changed or improved in the short and long terms.**
6. **Implement the changes.**
7. **Follow up and evaluate!**

## 3R-METHOD

**Representation**

- Who is given what tasks?
- Who's in charge?
- Who speaks the most?

**Resources** • Who gets money and time • What is prioritised?

**Realia**

- What is the purpose of the organisation?
- Whose values counts?
- Who has the highest status?

## CHECKLIST

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reveal</b>	The problem has to become visible. Do you have gender-sorted statistics on everything?
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Establish</b>	Have you established the work for gender equality with the management?
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Legitimise</b>	Do the organisation's plan, budget and evaluations have a gender equality perspective?
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Educate</b>	Have you had courses, have you presented the facts in the school or the organisation?
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Whole picture</b>	Are the effects of proposals on both boys and girls considered before decisions are made?
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Distribute</b>	Have resources been evenly distributed?

## Representation

Who is given what duties?  
Who's in charge? Who talks the most?

Try to make visible both the formal and informal decision-making process.

### The committee

1. What is the distribution according to sex in the committee?
2. How are positions distributed in the committee?
3. What duties do the girls and boys have respectively?
4. Is there a balance of the sexes in the election committee?
5. What kinds of proposals/questions are raised by girls and boys respectively at committee meetings?
6. Who prepares proposals? Who implements them? Who writes the letters? Who evaluates and follows up?
7. How much of the affairs/topics at the committee meetings can be assigned to areas that are expected to apply more predominantly to girls or to boys?
8. Who is the committee in contact with? What about? Formally/informally?

### Exchanges/courses

1. Who on the committee takes part in exchanges and courses?
2. What types of courses and exchanges does the committee prioritise? Are these in any way related to gender?
3. Which members take part in exchanges and courses?
4. What gender do the guests and lecturers have who are invited to events?
5. Is there any connection between gender and the topics that are prioritised?

### The club's image

1. Who represents the committee outward?
2. Who contacts the media?
3. Who gets quoted?
4. Who is seen in pictures?



*"Some will think it's going too fast and some, not fast enough"*

*Katarina Bivald, Röda Korsets ungdomsförbund*

## Activities

1. What activities does the organisation offer? Are they linked to gender?
2. List the number of "active" and "passive" members according to sex.
3. Who influences and pursues issues related to the organisation?
4. What is considered important in the organisation? Use, for example, the high and low status activities method (see the heading: Withholding of information).

## The leaders

1. What is the distribution according to sex among leaders who are employed and among those who are volunteers?
2. What duties do girls and boys have respectively?
3. Who speaks at leaders' meetings? How long do boys/girls speak for?
4. What kind of proposals/questions are raised by girls and boys respectively?
5. How much of the affairs/topics at the leaders' meetings can be assigned to areas that are expected to apply more predominantly to girls or to boys?
6. Who attends the courses? (Volunteers and employees respectively)
7. What type of course is prioritised by staff/leaders?
8. Are there activities aimed only at girls/boys?
9. What activities do girls/boys take part in?
10. Does a willingness exist among the leaders to develop gender equality within the organisation?
11. Is there a willingness to find out what girls'/boys' interests are?
12. Are male leaders ever responsible for activities that often are regarded as activities for girls?
13. Are female leaders ever responsible for activities that often are regarded as activities for boys?



*"It's easy to become blind to the inequality within your own organisation."  
Soledad Pinero Alonzo,  
LSU*

## Resources

Try to make visible both the formal and informal decision-making process.

### Who gets funding? Who gets time? What is prioritised?

1. How are the economical resources distributed within the association? What are club subsidies, sponsor revenue, membership fees and other grants spent on?
2. What assets does the association have?
3. What equipment is there, is it of good quality, is there any link between gender and the distribution of equipment?
4. Are there differences in pay for staff/leaders/committee, fees, allowances, travel expenses and other benefits, with respect to gender?

### Expectations/demands

Are there different expectations/demands on volunteer work with respect to gender? For example, in activities that are dominated by one gender or the other? Try to analyse the reason for this and describe it.

1. Is there a difference as to how well known the various activities are within the club or among the committee members?
2. What type of activities/meetings receives most planning/preparation? By whom? Who takes part in these meetings?
3. How are the meetings set up? Who begins? Who has opinions? Where in the room do participants sit? Are creative methods used to allow everyone the chance to speak?

### Club premises

1. Are the premises attractive and comfortable? Who takes care of them?
2. Are the toilets kept clean? Can the doors be properly locked?
3. At meetings, can the furniture be easily rearranged?

### In your experience

1. Do you feel that the association's resources are distributed equally between girls and boys? Why/why not?

Try to make visible both the formal and informal decision-making process.

## Realia

**What is the purpose of the organisation?  
Whose values apply? Who has the highest status?**

1. What purpose do the organisation's activities have?
2. What norms and values have shaped the organisation's activities? Look at the history and development of the club.
3. Who knows their way about the organisation's activities? Who is given attention? Whose needs are met in the organisation?
4. What thoughts and ideas are permitted, and which are not? In the committee? In the organisation?
5. What is the measure of a good activity within the organisation? Are there different measures?
6. What activity in the club has high/low status?
7. Are expected girl and boy behaviours rewarded or are more unconventional patterns allowed?
8. What kind of leadership and leadership philosophy exist in the association?
9. Who has the right to formulate the problems? In the committee, amongst leaders and among members?
10. Who takes the precedence in interpreting reality?

## Gender equality – important for both boys and girls

Even though many boys are aware that society is not entirely gender equal, only a few are involved in working to develop gender equality. It's The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs' experience that gender equality projects started among youth are mainly run by girls. Work for gender equality is considered an issue for girls rather than a democracy issue from an equity perspective, concerning both girls and boys.

Researcher Thomas Johansson has described the various attitudes that are unconsciously or consciously held by boys in respect to gender equality<sup>15</sup>. There are those who are in favour both of gender equality in relationships and of change; those who support work on gender equality in principle but do not want it to affect their own situation at work or in the family; and those with a more reactionary attitude who want to work to hinder gender equality.

### Why are boys less interested in gender equality than girls?

There are several theories and explanations as to why so few males participate in gender equality work. An obvious reason is that power is in the hands of groups of men and they are reluctant to relinquish it. The American masculinity researcher Robert Connell<sup>16</sup> says that most men cannot place themselves in the superior – subordinate model and that they try to handle the power structure individually. It then becomes difficult to see structural connections to, for example, men's violence against women.

Researcher William J Goode has discussed different explanations as to why boys show a lack of interest in gender equality work.<sup>17</sup> He believes that boys often have little knowledge of girls' situation. This is partly because boys and girls often have separate interests, and partly because many conversations take place in single-sex groups. Goode also believes that boys' lives are much less dependent on the actions of girls, than vice versa. This results in boys often being less interested in a girl's situation than in their own.

### Girls can also be uninterested in gender equality

Not all girls are interested or involved in work for gender equality either. The researcher Eva Ethelberg<sup>18</sup> offers an explanation. She highlights various attitudes a girl, either consciously or unconsciously, chooses in order to deal with her subordinate position. A girl can deny that subordination exists at all: "anyone can do what they want, one just has to help oneself". She can also accept subordination: "it's okay that boys are in charge, they're better at that kind of thing". Another attitude is to protest and rebel. The girl is aware that boys are more valued, and seeks to change that.

## Method

### Have you thought about these things lately?

Making male dominance visible is not easy. There are very few boys who have ever wanted to be a girl, whereas the opposite is quite common.

1. Ask the boys in the group to reflect upon the last time they thought about being a boy and ask the girls to do the same about being a girl.
2. Let the boys give their answers first and then the girls. Discuss the result. The most common pattern is that none of the boys have done so but that the girls on a number of occasions have. Is this the case? Discuss. An initial discussion can preferably be held in groups divided by gender.
3. Ask the girls and boys to think about when and where they felt they were being discriminated against because of their sex. An initial discussion can preferably be held in groups divided by gender.
4. Let everyone give an account by going to each person in turn and discussing the result.

**Objective:** To reflect on the connection between gender and power.



*"Always remember the foundations of sisterhood, especially when you encounter others not like you."*

*Love Nordenmark, Kvinnoforum*

## Statistics – fuel for discussion

Studying and discussing statistics on the importance of gender for habits, attitudes and opportunities can be an important method for initiating and developing discussion around gender equality.

In some areas young people are more gender equal than those who are older, but large differences are to be found even within the younger generation.<sup>19</sup> Boys feel more satisfied with available recreational opportunities and studies have also shown that boys have more recreational time than girls. Among 16–18 year olds, 36 percent of boys had more than four hours recreational time per day, whereas only 19 percent of girls had the equivalent.<sup>20</sup>

### Differences in the home

Research has shown that in the home, boys and girls have distinctly different tasks.

**Amount of youths in percent, 10–18 years, that have the following tasks in the home<sup>21</sup>**

---

Tasks in the home	Boys	Girls
Tidy own room	62	76
Clean somewhere other than own room	24	36
Cook	24	33
Wash dishes or fill/empty dishwasher	44	59
Wash, iron, hang or fold clothes	10	32
Work outside the house	32	14

---

1. How do the tasks that youth are expected to perform in the home affect their opportunities for recreation and involvement in club life?
2. Why do girls clean more than boys?

### Different economic situations

Studies have shown that the difference in salary between men and women ages 20-24 years is 17 percent, and has remained so since 1997.<sup>22</sup> Men also dominate jobs with a high income.<sup>23</sup>

1. Do poorer economic conditions for women affect your organisation?
2. What is the cause of this economic inequality?
3. What is needed to reduce the economic inequality?

## Violence and the sexual harassment of girls

Investigations have shown that violence and the threat of violence are often a part of a girl's daily reality. Acts of violence against girls are often committed indoors by someone known to the victim.<sup>24</sup> Sometimes you may hear claims such as: "I don't know any girl that's been abused by her boyfriend!". This doesn't exclude the fact that there are girls who have been abused. It's not something one necessarily talks about.

Sexual harassment mostly affects girls. One study shows that 69 percent of girls get called "whore", "bitch", "slut" etc., whereas 55 percent of boys get called "homo" or the like. Research has also shown that girls suffer unwelcome groping – 61 percent are touched on their behind and 41 percent on the breasts.<sup>25</sup>

1. Do you know anyone in your organisation that is sexually abusive or violent?
2. Do you know anyone in your organisation that has been subjected to sexual harassment or violence?
3. How is sexual harassment defined (recognised) in your organisation?
4. In your organisation, are there methods and activities to counteract violence and sexual harassment?

### Fact box

The EU-commission's definition of sexual harassment taken from JämO:s handbok mot sexuella trakasserier<sup>26</sup>

"Sexual harassment means unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature or other behaviour based on gender that affects the integrity of women and men in the workplace, and which creates an intimidating, hostile or humiliating working environment. This may include unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal behaviour."

## Work for gender equality may encounter opposition

Work developing increased gender equality may sometimes encounter opposition, both from individuals and through structures. Opposition can be diffuse or clearly articulated.

If the work is met with opposition, support can be found through identifying domination techniques and doing various power analyses. Further support can be found by networking with others committed to work for gender equality.

One of the reasons why work for gender equality is met with resistance is that it challenges power structures and values. It is therefore vital to be aware that work for gender equality and issues concerning women's situation require long-term development. If associations and organisations invest time and money in this work and the work is well grounded, it will be possible to achieve the objectives set by gender equality policies. Important prerequisites include; relevant methods, information material, exchanges of experience and tools for collecting knowledge.

Ulrika Eklund and Mia Hanström have identified some typical situations and attitudes that those working with gender equality may come across. They also give advice on how to proceed:

### "Other issues are more important!"

**Advice:** Gender equality often becomes an "on the side" project, and no money is put aside for it in the regular budget. It then becomes important that money is set aside within the regular budget so that the continual development of gender equality can be ensured. Point out that gender equality is a matter of human rights and democracy. Get the management to take responsibility. Increase knowledge and organise courses on gender equality. The goal is to incorporate the gender equality perspective in all areas of the organisation.

### "There aren't any women who want to be leaders, we've asked everyone!"

**Advice:** Review the conditions for being a leader in the organisation. They may be such that women don't want to take the position. Perhaps there is a norm that says that competence is something special which men have more of than women, or that the responsibilities are such that they are not suitable for women. Make sure you always have a list of female candidates ready for when jobs and groups are being appointed.

## "Women don't want leading positions, we've asked everyone!"

**Advice:** Find out how many were actually asked. Review how the terms of the job were formulated. Offer a system of mentorship. Educate the nominating committee in how to pose the question in a good way. Support nominated women actively and openly.

## "Women already dominate!"

**Advice:** Check if this really is the case. In what areas and situations do they dominate? If women dominate both in the organisation and the management positions, it is important to investigate why men are absent, the working conditions for men, and the status of the organisation.

## "We don't have the competence to work for increased gender equality!"

**Advice:** Many believe that gender equality is a value and not a field of knowledge. Suggest courses within the organisation!

## "Differences are important for maintaining an attraction between the sexes!"

**Advice:** This statement reproduces both gender roles and the heterosexual norm. Gender equality is about developing diversity, not the duality that the traditional gender roles more or less force upon us.



*"Concentrate on how you can break the traditional patterns"*

Ayse Mutlu,  
Kvinnoforum

# Noter

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- 2 Women obtained the right to vote in 1921 and the law on marital rape came in 1965.
- 3 Svenska kommunförbundet, JÄMKOM-projektet, 1998
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- 5 More methods for analysing meetings are found in the book Jämställdhet i praktiken!? Kön spelar roll. Mia Hanström Fritidsforums förlag 2002.
- 6 Further reading: Flickan och skulden – en bok om samhällets syn på våldtäkt. Katarina Wannerstam. Albert Bonniers Förlag. 2002.
- 7 SOU 1996:3 Fritid i förändring. Om kön och fördelning av fritidsresurser.
- 8 [www.etiskaradet.org](http://www.etiskaradet.org)
- 9 Fokus på tjejer. Äldre tjejer leder yngre. Fritidsforums folder.
- 10 Slagen dam. Mäns våld mot kvinnor i jämställda Sverige – en omfångsundersökning” Eva Lundgren, Gun Heimer, Jenny Westerstrand and Anne-Marie Kalliokoski. Fritzes förlag.
- 11 [www.femselfdefence.tk](http://www.femselfdefence.tk)  
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- 12 Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Men and women of the corporation. 1977. Basic Books.
- 13 Wahl Anna, Charlotte Holgersson, Pia Höök. Sophie Linghag. Det ordnar sig. Studentlitteratur. 2001.
- 14 Adapted by Fritidsforum for youth clubs and by Elisabeth Nilsson, Municipality of Skellefteå, for local recreation organisations.
- 15 Tomas Johansson, Det första könet? Studentlitteratur 2000.
- 16 Connell, R.W. Maskulinitet, Daidalos 1999.
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- 19 Identitet, kön och klass. Inger Berggren, Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis and Det kallas kärlek. Carin Holmberg. Månocket, 1995. De små konstruktörerna. Flickor och pojkar om kvinnligt och manligt i relation till kropp, idrott, familj och arbete. Birgitta Fagrell, HLS Förlag Studies in Educational Sciences 30, 2000. [www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se](http://www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se)
- 21 SOU 2001:55 Barn och ungdomars välfärd. Socialdepartementet.
- 22 [www.scb.se](http://www.scb.se)
- 23 SOU 1997:1389 Familj, makt och jämställdhet. Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet.
- 24 [www.bra.se](http://www.bra.se) The National Council for Crime Prevention's (Brottsförebyggande Rådet) statistics.
- 25 Sexuella trakasserier mellan elever i grundskolan, Pedagogiska institutionen i Örebro. Similar results in Stopp för sexuella trakasserier by Stockholm schools information unit.
- 26 The EU-commission's definition of sexual harassment taken from JämO:s handbok mot sexuella trakasserier JämO 1997.



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## Video tip:

De fem domination techniques. Granvideo AB. Växjö kommun

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