

Queering

The History of Nordic Women's Literature

Background

The History of Nordic Women's Literature I-V voices women's literary history and highlights more than 1000 years of women's literary history in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland and Åland. All texts are written by prominent literary researchers. "The term women's literature was used here as a search term to describe what the male-dominated literary culture had excluded" (Editor Anne-Marie Mai). The latest volume, which deals with the period after 2000, recognizes how gender is also performative and ambiguous and in the 21st century literature interacts with markers of difference such as age, class, and ethnicity. This is the tendency that we want to elaborate in the next volume.

Today, gender is perceived as fluid, not least due to the influence of LGBTQIA+ movements and insights of queer theories. We are challenged in our notions of what can be defined as female and male literature and, not least, *who* or *what* is perceived as underexposed and excluded. Following this, we aim to make a supplementary volume to the *History of Nordic Women's Literature* with focus on queer perspectives in Nordic literary history as they appear in both contemporary and historical literature.

Potentials

The purpose of a queer version of *Nordic Women's Literature History* is to focus on gender-fluid perspectives in Nordic literary history, and we therefore call for articles about and by women, men and the entire LGBTQIA+ spectrum, in which our heteronormative notions of how we do and think about gender have been challenged. We pursue what Sara Ahmed calls "queer histories" understood as "the histories of those who are willing to risk the consequences of deviation" (Ahmed, 2009) and which throughout literary history have typically been read as failures (Halberstam, 2011). We are interested both in articles that relate to the

queer perspectives of contemporary literature, and in articles that work transhistorically or strategically 'presentistic' and that aim to examine the queer issues of literary history in a contemporary context. An example could be studies of what Halberstam calls "female masculinity" – including analytical studies of the role of masculine women in our cultural understanding of masculinity. As Halberstam points out in *Female Masculinity*, "far from being an imitation of maleness, female masculinity actually affords us a glimpse of how masculinity is constructed as masculinity" (1998, 1). Another example could be explorations of the way bourgeois or heteronormative family and kinship forms are challenged when gender conceptions appear through the "sissy" or "tomboy" figure in Nordic children's literature. Thus, the purpose of the volume is by no means to exclude heterosexual women or men; on the contrary, we think here of queerness in a broad sense: as general and manifold disturbances of a heteronormative order to avoid that the term queer is turned into an identity that creates new exclusions.

Process

The deadline for submitting abstracts (maximum 1 page) is 1/6-2023. The deadline for submitting the final contributions will be primo 2024. The articles should be a maximum of 36000 characters and written in Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, or English. All articles will go through a process of peer review, and we will host a workshop at SDU, where the appointed writers can present and discuss their full articles. The book is expected to be published in a digital version by the end of 2024.

- Abstracts and questions can be sent to Camilla Schwartz: **cas@sdu.dk**
- Feedback on abstracts will be sent to you before 1/7-2023
- The editorial team consists of Camilla Schwartz, Anne-Marie Mai, Karen Hvidtfeldt and Anne Scott Sørensen

Literature cited:

Jack Halberstam: *The Queer Art of Failure* (2011)

Jack Halberstam: *Female Masculinity* (1998)

Sara Ahmed: http://www.worldpicturejournal.com/WP_3/Ahmed.html

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