Me, Us and Them – Identity Politics in Swedish Press

An argumentation analysis of the identity politics debate in Swedish Press 2014
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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to apply an argumentation analysis to editorials and culture articles from the four largest newspapers in Sweden, all in which the concept of identity politics is debated. The reason for this is due to a more frequent debate wherein new actors have found new platforms to debate. In the articles the concept was discussed in the context of political ideologies, marginalised groups and structures of oppression. Theories of intersectionality, power and ideology is applied to find answers regarding *whose* discourse is presented in the identity politics debate, *how* it is presented, *what* concepts are being used, and *what* underlying meaning they might have. Using identity politics becomes a method for many groups (including trans-activists, racialised Left wing, and racists) to set new agendas, raising their voices, or silencing opponents. Symbolic actors seem to believe that they are given the power to construct a discourse that is considered to be the “unbiased” true reality.

Keywords: Identity politics, symbolic actors, Intersectionality, Power, Ideology.
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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

During 2014 the concept of Identity politics was (and continues to be) a heatedly debated topic in the Swedish press. Actors from many different professions and ideological perspectives seem to have strong opinions in what the concept stands for, but also how it works and takes place in Swedish society. How and why the concept of identity politics have been used throughout history may change according to who one ask, but the modern definition can be found in an American context; it has been used by marginalised groups including second-wave feminists, black Civil Right movements and Hispanic immigrants (Heyes, 2014). When the political situation in both the Swedish as well as the global society is constantly changing, new political agendas are taking form – creating ideological conflicts between the collectivistic and individualistic perspectives.

The three Scandinavian countries, Denmark, Norway and Sweden have shared, not only political traditions, but also similar media systems. Politicians across the political landscape have had a (more or less) common view on a strong public service media, strong well-fare state and a consensual democracy (Nord, 2012:47). Sweden has had a media system with an early-adopted freedom of press, which has coexisted with a high journalistic professionalism and a strong state support for a regulation of media (Hallin & Mancini, 2004:74). In spite of this political stance, there has been a deregulation of radio, and television. With this deregulation during the last decade, a tabloidisation of the Swedish press has occurred making the content more like sensationalist newspapers (gossips, scandal-mongering and infotainment) (McQuail, 2010:572). With this rapidly evolving media landscape, the role as well as the methods of the traditional media is being questioned. At the same time the traditional media must also relate to the “new media”, including social media channels such as blogs and websites (for instance Buzzfeed and Twitter), this in sense of rhetorical styles and content (Waisbord, 2013:204). Platforms and channels are not the only aspects changing in the landscape; new actors are arising. The professional journalism has gone in a liberal direction, a move towards press independence and freedom to justify the mission of journalism in
modern democracies (Waisbord, 2013:43). The Internet as a medium raises the opportunity for people to become symbolic actors, who can reproduce new images of themselves, but also of others. These others can both include those who share values, notions and ideas but also opponents. As mentioned earlier, the journalists are required to write material that has a larger focus towards entertaining the readers, and this also includes the editorials, culture pages and debate pages. It is here their argumentative dialog (or monolog) is taking place and not only is the journalist supposed to offer their own intellectual ideas, analysis and comments, but this is also to be done in an entertaining way. The latter with irony or condescending bantering of the opponents’ ideas, while not offending the masses that posses the norms of the society (McQuail, 2010:124). This raises many questions of interest for the media scholars. Whose definition of identity politics is legitimised? How is the debate on issues such as surrogacy, gender roles and sexism carried out? These matters are very much depending on the position and ideology of the symbolic actors and their argumentation (for instance calling the same person a terrorist or a freedom fighter). But what happens in the argumentation when different ideologies use and claims the same notions? Whose definition of the social or political situation is accepted and taken seriously (van Dijk, 2008:10)? Who sets the equality discourse and why?

1.2 The Purpose of the Thesis

This thesis focuses on the identity politics debate, which has gained a lot of attention in Swedish press during 2014. Since the media landscape is under constant change, the professionals as well as the other symbolic actors have new sets of rules and procedures to follow. With the tabloidisation and its growing sensationalist journalism, the method and style of the journalists might change. It is a necessity to map out and analyse new actors. What actors are given space and what agenda-setting do they have? Because of this there is a risk that some academic concepts are simplified or trivialised and therefore loses their meaning or become misunderstood. Since the concept of identity politics is a very complex phenomenon (deriving from postmodernism, post structuralism etc.) and while discussed as an abstract theoretical concept in the academic field, it is also a concrete and practical tool for activists. The thesis aims to
raise questions regarding who is allowed to define as well as represent certain topics in the equality debate in the Swedish press. In other words, what kind of themes can be unraveled in the debate? What happens when academic discussions take place in everyday journalism and becomes challenged by new actors?

1.3 Hypothesis and Research Questions

New actors have raised their voices regarding “new” notions or concepts, like identity politics, transgender issues and the situation of “non-white” citizens. There is a gap in the debate regarding identity politics, both in the sense of what the concept actually means (or is being defined as), but also which actors that are able to define it. Who other than the professional journalists is heard in the debate? Are their arguments or ideas backed up by their ideological standpoints and with what kind of power do they exercise their discourse? There is an ideological power struggle between different actors in the media landscape regarding ideological concepts. A hypothesis can be stated as follows: symbolic actors are given the power to construct a discourse that is considered the “unbiased” true reality. This hypothesis can be tested and elaborated by asking a set of questions:

- *Whose* discourse is presented in the identity politics debate?
- *How* is it presented in terms of argumentative style?
- *What* concepts are being used in the identity politics debate?
- *What* underlying meaning do concepts within the identity politics debate have?

1.4 Disposition

Chapter 1: In this chapter relevant concepts are being presented, together with the thesis aim and research questions. The material (which can be found in full-length in appendix 2) and the limitations of the thesis are also presented.
Chapter 2: Here the previous research in the field is presented, especially how marginalised groups (based on for instance ethnicity and race) are represented in media.

Chapter 3: In the third chapter five different theories or concepts are presented namely: Journalism, Identity politics, Feminist perspectives, Intersectionality and power.

Chapter 4: The method of argumentation analysis is presented in the fourth chapter, as well as the operationalisation.

Chapter 5: Each of the analysis is presented in a summary (the full-length texts is found in appendix 1). The result of the combined analysis is then presented, followed by a critical discussion and suggestions of further research.

The final chapter consists of all printed and digital references.

1.5 The Newspapers

The four different newspapers from where the material is gathered have different ideological standpoints.
Aftonbladet is a tabloid style paper with over three million readers daily (2014). It is regarded to have a Left wing approach and is owned by Schibsted Media Group. Aftonbladet is in Sweden the largest news source in the channels: print, online and mobile.
Expressen is a tabloid newspaper owned by Bonnier AB. It is distributed nationwide with two extra regional editions (GT in Gothenburg and Kvällsposten in Malmö). The three editions have around 1,6 million (2014) readers combined. The political position of the newspaper is independent liberal.
Dagens Nyheter (DN) is an independent liberal newspaper. The paper copy is read by around 750 000 readers daily (2014). The web version has more than 1,5 million unique readers daily.
Svenska Dagbladet (SvD) is a part of Schibsted Media Group, but unlike Aftonbladet it has a liberal Right wing approach.

1.6 Selection of Material

The material is collected from a cluster sampling of editorials and culture pages in Dagens Nyheter, Svenska Dagbladet, Aftonbladet and Expressen (or more specifically the web editions) where concepts of identity politics are discussed (where identity politics and its actors are included). In many of the articles, the author either gives answers or call out to other actors. This sort of two-way communication leads to material where both diverse ideological standpoints as well as multifaceted views on the debate are given. The first article that was chosen was Åsa Linderborgs article on political correctness (Aftonbladet 7/11) – an article that sprung a lot of reactions from different symbolic actors (both on the Left wing and the Right wing). To analyse the entire set of articles revolving around Linderborgs article would be impossible (due to the massive amount of responses). Therefore this cluster sampling was performed where the four different news papers websites where scanned for articles that either was connected to Linderborgs article or in some way dealt with the concept of identity politics. For instance the two articles from SvD (article 2 and 3) dealt with the concept from an academic perspective, therefor becoming of importance for the thesis since they can give examples of scholarly voices in this so often opinion journalistic debate. The time frame for the material is set to only include articles published in 2014. The reason for selecting that year was due to the political significance it had with two major elections (both for the EU parliament and national election). In the campaigning for both these two elections, issues of equality (and therein identity politics) have been receiving more and more attention. The cluster sampling resulted in 15 articles. All of the articles have been translated from Swedish into English and can be found in appendix 2.

1.7 Limitations

The study does not aim to answer any questions on whether who is right or wrong in their ideological perspectives; the goal is for instance not to prove if liberalism is right rather if a liberal actor is actually presenting liberal ideas. It is what is said and how that
is of focus and how it relates to the debate in large. Questions of whether or not their discourses and argumentations hold ground are of focus.

The reason of focusing only on texts published in the newspapers mentioned above, rather than to include for instance blogs etc. was due to the relation between professionalism and power (concepts which will be further discussed in the theory chapter). There are certain factors that take its play in whether or not a text is being published in a professional publication. This does not mean that a text on a blog or on any other social media channel cannot bear any significance on the debate, it surely can. However, because the thesis aims to answer questions of how symbolic actors function within traditional media, and how this channel affects the sender as well as the message, the sources of material had to be limited.

1.8 Concepts

1.8.1 Hen

*Hen* is a gender-neutral pronoun, the third next to *he* and *she* in the Swedish language (ne.se). Being used in the scholarly debate for many years, the pronoun was just recently (2014) accepted as a valid and correct term (taking part in the dictionary as well as being accepted by the Swedish Academy). The pronoun can be found several times in the material collected for analysis.

1.8.2 Cis

A cis-person is a person whose gender identity matches his or her biological and legal sex. The concept concerns gender identity or gender expression, not sexual orientation. The opposite of cis-gender are transgender (ne.se).
1.8.2 Gender & Sex

*Gender* is defined as the socially constructed traits of femininity and masculinity. *Sex* on the other hand can be defined as the biological traits of men and women (Sellnow, 2014:140).

1.8.3 Racialised

For a long time race has been a concept debated in different scholarly fields, and often these discussions have their core in a complex relationship between different groups within society. In the US, the unequal relationship between white citizens and Afro-American citizens has been dominating the debate (Hill, 1990:220-238, Fusco, 1998:60). In other parts of the world, other groups have been the focus; all cultures and identities are negotiated and hybridised from context to context (Bhabha, 1999:290, Gutmann, 1999:18 as referred to in Bayati, 2014:23). From some perspectives the racialised group of immigrants or other ethnic minorities can be seen as an economical group belonging to the “underclass” or the working class. From other points of view low-status ethnic groups are distinguished by lesser esteem, honour and prestige, therefore becoming the low-status ethnic group of society (Fraser, 2008:74). Coco Fusco (1998) points out how race as a concept can highlight unjust structures in society:

“Racial identities are not only black, Latino, Asian, Native American, and so on; they are also white. To ignore white ethnicity is to redouble its hegemony by naturalizing it. Without specifically addressing white ethnicity, there can be no critical evaluation of the construction of the other.”

This thesis does not aim to take part in the ongoing scholarly debate on whether or not to use the term racialised. There is however a need to define and describe the various approaches towards this complex notion since it is frequently used in the identity political debate in media.
1.8.4 Afro-phobia

The concept of afro-phobia is used when discussing hostility towards people originating from sub-Saharan Africa (with both parents coming from this region) and belongs to the African diaspora (Hübinette 2014:11). A person from sub-Saharan Africa, living in Sweden can thus be both a racialised person as well as an Afroswede. In the Afro-phobia report (2014) the concept is defined as:

“Fear, hostility or hatred against black people and activating an Afro-phobic reaction against African swedes, their property, institutions or the person or persons who are, or perceived to be, Afro-Swedes, or representatives of the Afro-Swedes.” (Klingspor & Molarin 2009: 39, as referred to in Hübinette 2014:12).

1.8.5 Ideology

The term ideology is used frequently when discussing society and how it functions, so also in the case of Media and Communication studies. In this study ideology is divided into unconscious ideologies and conscious ideologies. Unconscious ideologies (or anonymous ideologies) are not formally named and are therefore difficult to identify. It is the common sense foundation of our worldviews that is beyond debate (Weber, 2014:5). “Boys will be boys” and “Everyone I know are heterosexuals” are two sorts of unconscious ideologies. Conscious ideologies are more concrete and revolves around sets of ideas that explains and evaluates social conditions, as well as helping people to understand their place in society. Examples of these conscious ideologies are for instance Liberalism, Socialism and Feminism (Weber, 2014:4).

The press system, being a part of the media landscape, is also affected by ideologies. The liberalisation of the media landscape includes a move from governmental involvement to a privatisation and owner-oriented approach (Waisbord, 2013:176). This does not say that the owners cannot be political. Ideology also affects how the common sense influences ones argumentation, which will be discussed later on (Richardson, 2000:6).
By taking these concepts of ideology into consideration when analysing texts on the ideological debate one can deconstruct how symbolic actors views both themselves but also other groups in society. All humans are driven by multiple ideologies (both unconscious and conscious) at the same time, while not always stating them.

1.8.6 Symbolic actors

Symbolic actors become symbolic since they possess the privilege to represent themselves as well as manufacturing opinions and sharing “symbols” with society (Waisbord, 2013:107, Bignell, 2002:76). The symbolic actor thus becomes a sign for both the individual and the ideology he/she is representing. The term symbolic actor is similar to the elite actor; expect that the latter belong to the top hierarchy of its profession. An example of this form of elite actor is the journalist who, in contrast of other symbolic actors, has a professional background in media – it is a term that separates the professional from the layman. This does not mean that a symbolic actors is not in any way powerless just because the lack of profession. On the contrary the power that comes from being a symbolic actor (being able to represent a group and therefor also defining it) comes with a huge amount of power. If it is the opinion of the symbolic elites, or actors, that forms the hierarchy of public knowledge, it becomes interesting to explore what ideologies that control these symbolic elites (van Dijk, 2008:36).

1.8.6 Sensational Journalism & Tabloidisation

“The primary content of newspapers today is commercialized news and designed to appeal to broad audiences, to entertain, to be cost effective and whose attention can be sold to advertisers. The result is that stories that may offend are ignored in favour of those more acceptable and entertaining to a larger number of readers, that stories that are costly to cover are downplayed or ignored and that stories creating financial risks are ignored. This leads to the homogenization of the range of opinion and ideas expressed” (Picard, 2004:61, referred to in McQuail, 2010:124).
This raises questions regarding of who’s a member of the “larger number of readers”, and which stories (or discourses) that may offend. The concept of sensational journalism is very much intertwined with the concepts of elitism, professionalism and “citizen journalism” (Waisbord, 2013:110) (discussed later on).


2 Literature Review

In this chapter previous research within the subject is being presented, as well as how it is of importance to the current study. Several studies are presented and the Afro-phobia report on the situation of Afro-Swedish citizens. Barzoo Eliassi study on the usage of identity politics in Social works is presented, then Tabitha Flyger’s study regarding European editorials view on discourses of diversity, and Richardson’s study of the media representation of Muslims in British press. Both the latter feature ideas around the concepts of “the others”.

2.1.1 Creating Identities in Sweden

While the concept of identity politics has been scholarly debated and studied (for instance in Gender studies, Political science and Social Work) for a long time, its relationship to the media in Sweden is fairly new. The focus of this chapter is therefore on Media and communication studies and its contribution to the scholarly debate (rather than to dive into the actual research on the concept).

There are several gender scholars that have explored the concept of identity politics including Lena Gemzöe (2002). A summary of her reasoning on identity politics can be found at the University of Gothenburg’s website (Gu.se 31/3 2015). Furthermore, a large report released during 2014 called the Afro-phobia report, in which the situation for Afro-Swedish citizens was analysed and discussed. The authors argue that racism takes its expression differently depending on historical background as well as on skin colour and ethnicity. Different minorities therefore have different relations with the white Swedish majority population. In other words some minorities are experiencing different levels of racism (Hübinette, 2014:12). The report also states that:

“African phobia, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and antiziganism or other forms of discrimination directed against other minorities are not comparable in any unambiguous way. Each category has its own history and its own logic.” (Hübinette, 2014:12).
While the report in it self does not talk about identity politics, it can be used to highlight the very complexity of race, ethnicity and skin colour as factors for identity building. Not only is it of importance to distinguish white persons from non-white (or racialised) persons, but also to separate for instance Afroswedish persons, whose both parents originating from sub-Sahara from those who only have one parent (often called biracial, multiracial or mixed-race). The term sub-Saharan Africans also becomes complex since it often doesn’t separate black Africans from white Africans or Asian Africans (Hübinette, 2014:16). With this said it is still a fact that Afroswedes have a low or almost no representation in society, whether it is in academia, politics or business. This is also the case in the media (Hübinette, 2014:22). There is a feeling of diminishing and that it is taboo to talk about race in Sweden because of a “white norm”. The methods used in the report where many but included an intersectional perspective. The report highlights that there is a need for more research when it comes to the age category; young adults and youths are more often getting space rather than seniors (Hübinette, 2014:56).

Another scholar that has explored the concept of identities is Barzoo Eliassi (2010), who used the concept of identity politics in his research in the field of Social work. Sweden is a country often described as a national and international role model of social equality, gender equality and integration policy (Ålund, 2002, Ålund & Schierup, 1991, as referred to in Eliassi, 2010:15). Since 1975, the Swedish rhetoric regarding dealing with diversity has shifted from assimilation to multiculturalism, integration and back to assimilation, like many other countries in Western Europe (de los Reyes & Kamali, 2005; Schierup, et al., 2006; Ålund & Schierup, 1991, as referred to in Eliassi, 2010:15). With the previously described change in the political landscape, the insistence of the assimilation ideology tends to powerfully emphasise national identity as the cure for the plural society. The Liberal party of Sweden, along with other Right wing parties, have during the 2000’s urged immigrants to learn “core Swedish values” and undergo “citizenship tests” and “language tests” etc. Reflecting this political shift in Swedish integration policy and demands on migrants to adhere to normative Swedishness, the beginning of the 2000’s (and especially the national election of 2006) was supposed to be the time of multiculturalism, but instead it became a period where Sweden seem to have had enough of multiculturalism (Jonsson, 2008, as referred to in Eliassi, 2010:15). The
discourse of “Us versus Them” is not only produced by the Media but also by political actors, and especially the production of Muslims and Africans as signifiers of otherness (living in other cultures having different sets of values). Or as Eliassi (2010) describes it: “The power and the privilege of defining people with immigrant background as a ‘problem’ that need to be solved is also related to structural inequalities that exclude alternative voices, experiences and explanations which could articulate other ways to deal with inequality than a strong focus on cultural differences as the main reason for ‘failed integration’” (de los Reyes & Kamali, 2005; de los Reyes & Wingborg, 2002; Lindeberg & 17 Dahlstedt, 2002, as referred to in Eliassi, 2010:16).

2.1.2 Us Versus Them – Finding the Others

Tabitha Flyger (2013) has conducted a discourse analysis on interviews with editors of 14 newspaper institutions, both Left-leaning and Right-leaning, in five different countries (Hungary, Italy, Denmark, Spain and Germany). The focus of the interview-questions has been on diversity and notions such as gender, culture, sexuality and race. The study has been part of the Eurosphere project (which aim is to examine the possibilities of European Public Spheres and joint media data bases) in order to contribute to the objectives of the publication by examining positions on gender and diversity among media representatives.

Notions such as gender, culture, sexuality and race are central when it comes to defining diversity, and they cut across national borders. Thus the understanding of notions such as the above mentioned is society based. Furthermore, identity groups are always in motion, both within the member group and ideologically speaking (Flyger, 2013:125, as referred to in Siim & Mokre). What was found in the study was a resistance to change from the editors, especially when it came to understanding diversity as belonging. The interview-answers could contain quotes such as: “...does not differentiate among groups based on ethnicity or religion. They aim to give a voice to every minority which has a valid message to the world”. Constructions of diversity are not articulated as a matter of group differences per se but rather as the degree of institutionalisation (Flyger, 2013:125, as referred to in Siim & Mokre). This finding is interesting when put into an intersectional
perspective, which will be discussed later on. Further more the result pointed towards an importance of religious and ethnic group belonging when discussing diversity. However, the answers given from the editors were divergent in the sense of them being either Left- or Right-leaning. Since Sweden and Denmark are similar both geopolitically and socio-economically, the Danish responses is of great interest: “*a difference between the responses of the Danish right- and left-leaning press, with the right-leaning press expressing worries about pressure on gender equality, freedom of expression and personal freedom, and the editors of the left-leaning newspaper expressing concerns about the assimilatory pressures on newcomers to Danish society as a consequence of ethno-national diversity*” (Flyger, 2013:125, as referred to in Siim & Mokre). The Right-leaning editors in Italy, Spain and Hungary responded in a similar pattern with a sceptical attitude towards diversity (for example by emphasising the importance of Hungarian cultural values or the threat from Muslims etc.). Muslims are often characterised as thinking within “*the frames of caliphates, in medieval, atavistic structures*”. This sort of reasoning was also found at the Danish editors (Flyger, 2013:128, as referred to in Siim & Mokre).

Speaking of the media can sometimes be a bit misleading, rather than speaking of which media that is blurring or hindering the progress of a certain group. As can be seen in the study, some editors from both sides can agree upon an “*us vs. them*”-dichotomy while at the same time not agreeing on certain terms or notions (Flyger, 2013:135, as referred to in Siim & Mokre). The author argues that this sort of dichotomy is not a European but rather a nationalistic concept. “Us” and “our ways of life” does not have to be mentioned, it is taken for granted while for example the “Muslims” or “Islam” are being seen as “the others” and therefore a threat. The discourse presented in editorials around Europe defines Muslims as a group whose cultural and religious heritage is in direct conflict with “our” freedom of press (Flyger, 2013:135, as referred to in Siim & Mokre). Some symbolic actors have the power to construct a “shared understanding” of certain concepts.

John E. Richardson’s (2000) study of the media representation of Muslims in British press provides the current thesis with valuable insights to how argumentation can be used to influence media. The study also helps expand the concept of “Others”. Richardson applies an argumentative discourse theory to a genre of letters, all written in
response to prior newspaper articles and reporting, in which Islam and/or Muslims were cited as actors, to the editor and subsequently printed in the British Broadsheet press. By conducting this study, Richardson unravelled a concept of “Muslim-others”. The ideological position of the authors exposed how they were relying so heavily on these kinds of negative other-presentations, but more importantly how this was done so very hidden (Richardson, 2000:6). Or as Kleiner (1998) states it: “the ideology of ‘Modern Racism’ is a case in point, wherein ‘modern racists are said to avoid expressing overtly anti-black opinions, instead preferring to express their views in more subtle, sophisticated ways which may be defended by appeal to seemingly universally accepted egalitarian values and principles” (Kleiner, 1998: 188).

The previous research gives examples of the complexity of cultural identities and creation of it, both that they can come from within the group but also be forced upon by external actors. What the previous research also shows is how some symbolic actors, including editors and journalists, can define other groups into the others. This however depends on a homogenous group of professionals, something that the current thesis questions, especially since the “new” medias like social medias have added new possibilities for new actors to be noticed by gatekeepers. Is the group of symbolic actors within the traditional press as homogenous as some of the previous research states?
3 Theories

In the third chapter five different theories or concepts are going to be presented namely: Journalism, Identity politics, Feminist perspectives, Intersectionality and power. How they are defined, intended on being used in the present study, and how they can interact with each other (or sometimes not) is also stated.

3.1 Journalism

For the printed media such as Dagens Nyheter and Svenska Dagbladet (among others), the role of being slow, “objective” and meticulous has quite changed during the past decade. New media such as social media and news sites on the Internet have opened up for “new” symbolic actors to be heard. Not only journalists have the ability to create opinions in the printed press (and their web editions). Firstly the pressure of speed and being first on delivering a news item has increased. Secondly the argumentation has changed into being more focused on opinion (or sensationalist) journalism (Hadenius, Weibull & Wadbring, 2008:75). A fundamental issue for the traditional media, which the new media is somewhat relieved from, is that profit becomes an overwhelming motive (McQuail, 2010:124). In order to attract the readers the tone as well as the content needs to shine through the seemingly increasing amount of information. Where reporting and other journalistic news pieces have plenty of rules in order to be “objective”, there are some forms of journalistic works that are more difficult than others. The journalists are required to fill the editorials and culture pages with opinions, taking on roles as experts in vast amounts of subjects including politics, economics, culture, popular culture, education, war, and crisis management to name some. One of the more difficult journalistic tasks is the one of reporting on scientific discussions, both in the natural science tradition but also in the social science (Resnik, 2005:101). This includes summarising and/or commenting on scientific studies, reports or journals. Again the journalist must be able to understand and reproduce concepts from different scholarly fields. The journalist (as well as the editor) must bear in mind that media has an important public role, both in which information provided but also how (McQuail, 2010:563, Hadenius et al. 2008:21). The reasons for people’s misunderstanding of science are plenty, even when the reporting might not be “bad” (Resnik, 2005:104). As
can be seen, the sender has several aspects to take into consideration, but what about the receiver of information? Gadamer (1959) states that: “Whoever wants to understand a text, is always carrying out a projection. From the moment a first meaning becomes apparent in the text he projects a meaning of the whole.” The consumption as well as the interpretation of the text is however dependent on the expectations of the reader. In other words, if the reader from the beginning knows that the text is published in an outspoken Liberal or Left Wing newspaper, this might change how the reader takes in the text. Openness to a text does not require “neutrality” about the object (a topic or subject) rather a certain identity view of ones assumption and prejudices. From a scientific perspective, the challenge lies in trying to look at the text from different angles, with different “theoretical glasses”. One way to do this in media studies is for example to use a discourse analysis or an argumentation analysis.

3.2 Identity politics

Mentioned in the introduction, the concept of identity politics is a much-debated topic, not only in the academic field but also in mainstream media. Often, identity politics seem to be equated to equality, many times in the sense of whose movement is allowed to claim it for its own need. There has been critique towards not only this self-appointed permissible to equate the concept, but also how it is being used (Heyes, 2014). Identity politics as a mode of organising is intimately connected to the idea that some social groups are oppressed; that is, that one’s identity as a woman or as a Muslim, for example, makes one peculiarly vulnerable to cultural imperialism (including stereotyping, erasure, or appropriation of one’s group identity), violence, abuse, marginalisation, or powerlessness (Heyes, 2014). The modern identity is characterised by an emphasis on its capacity for authenticity. This authenticity is found in its ability to find a way of being that is somehow true to oneself (Taylor in Gutmann, ed. 1994, as referred to in Heyes, 2014). Much like the features presented in the intersectional perspective (discussed later on in this chapter), the “identity” in identity politics appears to be the experience of the subject, especially the individuals experience of oppression and the possibility of shared and authentic, self determined alternative.
If this experience is the origin of politics there is a risk that an “epistemology of provenance” will become the norm. Political perspectives gain legitimacy by virtue of their voicing by subjects of particular experiences, which closes off the possibility of critique of these perspectives by those who don't share the experience. This critique can come from both the outside as well as from within the group. This can hinder political dialogue and coalition building (Kruks 2001, Alcoff 2000 as referred to in Heyes, 2014). From an essentialist perspective (in the contemporary humanities the term is used to imply an illegitimate generalisation about identity) identity politics meets two major obstacles; the first is the understanding of the subject that characterises a single axis of identity as discrete and taking priority in representing the self (and in turn others within the group). With identity politics the symbolic actors of the group (those who possess enough power to be heard) urges mobilisation around a single axis, putting pressure on participants to identify that axis as their defining feature (“either you are with us or against us”). The participants of the group may well understand themselves as integrated selves who cannot be represented so selectively or even reductively (Spelman 1988 as referred to in Heyes, 2014). Just as dominant groups in the culture at large insist that the marginalised integrate by integrating to dominant norms, so within some practices of identity politics dominant sub-groups may, in theory and practice, impose their vision of the group’s identity onto all its members. From the relativist perspective all groups produce specialised thought and each group’s thought is equally valid. In other words, no group can claim to have a better interpretation of the “truth” than another (Hill Collins, 1990:238). Further critic towards the identity politics is that singular activists (symbolic actors) can take the role as spokespersons, representing a group consisting of members that necessarily haven’t agreed upon the organisation. Or as Heyes (2014) states: “thinkers agree that the notion of identity has become indispensable to contemporary political discourse, at the same time as they concur that it has troubling implications for models of the self, political inclusiveness, and our possibilities for solidarity and resistance.” In previous research, Flyger (2013) found that in western media, this could often be seen when portraying the Muslim community, where Sharia laws, terrorism and halal traditions etc. can represent all Muslims. Another example is how the LGBT community can be represented by organisations with an
ideological agenda that might not reflect the community as a whole (for instance the issue of surrogacy). The individual can come to be forced to identify with an already fixed identity.

What identity politics often fails to recon is the difference between the traits given to an individual and his/her ideological, philosophical and moral values. These traits include both biologically (sex, ethnicity, race) and socially constructed (such as class, gender, education, work) factors. Experience requires a theoretical framework in order to be interpreted (and given meaning). In other words, identity politics as a concept is rather unsuccessful on its own.

Can a man be experiencing oppression when he is in fact on top of the hegemony, while at the same time being a Muslim and gay? Does this oppression change whether or not he is a citizen in Sweden or Saudi Arabia?

By taking the unconscious and conscious ideologies, philosophical and moral values into the definition of oneself and how one sees the world, a more well-defined and nuanced debate can take place, i.e. there are certain ways of categorising thoughts on society, its structure and how humans can influence it. Social science provides us with two different paradigms. The paradigm of redistribution includes ideological movements that see socio-economic transformation as a remedy for gender and racial-ethnic injustice such as Social democracy, classical Feminism, Liberalism and Socialism (Fraser, 2008:73).

Oppression is defined as socio-economic, for example exploitation, economic marginalisation, and deprivation ( economical power). The paradigm of recognition aims to revalue unjustly devalued identities. For example to increase the value for women (cultural Feminism), black cultural nationalism and gay identity politics (including Queer theories). For some movements the paradigm has a deconstructive tendency, such as queer politics, critical “race” politics and other groups rejecting the essentialism of traditional identity politics (Fraser, 2008:73). Cultural oppression (social and cultural power) is rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation and communication. These two different approaches and their view on society can seem complex and fixed;

Politics of redistribution does not mean class politics, nor does politics of recognition mean “identity politics”. The feminist, anti-heterosexist, and anti-racist movements are not a unified single whole movement. There is no (combined) politics of sexuality,
gender and “race”. To include all of these groups into a single “super” movement would be to render invisible groups (Fraser, 2008:73). In other words it fails to see the different dimensions of class struggles, such as poor white groups, often called “rednecks” or the other way around, like upper-class homosexual white men who often are seen as the master group within the LGBT-movement. In other words, there is no unified, single identity politics movement, rather the concept can take its form in different ways and be used by different groups (for its own purpose). As stated earlier, identity politics is much dependent on the traits of individuals to be able to create and rally behind a unified group or movement. The feminist movement is a clear example of this.

3.2 Feminist perspectives

The Swedish feminist movement has during the past century achieved several victories for women, not only culturally but also economically and socially. Some of the achievements include voting rights for women 1919 (being a part of the First-wave feminism) and abortion rights in 1975 (in the Second-wave feminism) (Sellnow, 2014:142). Feminism is a complex perspective with several different branches, spreading in different directions, including postmodern groups focusing on and criticising white feminist scholars use of woman and gender as unitary and homogenous categories reflecting the common essence of all women to name one (McCall, 2005:1776). They do, however, share focus in some areas, such as the “taken-for-granted” “normal” rules and roles for men and women in society. Furthermore feminism focuses on oppression based on sex, gender, and sexual orientation (and especially heterosexuality). It is important to emphasise that it is the dominant ideology, the hegemony, which oppresses women, not men per se (on a structural level). Sellnow (2014) describes a feminist as: “anyone (male or female) whose beliefs and actions challenge hegemony by respecting and valuing women as well as respecting and valuing both men and women who embrace and enact multiple gender styles and sexualities”.

It can seem that the feminist movement might be very complex and not so unified as spokespersons for it might want to give impression of, especially for someone not so familiar with the both conscious as well as unconscious ideologies behind it.
The Marxist feminist movement seeks to ensure economic equality for women. There are many reasons to why women earn less than their male colleagues, for instance lack of education and work experiences; this due to a duality for women. Marxist feminists (among others) point out that women often perform unwaged labour home, forcing them to carry a double burden (Sellnow, 2014:149). On the opposite side of the broad feminist movement one can find the liberal feminist perspective, which focuses on providing opportunities for the inclusion of women in traditionally male-dominated arenas. Women being presented as successful in male-dominated arenas thus, from a liberal feminist perspective, operate within the system and are therefore also challenging it. Critics often highlight the other arenas where a woman is supposed to “work”, for example in the home, creating this double burden (Sellnow, 2014:144). While the Marxist feminist works to deconstruct the arena, the liberal feminist wants to change it from within. Close to the Marxist perspective, the radical feminist perspective can be found. The radical feminism focuses on the unintentional ideologies concerning men and women, and how oppression stems from the system created by these ideologies. Boys and girls are raised in different subject and object gender identities (also described as socially constructed genders). The goal of the radical feminist perspective is to point out how objectifying hegemonic beliefs and behaviours based on sex, gender or sexual orientation are reinforced in different ways (Sellnow, 2014:145). Furthermore, hegemonies are reinforced when women are portrayed as subjects breaking the “rules”, therefore being punished yet again. Heyes (2014) exemplifies how this sort of separatism can take its form: “Lesbian feminist separatists have claimed that the central mechanism for the oppression of women under patriarchy is heterosexuality. Understanding heterosexuality as a forced contract or compulsory institution, they argue that women’s relationships with men are persistently characterized by domination and subordination. Only divorce (literal and figurative) and the creation of new geographic and political communities of woman-identified women will end patriarchal exploitation, and forge a liberatory female identity.”(Rich 1980; Frye 1983; Radicalesbians 1988; Wittig 1992, as referred to in Heyes, 2014). The patriarchy is closely connected with Heteronormativity, which refers to the privileging (an expression of power) of heterosexuality and an
alignment among sexuality gender identity, gender roles, and biological sex (Sellnow, 2014:141).

These are yet some of the many different forms of feminism that have risen up, and while not every one agrees upon to the definition of them they can serve as notions in the scholarly debate. Outside of the scholarly debate it also becomes important to define and explain how one tends to use the different concepts (not only the feminist ones but in general).

3.3 Intersectionality

Intersectionality is the notion that subjectivity is constituted by mutually reinforcing vectors of race, sexuality, class, gender and ethnicity etc. (Nash, 2008:2). One of the most important aspects of using the notion of intersectionality is its unique ability to deconstruct the belief system of ideologies. Intersectionality disrupts cumulative approaches to identity (i.e. race + gender + sexuality + class = complex identity). It also problematises social processes of categorisation in strategic deployments of marginalised subjects’ experiences (Nash, 2008:6). The result of this multiplicative experience provides one indivisible being. When simultaneously deconstructing the cultural codes within groupings (in terms of gender, race and ethnicity etc.) the result shows how complex the paradigms of redistribution and recognition actually are (Fraser, 2008:74). Intersectionality is particularly interested in privilege since it is one of the most powerful expressions of power. The level of power, oppression and privileges an individual possess is regulated by certain positions in society, often called the Matrix of domination.

3.3.1 Multiple Levels of Domination

The Matrix of domination is, in addition to the indivisible being, structured on several levels. Three different levels can be found: the level of personal biography; the group or community level of cultural context; and the systemic level of social institutions.
In the level of personal biography the most fundamental functions can be found, the area where new knowledge can be used to create change. By emphasising the power of self-definition and the need of a free mind, one can realise that domination is not only stemming from the top down, but also by seizing the power as energy of those on the bottom for its own ends. For example non-white women can be exposed to oppression from not only white individuals but also non-white men, the latter also being in the bottom of the hierarchy. Tools for resistance are being created for individuals to withstand discrimination from forces further up in the hegemony.

The group or community level of cultural context is of focus for the second level of domination. It is the shared experiences and ideas that form the group, giving meaning to the individual biographies. In turn, this verifies the domination that the individual experiences and resists. As mentioned earlier, each individual biography (or complex identity) is built up by cultural contexts overlapping each other, such as race, social class, ethnicity, sex, gender etc. These components contribute to the concepts used in thinking and acting, group validation of an individual’s interpretation of concepts. The shared cultural context is more powerful with identifiable histories, geographic locations, and social institutions, i.e. when individuals come together they increase the validity of their group norms.

The third level, which includes social institutions such as schools, churches, political arenas, the media etc. is also a level where domination is present. In these institutions, the individual is exposed to the norms, standards and ideas of the dominant group(s) of the society, and of oppositional groups. Patricia Collin Hills (1990) describes it as following:

"These institutions expose individuals to the specialized thought representing the dominant group’s standpoint and interests. While such institutions offer the promise of both literacy and other skills that can be used for individual empowerment and social transformation, they simultaneously require docility and passivity. Such institutions would have us believe that the theorizing of elites constitutes the whole of theory.”
The matrix of oppression unlocks information about certain groups and shows that different groups hold both privileges as well as the risk of being penalised; an individual can be both an oppressor or and an oppressed depending on the *context*. A suggestion is therefore to categorise discrimination or victimisation within a linear dimension rather than hierarchically where context is defining who is privileged during the specific scenario. By doing this, members of different groups must redefine themselves and explore the definition of the group further than for instance “as women” or “as blacks” (Nash, 2008:4). Nominal determiners are tools that functions to categorise single groups. An example is how “immigrants” can be deconstructed into new groups such as “black immigrants”, “Asian immigrants” or “Muslim immigrants” (Richardson, 2000:2). By highlighting nominal determiners one can deconstruct *master categories*, in order to see if the argument is defensible.

Often intersectionality and identity politics are mistaken for each other or even understood as the same concept. Intersectionality sees class, gender, sexuality, functionality, ethnicity and skin colour as vectors that interact. That is to say one cannot judge someone as privileged only on the basis of a category that often happens to be the right category one belong to. It is rather the case of identity politics (as described with the single axis of identity above). In other words: in the philosophical realm of intersectionality the individual biography (or complex identity) is made up by cultural contexts overlapping. This means that a white poor single mother can share experiences of oppression with for instance a black single mother or a poor white man, and although not having the exact same identity they can still share tools for resistance thus increasing their validity. From an identity political perspective the aim is rather to separate the group sharing a single axis of identity (either by race, ethnicity, sexuality, class etc.) from the “others” and putting that category under itself. In order to understand how oppression functions on these different levels, one needs to take into consideration that power functions in different ways depending on how it is carried out; privileges and oppression takes its form depending on the context (i.e. where in the matrix of domination an individual is located).
3.4 Power

In this intersubjective world, it is not only the individual who uses different kinds of power to construct a “true reality”, but also ideological groups. It is a complex relationship between the individual and his/hers true reality (Alvesson, 2010:25). It is through symbols, signs and language that this reality is presented and shared with others (often seen as common-sense knowledge). As Alvesson (2010) notes: language is of a special importance in the building-up of a social stock of knowledge. In order to gain knowledge from texts, the language user needs to use macro-structures. The social processes help the individual to share these symbols, signs and language. Rose (2012) presents it as follow: “If ideology is effective, it is because it works at both ‘the rudimentary levels of psychic identity and the drives’ and the level of discursive formation and practices which constitute the social field.” (Rose, 2012:190). This focus on language as an important component in the discourse can open up for a scholarly discussion when compared with Foucault’s notion of power. Foucalt states that power is not something forced from the top of society and down the hierarchy, but rather something that can be found everywhere (Rose, 2012:192). This depends heavily on which context power is discussed. Humans can possess power in different forms. One way to categorise power is by dividing it into economic, cultural and social capital. Economic capital can be directly convertible into money and other economical forms such as property rights. Cultural capital is convertible and can for example be institutionalised in the forms of educational qualifications. Cultural capital is highly dependent on society and its laws. An example of this is heteronormativity, which can either place gay people within an accepted sexuality or as morally deviant and “bad” – a despised sexuality (Fraser, 2008:75; Sellnow, 2014:141). The last one, social capital, is made up of social obligations or “connections”, which in some cases can be converted into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the forms of nobility (Bourdieu, 2008:281). Firstly, the notion that social, cultural or economic power is equally divided into different individuals (and the ideology their representing) is very complex (McCall, 2005:1783). Secondly Foucault’s account of power does not consider where and how the power of discourse is carried out. Not only is language an important aspect of the social process but also a tool that from a historic perspective has not always been a tool for the masses. Rather the
intellectuals and the educated have had an exclusive right to the language but also to the communication (the media). That power is not something that is imposed from the top down to the oppressed bottom, is then a statement made with a very basic analysis. Elitist actors are more favoured and therefore noticed by gatekeepers (which in turn are also a form of elitist actors), this because of their lingual tools. Not only is language required to gain power but also vision. This vision of oneself is very much intertwined with representation and ideology. Who is the scholar, journalist, editor or elitist actor a spokesperson for, and is that representation mutually agreed upon? Self-identity is not the same as an objective vision (Haraway, 1988:585). An example of this scholarly debate over representation can be found in the feminist theory including postmodern groups focusing on and criticising white feminist scholars use of woman and gender as unitary and homogenous categories reflecting the common essence of all women (McCall, 2005:1776). There is a need for rational discussion when deconstructing the imagery and technologies of vision within any form of ideology (Haraway, 1988:587). Van Dijk (1991) makes a similar statement: “Dependence on world knowledge and beliefs may make coherence subjective and ideological: what is coherent for the journalist may not be so for all readers.”(van Dijk, 1991:112). This sort of common-sense knowledge that is presented by elitist actors thus becomes a “true reality”. Media can be a dominant channel to carry out social and cultural power. By using implications the actor can emphasise an opinion by not expressing it explicitly.
4 Method

In this chapter the method of the thesis is presented and how it is being operationalised. Firstly comes an introduction to how arguments can be created and to which purpose, secondly follows how these arguments can be argued for or against and which tools the sender can use in order to make the argumentation stronger (or weaker). The chapter ends with a presentation of how written texts can be categorised into different stages and how this type of argumentation overview can find and highlight important messages within the text. Lastly an evaluation of the research quality is presented.

4.1 Argumentation analysis

With the previous chapter in mind, a reader trying to deconstruct an argumentation towards something needs to ask if the argument built on the level of personal biography, the group or community level of cultural context, or the systemic level of social institutions. From where does the thesis statement (T from the Greek word tes) and examples come from? In order to perform an argumentation analysis, one needs to have certain tools. Further on both the term thesis statement and tes is being used having the same definition.

“The question is not whether or not the arguments are formulated in an elegant or powerful way, that will make the audience accept the conclusion or sympathise with the speakers’ opinion, rather regarding if the arguments gives us good reasons to accept the conclusion” (Björnsson et al. 2009:18).

Firstly the sender can present either a factual thesis statement or a normative thesis statement. A factual thesis statement is a tes that claims that a certain factual situation has existed, exists or will exist (Björnsson et al. 2009:31). A normative thesis statement is an opinion that it would be desirable that a specific factual situation came about, or we should take a specific action, or that certain actions are morally unacceptable (Björnsson et al. 2009:31). Secondly, the sender can have two different viewpoints; either the sender is positive towards the thesis statement, or negative. In order to argue for the thesis statement sender can use either:
Pro-arguments (P): aiming to give reason to accept a thesis statement.
Contra-arguments (C): aiming to give reason to reject a thesis statement.

Both types of arguments can be further specified into more specific categories. This will be done later in this chapter. First other concepts need to be presented, namely: conclusion power, sustainability and relevance.

4.1.1 Conclusive power

In order for an argument to be valid (that it gives good reasons to accept or reject a thesis) it needs to possess a certain amount of strong conclusive power. Bad arguments on the other hand, possess weak conclusive power. Conclusive power can be roughly calculated and categorised into “very low”, “low”, “average”, “high”, “very high” (Björnsson et al. 2009:22-23). That 2+2=5 would be true has a very low conclusive power, while the thesis statement that: all humans are mortal, and if Eve is human she is mortal, has a very high conclusive power. Often several different arguments are presented, which must be taken into consideration as a whole. The conclusive power of arguments can be examined by using three different principles:

1. The total strength of the arguments pro a thesis increases when in greater numbers, and by their conclusive power (“very high”).
2. The total strength of the arguments against a contra thesis increases when in greater numbers, and by their conclusive power (“very high”).
3. Arguments pro and contra a thesis that are of equal strength cancel each other.

4.1.2 Sustainability

The sustainability of a thesis statement is a measurement of the grade of trust given reason towards the thesis. When an argument lacks sustainability, it also lacks conclusive power (Björnsson et al. 2009:24). The statement: smoking is carcinogenic, is for example a type with high sustainability. Scientific studies (or academic expertise) argue that this is the case. It is possible, yet not likely, that this thesis is wrong. The sustainability of an
argument is dependent on the background of the reader. With a lack of knowledge it can be hard to understand a certain concept (being discussed) or to form an opinion about it. The reader can gain a better-formed sustainability evaluation when given references or related articles etc. (Björnsson et al. 2009:30).

4.1.3 Relevance

The relevance of a pro-argument (P) for a thesis statement (T) is a measurement of what good reasons (P) would give in order to accept the (T) if (P) was true. In other words, will the pro-argument be valid (or fair enough) making the reader feel that it is worth finding a well-informed opinion regarding the matter (Björnsson et al. 2009:35)? Naturally an argument can be high in conclusive power and in sustainability, while at the same time not be relevant for the discussion. That the planet Earth is not flat (a factual thesis statement) is not relevant when discussing whether or not Santa Claus is real. This can also be said for contra-arguments. The relevance of a contra-argument (C) for a thesis statement (T) is a measurement of what good reasons (C) would give in order to reject the (T) if (C) was true. The difference between relevance and sustainability lies in that an argument always has a grade of relevance in relation to the thesis that it is an argument for or against. Some arguments are highly relevant in some discussions, while being irrelevant in other. In short, in order for a statement to have a high conclusive power, it needs to show sustainability and relevance. Not only conclusive power can be categorised or valued “very low”, “low”, “average”, “high”, “very high”, but also relevance and sustainability (Björnsson et al. 2009:90).

4.1.4 Different sorts of arguments

As mentioned earlier, the pro-arguments and contra-arguments can be divided into more specified categories, namely Cause arguments, sign argument, example argument, authority arguments, analogy arguments, consequence arguments and rule argument.
Cause arguments indicate the cause to or the effect of an experience. An example can be made:

(T) *The climate is getting warmer.*

(P1) *Cause argument:* The sea level has increased.

(P2) *Cause argument:* Animals rare to Scandinavia is being spotted more frequent.

(Björnsson et al. 2009:104)

Another type of argument is the sign argument; arguments that indicate, or show signs of something that might, or might not happen. For instance:

(T) *It might start raining soon.*

(P1) *Sign argument:* The air pressure has fallen significantly.

It can also be exemplified in an argumentation model:

(T) *(X)*

(P1) *(Y)*

(F1,P1) *(Y)* is a sign of *(X).*

(Björnsson et al. 2009:105)
Note how further argumentations for an already stated argument can be defined as either for the argument (F) or against the argument (A). These kinds of argument are in other words not arguing for the (T) in itself rather than testing (P) or (C). The third type of argument is the example argument, which can be used to state examples of general conditions. It can also be about highlighting characteristics of an opponent or describing personal features etc. Typical for example arguments are that they usually have a very low-level relevance factor, demanding that the author use several concrete examples in order to increase the conclusive power of the argument (Björnsson et al. 2009:106).

Using a reference like a thesis statement from an expert (or an other elite actor) can increase the level of sustainability. This type of arguments is called authority arguments. If the argument can be proven to be correct the level of sustainability can be very high. However, there is as in all forms of argumentation a need to examine the relevance of the specific argument. The expert that has provided with facts or thesis statements might be very credible but not in the field currently discussed (Björnsson et al. 2009:107).

Analogy arguments are one of the more complicated types of arguments, where the sender aims to use metaphors or parables from other contexts. Can examples from debates regarding a certain sector be used when discussing other sectors in society? The more resembling the parable is, the higher the relevance gets. If the difference between, for instance, the public sector and one of the areas in the private sector are too vast, the argument risks being rejected (Björnsson et al. 2009:108). When using metaphors one needs to be careful not to be misunderstood, since some people do not know how to handle metaphors (see for example Frida Boisen in DN.se 21/1 2015)(Björnsson et al. 2009:109). To narrow down the text while keeping it clear and structured can keep the argumentation free from misunderstanding (Björnsson et al. 2009:113). One way to keep the text clear is to avoid vague terms and definitions, or to present what and how the concept is to be used, the argumentation stands a better chance if specified (Björnsson et al. 2009:119).
Lastly are the consequence arguments and rule arguments. Note how these are often used when carrying out normative statements, and especially when the statement urges the reader to take action for or against something. The aim of the consequence argument is to give support in either decreeing or forbidding an action based on if the actions effect (or consequence of it) is good or bad. The rule argument is somewhat similar but focuses on already agreed-upon rules, such as duties, laws or moral obligations (for instance the Christian Ten commandments or the Buddhist Eight folded path). The sustainability is determined on whether or not the action is a subject to the rule, while the relevance depends on whether or not the rule is relevant to the situation (Björnsson et al. 2009:110). In order to specify the argumentation in text, the author should be able to give answer to who, what, how, why and when something should (or should not) be done.

### 4.2 Operationalisation

The first stage of the analysis is to find the thesis statements of the author. What idea(s) is the author aiming to argument for or against? When the tes is found it is marked as (using an example from the material):

**T1: A more useful concept than identity politics is affinity politics.**

Next step of the analysis is to unravel what kind of pro-arguments and contra-arguments that is being used. These are presented below the (T).

**T1: A more useful concept than identity politics is affinity politics.**

P1: cause argument: Identity is a problem if it is allowed to cover up disagreements, which can happen when identity is reduced into a marketing tool.

F1,P1: cause argument: How can we reach out to the many in the fight for liberation, without for that matter excluding people from being a part of the fight?

F1,F1,P1: analogy argument: The same problems can be found in history, for instance in the anticolonial liberation movements in the 1900’s.
F2,F1,P1: example argument: Liberation is synonymous to the relaxation of “us and them”.

F3,F1,P1: cause argument: Unlike identity politics where the ones who possess double subordinated norms become marginalised if their political project is to only ally themselves with the ones sharing the exact same position.

A1,P1: rule argument: An idea or perspective may not be applicable to every context.

F1,A1,P1: consequence argument: A post-colonial perspective on multifaceted, changing identities and power relations may reasonably have a hard time winning support in a nation that has a notoriously hard time remembering its own colonialism.

P2: cause argument: Identity is a problem when people are casually made into spokespersons for a collective.

F1,P2: analogy argument: These spokespersons can come from groups whose issues include anti-racism, race stereotypes, trans-activism, Civil Rights, ethnic registries, intersectionality, racial profiling, racialised, white norms, gender-and race power order, afro-phobia, antiziganism, islamophobia, segregation, assimilation, integration and separatism.

This continues by adding new arguments either pro or contra the thesis statement, until a conclusion can be made. This is done in order to make an argumentation overview. The following principles are being taken into consideration when making this overview:

The sustainability of a thesis statement is examined through a weighting of the total conclusive power of the pro-arguments for the thesis statement, against the total conclusive power of the contra-arguments.

The total conclusive power of the argument is valued through the combined weighting of its sustainability and relevance.

The sustainability of an argument is examined through weighting the total conclusive power for the arguments sustainability against the total conclusive power against the arguments sustainability.

The relevance of an argument is examined through weighting the total conclusive power for the arguments relevance against the total conclusive power against the arguments relevance (Björnsson et al. 2009:84).

The different parts in the argumentation overview can be summarised as follows:
If the author uses concepts and/or notions, are they stated and defined? Are there any thesis statements that are implicit, and if so, is there a risk that the message becomes lost within the text? What arguments go hand in hand with each other (either helping to, or reducing the conclusive power of the argumentation)?

When the argumentation overview is complete, the second part of the analysis is taken place. Here the text is dismantled into four different stages:

1. The confrontation stage
2. The opening stage
3. The argumentation stage
4. The conclusion stage

Van Eemeren and Houtlosser (1999) defines these stages as following: “The confrontation stage, where difference of opinion is defined; the opening stage, where the starting point of the discussion is established; the argumentation stage, where arguments and critical reactions are exchanged; and the concluding stage, where the result of the discussion is determined.” (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 1999: 480-1, as referred to in Richardson, 2000:5). By analysing both the dissected argumentation and the text as a whole, one can hope to find a more nuanced meaning of the argumentation. In this second part of the analysis, the whole text is deconstructed finding hidden (or not so hidden) meanings within it, or as van Eemeren & Houtlosser (1999) defines it: “establishing systematically whether the standpoint advanced by the protagonist of a viewpoint is defensible against doubt or criticism of an antagonist” (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 1999: 480, as referred to in Richardson, 2005). Is the author relying on a negative other-presentation, a rhetorical argumentation that attempts to create
empathy or communion’ with an audience, or loaded definitions, figures of speech and rhetorical argumentative structures? By using the theories presented in the previous chapter, the argumentation within the text can be deconstructed and questioned, creating a more critical form than the first part of the analysis. While the first part of the analysis explains the argumentation and tests its credibility, the second part emphasise on the contextual side of the symbolic actors underlying meaning. How is the symbolic actor carrying out the discussion? Does he/she pledge to the common sense of the reader? What ideological concepts, loaded definitions, figures of speech and rhetorical argumentative structures are presented and how well do they stand against the theories used in the study (Intersectionality, Power, Ideology, Feminism, and Identity politics)? In other words, the first part of the analysis is to give an overall picture of the argumentation while the second part is more in-depth. It is important to bear in mind that the evaluation of argumentations is subjective to the receiver’s background. From a scientific perspective, the challenge lies in looking at the text from different angles, with different “theoretical glasses”. Scientists must try to remain objective, unbiased and professional in their position as experts in the social debate. Or as David B. Resnik states: “Although moral, social, and political values can have an impact on science, scientists should continually strive to be honest, open, and objective when they conduct research or are asked to give expert opinions” (Resnik, 2005:132). The major thesis statement might be different from receiver to receiver, it is therefore important to be as transparent as possible with how and why certain conclusions are drawn.

4.3 Evaluation of the Research Quality

The research takes different ideological perspectives into consideration, both in regard to where the material has been collected from but also who has produced it. There is always a risk of misunderstanding or in anyway getting lost in translation (like in all forms of qualitative research within the social sciences). The validity of the study is attested since the material is taken from newspapers with different ideological belongings (presented in chapter 1.5). Furthermore the newspapers have different formats, also increasing the validity. By selecting articles in where actors discuss the concept of identity politics the cluster sampling is performed (through different topics).
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To give both validity and reliability, the full transcriptions are presented in appendix 2 (Björnsson et al. 2009:127).
5 Analysis and Result

The fifth chapter contains of an overview of each analysis in which relevant or important parts are being presented; major thesis statements, arguments and important concepts (in bold). The total result is followed by a critical discussion. The chapter ends with a suggestion of further research that can be made within the field. The transcripts and full analysis of each text can be found in appendix 1 and 2.

5.1 The Analyses

5.1.1 Analysis 1

Article: 1: “It damn well better be politically correct”

Source: Aftonbladet 2014-11-07

Author: Åsa Linderborg

Åsa Linderborg has three major points to make in this article. Firstly how the concept of politically correctness is being high-jacked by different groups becoming a sort of authority consciousness. Secondly she discusses identity politics, how it functions and how it is operationalised by some groups. Thirdly Linderborg evolves onward to the similarities that she finds between identity politics and liberalism. These three topics all revolve around how the debate has derailed and how some groups defend themselves from criticism.

T1: To be politically correct is to be a democrat and a humanist.

T2: Politically correctness has a complex relation to Freedom of speech.

T3: The radical transgender movement is upholding an authority consciousness.

Two strong arguments that Åsa Linderborg presents against the practice of identity politics is that some loose groups have certain complexities within them, for example
the LGBT-movement, in which the issue of surrogacy has divided the movement. Another example is that not all black persons strive in the same direction and don’t have the same socio economical interests. Identity politics cover up the ideological contradictions.

Although her arguments are highly relevant to the discussion, some have a slightly lower sustainability – the article often mentions nameless groups or actors. This however doesn’t make the argumentation less powerful, especially by meeting her opponents (so to speak) half way by following some of the issues in the maxim of “never talk about us. Talk with us. NEVER talk for us”. Linderborg could have named the boycotters of the Feminist party at Södra teatern, or contacted some of the symbolic actors who where persecuted online. Anonymousness is both an advantage and a disadvantage. Marginalised groups can come together without risks, both in sharing experiences but also to put pressure to other actors. The latter can be viewed as problematic as it can lead to (which is shown in this article) persecution, bantering or threats (ostracism, McCarthyism, Stalinism). Can these radical tactics be justified because of the marginalised groups position? Åsa Linderborg’s statement argues for the answer no.

5.1.2 Analysis 2

Article: 2: “Old injustices in a new version.”

Source: SvD Kultur 2014-06-16

Author: Per Bauhn

The second article takes place in a more academic arena than many of the following texts. The philosophy-professor Per Bauhn deconstructs the concept of identity politics from both a historic and a philosophical perspective stating that it can be of good and contribute to democracy. His main thesis statements are statements of others, which he aims to deconstruct:
T1: Identity politics can be of good and contributed to furthering our democracy.

T2: Identity politics can create injustice.

T3: Identity political groups or movements are unison in their belief systems.

The argumentation of Per Bauhn is strong, presenting a variety of different arguments. Not only is he giving the reader historical examples of how identity politics has given a both positive outcome for democracy and human rights, but also how it can be used for the complete opposite purpose. In the Western society, the identity as a citizen has been rooted in the view of the identity of being human, i.e. that being a human is being a citizen (thus giving human rights). If a group is then oppressed within a society, it can never be given more power than its equals. In a historical context, the positive examples (if one is pro human rights and democracy) can easily be companioned by less positive examples such as the ethnic identity politics in the Balkan War or growing nationalism in Sweden with citizens claiming that they have the “right” traditions, culture and race. Many ethnic groups have come together by using an identity political rhetoric and in “democratic” ways representing the “identity” of the people.

The first thesis (T1) is strong in its conclusive power but falls since the second (T2) and third (T3) thesis is even stronger, this by intertwining with each other creating a powerful juxtaposition of arguments; this while at the same time not taking side in the, otherwise so often, narrative of “good and evil”
In the third article of analysis, Nathan Hamelberg (editor, antiracism activist, and writer) discusses what he sees as the problems with identity politics. Representing the organisation Mellanförskapet (the Interclusion), he argues that the concept of affinity politics should be used instead. The main issue that Hamelberg reflects upon in his text is firstly how difficult identity politics can be to define and use the term identity. Secondly, and most importantly, he brings up the issues with the concept of identity politics and how it can be used in any ideological directions without any concern of the problems it brings; especially how identity politics and its ability to only focus on the individual and the own agenda, hinders collaboration with other groups in order to achieve shared goals. The third issue is that the usage of the term identity politics is much too vague and poorly defined (in a Swedish context these sorts of actions can be found in many different discussions regarding for example anti-racism, Civil Rights, white norms, and integration). Two major thesis statements can be found:

**T1: A more useful concept than identity politics is affinity politics.**

**T2: The aim for identity politicians is to become large and powerful but not too large.**

What the association Mellanförskapet does is to not only assume that its members might be very different in their identity but that they can share negative experiences from an outside perspective. This approach is very different from identity politics since it rejects the need for creating "Us versus Them" rhetoric. Hamelberg uses both historical examples such as the anticolonial liberation movement in the 1900's, the fight for the independence of Algeria from France, and currently the different groups and movements fighting poverty in the US. What Hamelberg does is to point out that different groups (and symbolic actors) have a major part in shaping the debate both in
what it should regard (from anti-racism to gender- and race power orders) and who gets to have a say in the debate. This argumentation has a sort of self-reflexive stand since he is actually representing an organisation in the role as a symbolic actor for the group. Moreover it has a strong conclusive power since Nathan Hamelberg possess a marginalised identity but assumes that this not only gives negative experiences to gather around but to actually reach out over identities in order to find common goals (through experiences of oppression), or as he puts it: “to see identities but creating a politic that exceeds them an sees common interests”. The conclusion of Hamelbergs argumentation is thus that regardless of how similar affinity politics and identity politics are there are numerous differences that give strength to dismiss the latter. The most powerful of them being that identity politics fails to see the intersectional perspective.

5.1.4 Analysis 4

Article: 4: "The luxury of being able to represent oneself"

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-10-30

Author: Amanda Björkman

In September 2014 Sweden held elections for the national parliament. The Right Wing government lost and the Social Democrats together with the Green Party could form a new one. After the election, critic towards the ministers Mehmet Kaplan and Åsa Romson in some media were discarded as islamophobia and misogyny. In her article Amanda Björkman questions what she calls a love story between the Left Wing and the identity politics. She questions the ongoing focus on who gets to speak rather on what is actually being said, or as she puts it: “what has been said and done is secondary”. Two thesis statements are presented and argued against:

T1: Identity politics regards the right of expression rather than action and actual opinions.

T2: Identity politics is liberal in its sense of being focused on opinions and actions.
Björkman uses the politician Soraya Post, and a documentary about her, as an example of this reasoning. Post, being the first Roma person to ever hold a position in the European parliament becomes a symbol for the possibilities that have arisen in Sweden during the last couple of years. At the same time her story show how badly the Swedish state has treated its Roma population in the history and its recent time. Björkman highlights an important notion namely the luxury of representing oneself. Symbolic actors have a privilege (sometimes along with an elite position) of being allowed space to talk about certain opinions, which doesn’t necessarily mean that they can or should represent the group they have joined (or been forced into). With Amanda Björkman’s perspective, Post can bring attention to the situation of the (different) Roma populations but not represent them. In the same way a woman in a management position cannot represent every woman in the business community, much less a political party cannot call itself equal just because it has a female party leader. The conclusive power of the argumentation is raised since she uses an actual elite person showing that the paradigm of redistribution is (in this case) more powerful than the paradigm of recognition. The sustainability of the argumentation is however slightly lowered since Björkman is not reflexive (showing her own power position). Further more it is lowered since she has some difficulty connecting the other symbolic actors (Kaplan and Bah Kuhnke) with the correct ideology, seeming to be uninformed or lacking of knowledge.

5.1.5 Analysis 5

Article: 5: “Amanda Björkman: Linderborg is right about identity politics ”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-09

Author: Amanda Björkman

The fifth article is also written by the journalist Amanda Björkman and can be seen as a response to Åsa Linderborg’s (see analysis 1) view on identity politics. Slightly surprised Björkman admits that she agrees with Linderborg, something that does not occur alot as
they can be found on the opposite side in the ideological landscape. Although they agree on a common “enemy”, they still have many differences.

**T1: Identity politics hinders certain power holders to be exposed to criticism.**

Not only can Björkman aim severe critique towards identity politics but also towards the **Left wing** in large – hitting two birds with one stone. The Left wings fixation of the **bodily** has cornered the debate; white men’s objections cannot be explained as anything else than offending and reasonably executed criticism towards a black female (Alice Bah Kuhnke) minister is believed to be **afro-phobia** or **misogyny**. However, Amanda Björkman seems to be a bit lost in her usage of concepts since she fails to describe the difference between **intersectionality** and identity politics. Which dimensions is she talking about, and how are they not being taken into consideration? It becomes especially confusing since she actually uses a form of intersectional analysis (although a simple one) stating that Bah Kuhnke can be examined. Bah Kuhnke is from a **liberal** perspective a feminist symbol (in the sense that she is female and in **power**) and therefore can be exposed to objective criticism. How the criticism sounds and in what way it is objective is not stated, and therefore not open for the reader to decide on. This lowers the total conclusive power.

**5.1.6 Analysis 6**

**Article: 6: “Judith Kiros: identity politics and Left Wing politics are not opposites”**

**Source:** Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-10

**Author:** Judith Kiros

Again a response to Åsa Linderborgs article (1) can be found; this time from the leftist journalist and anti racist Judith Kiros. It is yet again the **racialised identity politics** that is of focus, and this time the author discusses how solidarity can be used as a political tool in order to expose **power**.
T1: Identity politics and Left wing politics are not opposites.

T2: Feminism is an identity political method.

Kiros claims to be a part of the leftist, anti racist and feminist movement, which also happens to be the case with Linderborg; the Left wing seems to be able to hold both. Using these titles is certainly of importance; the one who is allowed represent the group can also define it. The context of Judith Kiros argumentation seem to be a sort of "either you are with us or against us"-rhetoric, where there is no room for discussion and even a slightly lack of knowledge leading up to making a mistake. She disguises this by using words such as openness and curiosity, but doesn’t really follow them. If the aim is to uphold the “Us versus Them”-rhetoric the greater polarisation that is made the better, and as Judith Kiros shows it is important to have the right companions (sounding much like the ones that she criticises for being superficial). The text is also asking for more practical work within the movements in order to broaden them. A solution is to recognise how structural oppression is reproduced and to see what visions and interests that coincide. How this is supposed to be done is not stated, i.e. there are no practical solutions presented. This lowers the conclusive power of the argumentation (although not lowering the sustainability or relevance). To ask everyone else to stop trivialising the issues and design concrete plans while at the same time not delivering any oneself is not moving the debate forward.

5.1.7 Analysis 7

Article: 7: “It is about power…”

Source: Expressen 2014-11-12

Author: Valerie Kyeyune Backström

The article is written by the writer Valerie Kyeyune Backström in response to Åsa Linderborgs contributions to the debate regarding identity politics (see analysis 1). In the article Kyeyune Backström aims to “do the Left wing a favour and try to move the
debate forward”. The Left wing is not only too broad, not addressing minorities needs, but also too narrow: only seeing to one groups needs (namely white privileged women and Tomas Ledin). Backström also sees a misuse of power from Linderborgs side, in her asymmetrical relation to Twitter-activists. Five (more or less) major theses statements can be found:

**T1: There are unequal relations between Twitter activists and renowned debaters in the cultural pages.**

**T2: The public is not interested in segregation.**

**T3: Identity politics is a politic that is not based on everyone, it can therefore help marginalised groups to gain more power.**

**T4: The proletariat in Sweden mostly consists of non-whites.**

**T5: Solidarity can never be based in emotions.**

The main argumentation of Valerie Kyeyune Backström is that since the Afroswedish population is the most marginalised group in society (for instance on the labour market and in housing segregation) all Left wing politics must be rearranged and directed to target this group. The identity political perspective in this case must separate Afroswedes from other racialised groups in order to be valid (experience of oppression must always be focused around a single axis of identity). The conclusion of the author's argumentation is that white, female, middle class feminists actively reproduce racism in order to gain power over racialised groups. This by only discussing emotional matters such as racist pastries and cartoons. Further more white people who “try” to be included in the anti-racist movement (by joining processions and manifestations) are actually reproducing racist actions. From an intersectional perspective this rhetoric becomes contradictory: media is supposed to highlight and be aware of the Afroswedish population, but only Afroswedish symbolic actors are suppose to discuss it. Unaware of it Kyeyune Backström, while arguing for it, actually argues against an identity political
perspective within the Left wing. This lowers the relevance, sustainability and conclusive power of the whole argumentation.

5.1.8 Analysis 8

Article: 8: “...and about rights”
Source: Expressen 2014-11-12
Author: Maria Ramnehill

This article can be seen as a second part to Valerie Kyeyune Backströms article “It is about power...” (Combined: It is about power and about rights). (Journalist) Maria Ramnehill aims to discuss how Linderborg takes on a derailed debate regarding identity politics within the Left wing and feminism (see analysis 1). Where Linderborg claims that the different ideologies cannot be intertwined, Ramnehill claims the opposite. The shared experiences of Åsa Linderborgs group of cultural context (in this context: heterosexual fertile cis-women) is according to Maria Ramnehill in direct opposition to her group (transgender women), and it is here the conflict begins. Another white cis-woman that Ramnehill argues with is the journalist and writer Kajsa Ekis Ekman, who in one of her books used an ignorant metaphor of trans, something that she has later been apologised for (although questioned). In the debate, Linderborg becomes a sort of advocate for Ekis Ekman.

T1 Kajsa Ekis Ekman is trans-phobic.

T2 The only real tool for power that transgender persons have is social media.

In the public sphere cis-women experiences salary discrimination, double work, and higher numbers of sickness leave. These experiences are shared with transgender-women in exactly the same way, which according to Ramnehill, Linderborgs fails to see in her article. Linderborg states that women with an innate vagina share 200 000 years of experiences regarding reproduction and double work; something that according to Ramnehill’s argumentation can be seen as trans-phobic - it is cis-sexism to say that an
innate vagina gives common experiences. Cis-women’s shared experiences of oppression are not important since there are more marginalised groups experiencing the same kind of oppression. It is important for the trans-activist movement to establish a clear “Us versus Them”-relation to everyone that might share certain experiences (while not sharing the specific axis of identity – in this case being transgender). Transgender persons only have social media as a channel for (gaining?) power, except when writing in one of the largest newspapers in Sweden. Is Ramnehill representing the transgender community or herself? Again, is the transgender community unitary (especially since it is a Left wing concept)? Can a white transgender person represent a non-white transgender person? Many questions arise when the argumentation is built only on normative thesis statements; one needs to back up opinions by some factual arguments otherwise the sustainability is lowered. However, this does say that the conclusive power cannot be high, emotional arguments can be incredibly powerful.

5.1.9 Analysis 9

Article: 9: “Nina Björk: No power is greater than the economical power”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-12

Author: Nina Björk

In the text Björk reasons around two concepts exemplifying how inequality takes its form in regard of skin colour, gender, class background, sexuality, appearance and body functionality: “the power to” and the “power over”. The confrontation in the text can be found in the criticism of identity politics, how it can only solve the problem with the “power to”. The “power to” can be seen as the individuals chances to advance in the society (find it easier to get a residence, to get a job, to o a class journey). It is based on his/her skin colour, gender, class background, sexuality, appearance, and body functionality. The “power over” can be seen as the driving forces in a system: Who controls the housings, the jobs, the production, the economical resources, the media channels and the state apparatus? These two concepts or ideas are used in order to give strength to two thesis statements:
T1: Economical power is the greatest.

T2: If the goal of the Left wing is a socialist society there is an opposition between identity politics and the Left wing.

If the goal of the Left wing politics is every human equal opportunities to advance within the current society, the goal of free social movement within an extant hierarchy, the argumentation of Kiros becomes the opposite to the leftist idea (sounding much like several of the symbolic actors speaking for the liberal side of the debate). It is a clear example of the intersectional analysis. Depending on the context a white heterosexual man/woman can loose his/her “power over” (loss of social and/or cultural power) and thus be oppressed. This does not, in any way, argue that there isn’t a white norm in society, just that a generalisation that all whites, all men or all heterosexuals are in power over their own social advancement (or being targeted with guilt by association). That the system would change just because new identities take place in an already existing capitalistic system is the bottom line of this argumentation, and here is the clash between the advocates of identity politics the largest.

The first tes (T1) of the argumentation holds little to none sustainability without for that matter losing relevance. Power is highly relevant to these sorts of discussions. However, the arguments for this sort of tes are too few and don’t take the other sorts of power into consideration (a more ingoing discussion on for instance white norms or other social injustices could have raised the conclusive power).

The second tes (T2) holds ground since it both is relevant, has a moderate sustainability and conclusive power (in the sense that it follows the whole thought process from idea to conceptualisation).
5.1.10 Analysis 10

**Article: 10: “The leftists fighting internally need the liberal heritage”**

**Source:** Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-18

**Author:** Erik Wijk

The article locates itself between Åsa Linderborgs article on politically correctness (see analysis 1) and Judith Kiros defense of identity politics (see analysis 6). Where Wijk welcomes Kiros thoughts on the **Left wing**, he doesn’t agree on the solution. Instead Wijk asks for solutions within the classical **liberal** ideas (but not the liberal party politics). It can be seen as paradox that a debater with a leftist profile is urging the Left wing to embrace liberal ideas. What he actually states is that the movement has a heritage (of **universalism**), and can therefore actually challenge the ownership of the concept. Two major thesis statements can be found:

**T1: The Left wings basic behaviour is based on a contentious representation fixation.**

**T2: The concept of Universalism should be taken back from the liberals.**

The main disagreement between the **essentialist** identity politics that Kiros represents and this proposed Universalist Left wing that Wijk argues for is that the first tends to fight for a certain group as a part of everyone’s war on all; that **oppression** is absolute and something that can be monopolised for oneself or the own group. This would, according to Wijk, result in a fight where violence and revenge becomes just as natural as in the Old Testament, the White House or the Islamic State. From an identity political perspective it is better to condemn an innocent rather than to let a **traitor** go free. If others in the movement are marked as racists, misogynists or homophobes their chances of being spokespersons for the movement is reduced. At the same time symbolic actors arguing for a more individually based analysis can be marked as liberals. The debate in itself tests the first thesis statement (T1) and proves it. The second thesis
statement (T2) holds several arguments that hold a high conclusive power but isn’t relevant to the thesis statement.

The conclusion is that identity politics can be used to highlight injustices and problematise a movement but in itself doesn’t have solutions since individual’s ideologies are not based on their identities. Wijk also highlights that using the term Left wing is highly problematic since it does include a vast amount of groups and individuals.

5.1.11 Analysis 11

Article: 11: “Judith Kiros: Identity politics is about surviving”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-20

Author: Judith Kiros

The article is a response to Nina Björks article (see analysis 9) on identity politics. The confrontation can be seen in Kiros claiming that Björk has misunderstood the concept of identity politics. Kiros agrees with Björk that a white cis-man necessarily doesn’t have any “power over”, which contradicts her identity political argumentation (white cis-men can never be oppressed since they are not marginalised, and can only be equal to marginalised groups when their identity is dissolved). In the text Kiros discusses how Left wing politics and identity politics can be intertwined, the argumentation is built around the capitalist patriarchy in which systems of oppression is institutionalised.

T1: A socialist identity politics’ long-term goal is to dissolve the importance of identity.

T2: Identity politics is not only about social mobility, but also about survival.
If **equal rights** are given to everyone the **capitalistic liberal system** is only maintained. Furthermore identity politics is not only about **social mobility** (the groups increased social, and cultural power) but also about **surviving**. No other philosophical, ideological or political movements are about surviving, and thus are opening up for systemic and personal violence on all marginalised groups. This includes **Feministiskt Initiativ**, who is in opposition to Kiros movement (**red anti-racists** and **feminists**). In the end Kiros asks for several different things. Firstly she argues that the discussion should be more practical, in the way that the tools and methods of identity politics are not clear. This is arguably an answer that should come from Kiros herself since she (unlike the opponent of the argumentation, Björk) is an advocate of identity politics, but it also exemplifies the actual debate and the conflict of interests; it is still not agreed upon that identity politics is something that the Left wing should be involved in (thus an identity political discussion cannot take place). How the identity political movement supposes to find “**allies**” is difficult when even a socialist, feminist and anti racist party such as Feministiskt Initiativ is not accepted, and this may be a question that the proposed debate should examine. There is a contradiction between the text and Kiros previous article (see analysis 6), since she in the latter claims that feminism (although not stating what sort of orientation) is an identity political method, whilst she in the current argumentation states that identity politics is not ideological in itself. This lowers the sustainability of the argumentation but only if it is not valued in itself. The first tes (T1) holds a high level of sustainability since it only describes the long-term goal of a socialist identity politics, not specifically how. The relevance therefore is not as high. A strong argument against the tes is also that the tes is based on an assumption that the only political ideology that can end oppression is socialism. If all people would believe this there would be no need for democratic elections, no wars or other conflicts. Furthermore there is always an uncertainty with philosophical normative thesis statement that is presented as factual ones. Therefor the argumentation holds a weak conclusive power.
Article: 12: “Moa Matthis: Not only the Left Wing has a bloody history of double entry”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-12-10

Author: Moa Matthis

The main concept of Matthis’ article revolves around the creation of “Us” and “All” (or everyone), and how both the Left and Right wing uses these universal categories to include and favour some groups. Where the liberals have used identity politics to defend slave trade, the Left wing has used it to defend injustice to women. Matthis’ argumentation becomes a bridge between Kiros and Wijks articles. Two main arguments can be found in the text:

T1: Both the Left and Right wing have a history of building structural oppression.

T2: Identity politics can highlight oppression but not end it.

Matthis argumentation concludes that the society’s function is that moral and ethical driving forces exist, and how they affect the outcome of equality and justice. Neither the political Left wing or Right wing have a clean record on dealing with injustices since moral and ethics have been defined after the bodies of that time. This gives strength to the first thesis statement (T1), especially since Matthis shows historical examples. On the contrary Matthis argues that it divides groups and upholds systems of oppression. Men and women must unite to get past inequality. This argumentation tests and gives strength to the second thesis statement (T2) since both very precise examples are given (presented by prominent scholars, i.e. an authority argument), as well as a sign argument.

The identity politics can for instance help working class women gang up, but it can also be used for ethnical Swedes to organise themselves into a nationalistic party. Further more identity politics lacks the tools for finding common experiences of injustice since the focus is always on what separates rather than what unites. This sort of text puts the
reader to the “academic” test; not only should the reader be familiar with terms such as “postmodern identity politics”, the different versions of the Marxist philosophical tradition and realpolitik (and how it can take on “the” Marxist theory), but also the theories of Aristotle. The debate also demands that the reader actually reads the other symbolic actors texts (sometimes several articles from each).

5.1.13 Analysis 13

Article: 13: “Yoav Bartal: Identity politics is building walls within Sweden”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-27

Author: Yoav Bartal

The text and its argumentation revolve around a conflict between the liberal Yoav Bartal and the advocates of identity politics, including Judith Kiros (see analysis 11) and the Left wing, the racialised identity politics, and Sverigedemokraterna. Bartal argues that a continued identity political progress might risk the nation and bring it back to a sort of communist Iron curtain mental wall.

T1: If we accept identity politics and the special treatment we risk giving up the ambition of Sweden as a common and including project.

T2: Identity politics and Sverigedemokraterna structure their ideologies around the same maxim of unequal rights.

An interesting aspect of Bartals argumentation is the absent definition of “us” while there is a great emphasise on the “them”. While being meticulous in his explanation of how racists and other advocates of identity politics function and are, he uses a vague “we” when talking about himself and his ideological fellows (the Liberals). The “racialised” identity politics and how this concept is used as a strategy for income is the focus main argument of the text. The reasoning seems to come back to one underlying meaning: that all identities and included statuses are selectable. Immigrants choose be segregated. “Racialised” advocates of identity politics are lazy
and irresponsible. Again the others (from the liberals) are brought to the agenda. Identity politicians such as Judith Kiros and her Left sing comrades are too lazy about our children, they don’t vote, work or pay taxes. The argumentation does not provide any facts or statistics about these claims and no references. This lowers the sustainability of the argumentation vastly. The principle that every human is unique and possesses its own value outside of the group is not a unique view of Bartal, and is shared by others. For instance liberal feminists see the individual woman, working hard, as an example of how women can be successful regardless of the surrounding functions. Here the differences between the more collectivistic ideologies and the individual-based ideologies are clear.

5.1.14 Analysis 14

Article: 14: “Solidarity beats identity”

Source: Aftonbladet 2014-12-03

Author: Åsa Lindeborg

The second article written by Linderborg is an answer to several of the other articles (that together form the material), including Judith Kiros (analysis 6,11), Ramnehill (8), Kyeyune Backström (7), Bartal (13), Matthis (12). She agrees with other actors such as Björk (9), and Wijk (10). While the main argumentation of many other articles has been proving ones own ideas and views, this article aims to prove other arguments wrong, namely that:

T1 The goal justifies the means

T2 The Left Wing is prejudiced.

Three different topics or areas of discussion can be found: Transgender & social media activists, the Left wing, and lastly how racialised persons take place in the Left wing. These topics are rooted in the identity politics debate. Since the different symbolic actors (from both sides) do not share a definition of the concept it can be hard for the
reader to follow the argumentation. This is why identity politics, as a radical process, is
difficult to apply to the Left wing (socialist) movement. Its categorical mechanism
hinders a socialist (and with all its ideological branches reaching for the same goal)
strategy to deconstruct the class hegemony. Linderborg exemplifies this by pointing out
these liberal (or individualistic) factors that can also be seen in the example of Bartals
(claimed) liberal hegemony; this shows how identity politics create conflicts between
groups from both the paradigm of redistribution and the paradigm of recognition. What
Linderborg questions is if anything is justifiable in order to give the oppressed minority
more power. In her rhetoric she uses the hate and threats towards her fellow colleague
Kajsa Ekis Ekman, which has been persecuted for her book Varat och varan (2010-
2011), where she used the wrong terms when describing transgender persons. As a
normative thesis statement, the first thesis statement (T1) has a lower sustainability
since it does not include any authoritative arguments but is high on relevance since she
uses actual examples (both sign arguments and example argument) to show what the
consequences of identity political methods looks like. The second thesis statement (T2)
revolves around the issue of who gets to define and represent the Left wing. As can be
seen in the analysis, this is an ideological term with vastly different descriptions
depending on whom one asks. This lowers the conclusive power since it becomes
difficult to argue against or for something that is not clearly defined; the Left wing is a
complex group to generalise around.

5.1.15 Analysis 15

Article: 15: “Identity politics is a well-fare disease”

Source: Svenska Dagbladet Kultur 2014-12-27

Author: Thomas Engström

A couple of days before New Years Eve 2014, Thomas Engström (journalist at SvD) looks
back at the identity politics debate among the Swedish media elite. The critique that the
author has against identity politics is harsh. Not only are identity politics and its
followers shallow and at the same time difficult, but also a hopeless case of arrogant
and immature behaviour (even animalistic) amongst young people without any real life experience. The whole existence of identity politics is even questioned.

**T1: Identity politics is a well-fare disease.**

Engström argues that there is no relation between certain individuals’ special positions and the Right wing ideologies. Further more Engström argues that liberalism can be thanked for democracy, the Swedish legal system, equality (including anti-racism and feminism?) and free trade.

**T2: Liberalism is the answer to all problems in society.**

To summarise the argumentation, Engström states that anything else than liberalism is a childish and hopeless struggle to be something that can only be considered as the lowest artistic expression known to mankind - for instance the Left wing and identity politics.

It all comes down to the last few sentences in the text; one can try to belong to a group (based on identity?) but it is not a human right (instead it is the human’s sacred right). What the difference is between universal human rights and this sacred right is not stated. But what does this mean? Does liberalism allow people to achieve riches, and thus change class group? Can a cis-person be allowed to leave the heteronormative state of always being considered as a heterosexual? Should a transgender person “try” to become complete? Or are all of these sacred attempts animalistic and immature attempts to flounder in the “wrong” direction (to use Engströms own description of everything that is not liberalism)? The first thesis statement (T1) hold little relevance if analysed from a collective perspective since it is focused on the individual. Moreover the conclusive power of the whole argumentation is not increased by the fact that the second thesis statement is normative and lacks in amount of example arguments.
5.2 Result

5.2.1 Whose discourse is presented in the identity politics debate?

As can be seen in both theories regarding journalism and the previous research, the “typical” journalist has changed over time. The current study shows signs of this as well. In some cases the symbolic actor not only has a professional background as a journalist but also in science: Åsa Linderborg being a PhD of Philosophy and the editor in chief of Aftonbladets’ culture pages, while both Amanda Björkman and Judith Kiros have bachelors (Björkman in Political science, Kiros in Literary science). Some symbolic actors are given space in media because of their actual knowledge in certain fields such as Per Bauhn who has a PhD in practical Philosophy. Another expert that is often given space in media is the literary critic (functioning within the culture pages), in this case Kiros, Björk (also being a journalist), Matthis and Engström. Only one of these symbolic actors within the material has his background in politics, namely Yoav Bartal. All of these titles are not stated within the material but were found checking various sources such as the newspapers’ websites, Linkedin.com, and Wikipedia.org. As mentioned above, there is always a need for the reader to have certain knowledge about not only topics and events but also about the social actors. Some facts are not always possible to find (without actually asking the symbolic actor directly), for instance age, sexuality, origin of race and ethnicity, civil status etc.

Nine out of the twelve symbolic actors are white (Caucasian) while three are racialised (not stated which race they are). Seven of them are women. The material in itself also points at other sources where members of marginalised groups becomes symbolic actors: including Kawa Zolfagary (analysis 14), Chela Sandoval (analysis 3), Mehmet Kaplan (analysis 4), Alice Bah Kuhnke (analysis 7), Athena Farrokhzad (analysis 11), Aleksa Lundberg (analysis 14), Malcome Kyeyune (14), Roya Hakimnia and Arash Hakimnia (analysis 14), to name some.
The result creates several questions, for instance if the topic determines which type of symbolic actor that is allowed to be heard. Are some symbolic actors invisible in other debates?

5.2.2 How is it presented in terms of argumentative style?

Since identity politics as a concept revolves around the individual and his/her experienced oppression the argumentation often springs out of the example argument-category and the cause argument-category. The cause argument indicating the cause of an experience (e.g. Afrosvedes are segregated) is reinforced by an example argument (Afrosvedes more often lives in suburbs, rental flats and are the least educated). Furthermore, there is an overall usage of normative thesis statements, especially when discussing how identity politics functions or how different political ideologies take form. Discussing concepts such as authority consciousness, “safe rooms”, identity or experiences, it is difficult to construct factual arguments. What is real for someone might be the complete opposite to another.

In several cases others thesis statements are turned into the argumentation of a symbolic actor; in both the texts from Linderborg (analysis 1 & 14) this tactic can be found, but also in the article by Björkman (analysis 4). This sort of argumentation is built on powerful analogy arguments (drawing parables from other contexts) but also rule arguments. “The goal justifies the means” (analysis 14) for instance is a thesis statement coming from Ramnehills attack on Ekis Ekman (8), which Linderborg argues against in order to prove it wrong, i.e. it is not Linderborg who argues that this sort of rule argument (in the sense that it takes of in a moral codex) should be valid.

As can be seen, mentioning of other symbolic actors is a rather common rhetorical tool. Referring to other actors from the same movement can emphasise ones arguments and vice versa. Further more, one can use other actor’s texts as a starting point for a further argumentation. This rhetorical method is highly dependent on implications; both explicated but also the ones left out. Note how Linderborg points out in her text how other actors have used these tools (for example “It is probably difficult for Ekis,
understands Aleksa Lundberg” see analysis 14). The word probably has a facetious or sarcastic meaning behind it in an attempt to discredit Ekis Ekman (and Aleksa Lundberg probably has an agenda for choosing those words). It is not strange that Linderborg defends Ekis Ekman since they both belong to the same group (white, middle class, female feminists). The author also uses other symbolic actors to emphasise or draw the definition of a concept towards a certain direction. For example Linderborg mentions Gudrun Schyman (the party leader of Feministiskt Initiative) as an argument that identity politics is not compatible with the leftist movement.

Easy to say, the debate is complex and sometimes hard to follow, especially since every individual symbolic actor seems to have his/her own definition of every concept. This will be discussed later on.

5.2.3 What concepts are being used in the discourse?

As can be seen in several of the analyses, there is often a sort of meta debate regarding what concepts mean and who has the right to possess it. One of these is the concept of Left wing. Valerie Kyeyune Backström argues that the Swedish proletariat should be divided from the Left wing (analysis 7), Björkman talks about the “New leftist” and its identity politics (analysis 5). The Left wing can be divided into an older Marxist group and a younger identity political one (analysis 10), and at the same time the Left wing has more or less socialist parties, where Feministiskt initiativ is heavily criticised by Kiros (analysis 11). Evidently the reader must possess knowledge in several academic fields including political science, philosophy and history. While Moa Matthis uses concepts including “postmodern identity politics”, Marxist idea tradition, and realpolitik, she at the same time argues that one cannot separate “prejudice culture” from structured oppression, hoping the reader is aware of the difference (analysis 12).

At the same time there seems to be an internal struggle within the “Left wing” regarding how use the term solidarity, and not only between the leftist symbolic actors rejecting identity politics and advocates for it, but also in between the latter group. The spokesperson for the racialised identity politics Kyeyune Backström argues that
emotion and solidarity are only expressions of racism, while the spokesperson for the racialised identity politics Judith Kiros states that emotion and solidarity is what connects the Left wing with identity politics.

The liberal (or Right wing, or conservative, or non-leftist) symbolic actors use this internal struggle to not only deliver critique towards identity politics but also towards the whole Left wing (see analysis 4,5,13,15). This raises the sustainability of Matthiis argumentation revolving around the fear that the Left wing arguably might feel for the clash within it (analysis 12).

The principle that every human is unique and possesses its own value outside of the group is not a unique view of Bartal (see analysis 7), but shared by other liberal symbolic actors such as Thomas Engström (analysis 6). They also come together in believing that identity politics threatens this principle. What is problematic is that this liberal discourse sounds similar to several of the advocates of identity politics like Kyeyune Backström (analysis 7): “A politic that isn’t based on everyone, and especially not the most marginalised ones interest, rather solely the own group. It sounds shallow and un-solidarity. And kind of liberal.” It is this universalism Wijk calls for in analysis 10, becoming a bridge, or middle ground between not only the opposite sides within the Left wing but also between it and the liberals.

It is not easy to follow the codex when mixed messages are given, something that can have devastating consequences for other symbolic actors such as Kajsa Ekis Ekman, Åsa Linderborg or even Tomas Ledin. Backström and Kiros both use the Afro-phobia report in their argumentation in order to promote (or defend) identity politics as a concept. While being angry that no one has read this academic report (the fact that there are many academic texts produced each year is not taken into consideration), they actually produce a form of attack on the concept of racialisation, although unintended. The authors of the report argue that Afro-phobia, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and antiziganism should be separated, since each category has its own history and its own logic. What it does is that the reasoning actually fits the identity political perspective (even though it also happens to be unintended). It argues that each category (of non-white persons) should come together around a single axis of identity (their specific own
history and logic). Thus it becomes very difficult to discuss a form of racialised movement while using the identity political perspective. When reading the report the picture becomes quite different – it becomes more and more obvious that the symbolic actors Backström (analysis 7) and Kiros (analysis 6) use the report in a way that matches their own agenda. Just like the conflict between Afroswedish immigrants and MENA-immigrants, the individual becomes forced into conflict between choosing different identities (for instance between being black or Hispanic etc.). What the report actually calls for is an intersectional perspective where more axes are taken into consideration. It also recommends manifestos (which is banned in the identity political perspective). The argumentation of Nathan Hamelberg (analysis 3) makes the discussion easier to follow since he uses affinity politics, in which a person can have several different identities without being forced to choose (in contrary to what happens in the identity political perspective).

Everyone seems to claim the reward of being the true and only real power against racism (see analysis 1,2,6,7), and at the same time consensus seem to be fruitless to strive towards if one wants to be published in an editorial (unless it is incredibly sensational as Björkman agreeing with Linderborg, see analysis 5).

5.2.4 What underlying meaning does concepts within the identity politics debate have?

Similar critique towards identity politics and how it actually handles critique can be found all over the political landscape; both from Åsa Linderborg (analysis 1) at the Left wing, to Thomas Engström (analysis 15) at the far side of the Right wing. Linderborg questions identity politics impact on the relatively new and open party Feministiskt initiativ, a critique that also stems from her enemy Judith Kiros (analysis 11). Further more Åsa Linderborg agrees with some symbolic actors (like Eric Rosén) that identity politics is misogynist. Linderborg points out that it is only female journalists being targeted by the identity politic actors (Analysis 1). By adding race, ethnicity, class, religion and education etc. the groups become even more complex. By narrowing the variables for a group, one also narrows the potential spokespersons for it.
It is one thing to demand to be recognised as equally valued as any other group in society. However this does not mean that other groups have to accept a minority’s ideological perspective. It is here the critique towards identity politics lies: it creates small and narrow-minded groups, which have no problem when it comes to burn-marking opponents. Using identity politics becomes a method for many groups (including trans-activists, racialised Left wing, and racists) to set new agendas, raising their voices, or silencing opponents; or in other words “Damned if you do, damned if you don’t”. By performing this “agenda-setting” and equal sign is put between identity and ideology (e.g. transgender= leftist, racialised = radical feminist etc.). It seems that it is often the issue of who and why something is discussed rather than how or when. How can identity politics open up for more bodies, and what happens when this is achieved?

5.3 Critical Discussion

5.3.1 Race and Ethnicity

As can be seen in several of the texts it is rather confusing to discuss low-status ethnic groups from an identity political perspective; who is supposed to be included into the group and by whom? It calls for hegemony within the group and therefore also a show of strength (power valuation) from its symbolic actors. Do the radical groups within the identity politics, with their separatism, help or hinder the equality debate? The scholar Roya Hakimnia and journalist Arash Hakimnia (2014, mentioned in analysis 14) have witnessed about how they, as critics of identity politics, have been questioned by other racialised groups. This since Hakimnia and Hakimnia belong to the group of MENA-immigrants (Middle Eastern & North African immigrants), and therefore cannot share or even imagine the oppression that other racialised individuals experience (internationalen.se 12/11 2014). The philosophy professor Per Bauhn (analysis 2) brings a scholarly perspective into this, where he highlights how the misuse of identity politics can lead to this sort of special treatment of certain groups. Nathan Hamelberg (analysis 3) also questions this separatist outcome of identity politics by arguing for other processes of group building. The term racialised is being used to give power to the minority of “non-white” citizens by expanding the group. This construction of movement
brings, however, a complex situation to deal with. Firstly, it does not take age into consideration. When claiming that the experiences of all non-white persons are the same (in term of oppression), how is one sure that someone is not getting neglected? Is the experience of a 19-year-old Muslim girl the same as a 75-year-old woman from China? Do Caucasian immigrants from Greece position themselves on the same level in the oppression hierarchy as an immigrant from Afghanistan? More importantly for this study, who gets to represent the vastly polarised movement of racialised in media? As Patricia Collin Hills (1990) mentions: “Privilege becomes defined in relation to its other”.

5.3.2 Symbolic Actors

A result of moving academic discussions into the “public” media space can be that generalisations and trivialisations become standard. Often the journalist (and more often an other symbolic actor) must have an opinion without really having the knowledge of the concepts real meaning. In the analyses this can be exemplified in the way that feminism as a term is used broadly. That feminism in itself would be an identity political method is scientifically incorrect and shows of how symbolic actors tend to “high jack” concepts for their own agenda or purpose. Just like different movements have internal “battles” in whereas they should strive towards a paradigm of redistribution or recognition, there is also a struggle between universalism and essentialism. To say that identity politics is “liberal”, “leftist” or any other conscious ideologies is therefor a badly formulated question; it is a concept of philosophical ideas rather than political.

It is difficult to connect a symbolic actor with a certain group and be sure that there is a mutual agreement of representation. Symbolic actors in themselves are bodies of representation, both physically and mentally. As could be seen in the literature review, and especially in the previous research conducted by Flyger (2013), the definition as well as the view of diversity is very dependent on society and culture (e.g. context). This also goes for identity politics and its relationship with other ideologies. As can be seen in several of the analyses, identity politics forces ideologies and movements to categorise themselves. For instance it becomes impossible to talk about a Left wing or feminism;
rather one must talk about minor groups with specialised agendas (for example analysis 8 where Ramnehill separates the trans-gender women from trans-gender men). This is not depending on differences in views or ideas (as presented in earlier); it is variables such as gender, sex, race, ethnicity and sexuality that are of concern.

While some actors like Ramnehill, Linderborg and Kyeyune Backström focus on speaking out on each other discussing who gets to speak about issues, other actors like Bauhn and Hamelberg lack the inter-communicational interest. The focus thus is lifted from actual actors and lands on the actual topic or subject. Why the journalists have such an urge to create conflict might be hard to answer but it is still an interesting observation, and might have something to do with the constant need to be “edgy” and provocative (due to the sensationalist rules of journalism). It seems to be more interesting to call out on individual symbolic actors rather than to discuss the real issues.

5.3.3 Identity Politics versus Intersectionality

From an intersectional perspective the multiplicative categorisation that the identity politics perform becomes irrational. The combined experiences resulting into one type of identity deconstructs the proposed master group. The identity politic rejects the whole notion of a master group since it focus on the individual experience rather than a shared one. In other words: identity politics is a process in which oppression is hierarchical, while intersectionality is a process where oppression is linear. The imagined goal of creating alliances that some symbolic actors call for (see analysis 6,11) becomes difficult within the identity politics. As can be seen in the result, the critics against this identity political hierarchy are joining from vastly different sides of the political, philosophical and idea-based landscape (see analysis 2,3,5,10,12,13,14,15).

This doesn't mean that they have a common solution, rather that they share (some) similar goals. Is the hidden goal of the debate to cement the separatism, rather than to find common ways to hinder the spread of trans-phobia, homophobia and racism?

One could argue that there is no need to possess credibility in form of having an academic expertise when having the identity representation.
As could be seen in the second analysis (2), it is not always (or at all) agreed upon how one should use the concepts of identity politics, but more importantly that it is rarely the case that one can find a juxtaposition between two groups claimed identity political categorisation. Here the liberal hegemony can be used as an example. There seem to be a large group of (mostly) white persons (from both genders) that share experiences of oppression. This oppression can be built on a feeling of a much to heavy tax burden, a violation of the individual rights (to consume narcotics or to engage in prostitution) or to become a parent. The latter example is not purely owned by the (outspoken) liberals but shared by “leftists” from the LGBT-movement (see DN.se 13/6 2014). Surrogacy is a common issue for the otherwise so rival groups of gay people and liberal heterosexual women; the first not being able to become parents without medical help (insemination) or being hindered to adopt by the society, and the latter arguing that being able to become a parent is greater than the safety of a woman body (with the risks of childbirth etc.).

Are symbolic actors are given the power to construct a discourse that is considered to be the “unbiased” true reality? They arguably seem to see it that way themselves. If the readers see it that way is another question.

5.4 Further research

Does the topic decide who is allowed to speak up in the debate? If a similar study were going to be conducted on a material revolving around another topic, would the symbolic actors be different? Probably, but more interestingly, what features would they share? The surrogacy debate can be a possible area to unravel, especially (which can be seen in the current thesis) since this is one of the issues where the difference of opinion seem to not only be between the opposite sides in the political landscape, but also within groups. Another issue that a further study could be interested in is which role the producer has in the debate. What factors determine how symbolic actors are “chosen” (by gatekeepers), what topics should be on debate, and in which tone? More symbolic actors can be found within new debates if the material where to be collected from more niche sources (see for example politism.se, internationlen.se, or timbro.se).
A third possible focus would be to interview symbolic actors in order to unravel how they view themselves and how they identify their position within the debate.
6 Reference List


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Nationalencyklopedin, hen,

Nationalencyklopedin, cis-person,


Appendix 1

Analysis 1

Article: 1: “It damn well better be politically correct”

Source: Aftonbladet 2014-11-07

Author: Åsa Linderborg

T1: To be politically correct is to be a democrat and a humanist.

P1: rule argument: Politically correct persons believe in every human’s equal value and opportunity regardless of gender, ethnicity, race, sexuality, or disability.

T2: Politically correctness is in a complex relation to Freedom of speech.

P1: cause argument: Political correctness is shared by different ideologies in the political landscape.

F1,P1: cause argument: Class is for instance a variable that is hard to include into Political correctness since it stands in contradiction to liberalism.

P2: consequence argument: While respecting the freedom of speech, it also aims to always have good intention in mind.

F1,P2: example argument: This highly depends on a mutual consensus that all humans have prejudices and that these come from lack of knowledge.

A1,F1,P2: sign argument: In order to have this mutual consensus one needs to be able to realise ones own prejudices and be able to apologise and learn from mistakes.

T3: The radical transgender movement is upholding an authority consciousness.

P1: cause argument: Identity politics is radical in the way that it never judges people outside of the group fairly or with good intentions.
F1,P1: example argument: There is a belief that no trans-phobic expressions can never come out of lack of knowledge.

F2,P1: rule argument: trans-phobic expressions can never be apologised for. A person uttering trans-phobic expressions is always considered to be trans-phobic thus it is an unalterable status.

F3,P1: consequence argument: Any organisations booking, contacting, or who does not distance themselves from an actor with the unalterable status of being trans-phobic is also upholding trans-phobic structures.

F1,F3,P1: cause argument: Examples of this is organisations booking Kajsa Ekis Ekman, including: Socialist Doctors, The Left Party, Feministiskt initiativ, RFSL, and ETC.

P2: rule argument: The issue of representation is superior to ideology and class.

A1,P2: cause argument: Not all individuals within an identity political group strive in the same direction.

C1: analogy argument: It is difficult to talk about such an organisation since it is very loosely put together without any clear symbolic actors.

A1,C1: sign argument: On social media, marginalised groups finds tools of carrying out radical actions, such as bullying, discrediting, bantering or threats.

F1,A1,C1: example argument: The persecution of Kajsa Ekis Ekman and Nina Björk are examples of this.

C2: example argument: Not all members within a group act the same way, or have the same ideological, political or other socio-economical motives.

Confrontation stage

Åsa Linderborg has three major points to make in this article. Firstly how the concept of politically correctness is being high-jacked by different groups becoming a sort of authority consciousness. Secondly she discusses identity politics, how it functions and how it is operationalised by some groups. Thirdly Linderborg evolve on to the similarities that she finds between identity politics and liberalism. These three topics all revolve around how the debate has derailed and how some groups defend themselves from criticism.
Opening stage

Åsa Linderborg states that her ideological standpoint takes of in a “strive to work for every human’s equal value and opportunity” (11) or politically correctness. She early questions her own prejudices and the different ideological contradictions that might occur within this concept of politically correctness (15,22,23,24,26). Furthermore her ideological beliefs can be found in the Left wing and therefore includes the concept of class into her analysis. This will, as mentioned before, put her in an opposing position with liberalism.

Argumentation stage

The proposed authority consciousness is argued to be leading to persecution, which is exemplified by the case of Kajsa Ekis Ekman (35,36,37). Kajsa Ekis Ekman has done wrong, she has understood her misdoing and she has apologised for it (even though it has not been accepted by some symbolic actors). People are prejudiced (122) but people can also change since these prejudices are built on lack of knowledge (39), and sometimes people meant well but used the wrong terms (29), like the case of Maria Sveland (46) and Liv Strömquist (101). An outcome of this sort of boycotting is of course that the small group of transgender persons and feminists takes an active distance from the organisations like socialist doctors, The Left Party, Fi (Feministiskt Initiativ), RFSL (The Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights) creating the goal, which is the “safe room” (51,54); an effective method to quite down opponents, but also a method to achieve separatism. Since advocates of identity politics have their own group's agenda as the top (and only) priority, it becomes impossible for other groups to have their own agenda. Cis-women cannot discuss perinatal health care (98), the taboo of the vagina (101) or shared experiences of discrimination since other more marginalised groups already have claimed these experiences (62,63,141,143). Two strong arguments that Åsa Linderborg presents against the concept of identity politics is also that some loose groups have certain complexities within them, for example the LGBT-movement (72). Identity politics covers up the ideological contradictions, another
example is that not all black persons strive in the same direction and doesn't have the same socio economical interests (143).

**Conclusion stage**

The conclusion of Åsa Linderborg’s argumentation ends in a sort of pledge for an openness where good intentions aren’t immediately dismissed as for instance racism or trans-phobia. This can also be seen in the infected relationship between different symbolic actors in the Left wing, especially whether or not the movement should remove gender equality fight from its agenda (116). Secondly she questions the radical identity political tactics that some of its advocates are using: “*But the one demanding that an opponent should be excluded from the social community or shouts for a professional ban can never be believable when hen is talking warmly of human rights*.”

In several places Åsa Linderborg is reflexive in her reasoning, this in sense of her own identity (as a white leftist, see section 219), but also in how her text can be misunderstood and therefor also minimising this (222). In all of her three different main arguments, that politically correctness tends to become authoring. Although her arguments are highly relevant to the discussion, some have a slightly lower sustainability – it is often talking about nameless groups or actors. This however doesn’t make the argumentation less powerful, especially since she meets the opponents (so to speak) in the middle by following the maxim of “never talk about us. Talk with us. NEVER talk for us.” Anonymousness is both an advantage and a disadvantage. Marginalised groups can come together without risks, both in sharing experiences but also to put pressure to other actors. The latter can be seen as problematic since it can lead to (which is shown in this article) persecution, bantering or threats (ostracism, McCarthyism, Stalinism). So can these radical tactics be justified because of the marginalised groups position? Åsa Linderborg’s answer must be seen as a clear no.
Analysis 2

Article: 2: “Old injustices in a new version.”

Source: SvD Kultur 2014-06-16

Author: Per Bauhn

T1: Identity politics can be of good and contributed to furthering our democracy.

P1: example argument: Identity politics is all about creating the experience among individuals that their most important interests coincide with a certain group belonging.

F1,P1: cause argument: They all can use identity arguments to mobilize supporters.

P2: analogy argument: In both the French and American Revolution, marginalised groups came together to achieve human rights.

F1,P2: analogy argument: In the US, the fight against slavery as well as the Civil Rights movement could seek support in the definitions of human rights that were a part of building the nation

A1,P2: cause argument: But the purpose is then to include rather than to exclude, and to create conditions of a common political freedom. If a group excludes others (exert separatism), the result leads to injustice.

C1: consequence argument: But if citizens together can exercise a common responsibility for a society, they need to understand each other.

C2: example argument: Other factors than identity politics benefited to democracy.

F1,C2: rule argument: Solidarity and universal human rights where driving factors rather than specific identities coming together.

T2: Identity politics can create injustice.

P1: cause argument: The identity thinking can become morally problematic when it isn’t put in relation to universal human values.

P2: sign argument: If it is used to give power and space to just one specific group, a new version of old injustices will arise.

F1,P2: analogy argument: Through out history, nationalists, racists and fascists have all used identity politics to gain more power for one own group.
F1,F1,P2: sign argument: If a group is then oppressed within a society, it can never be given *more* power than its equals.

F2,P2: consequence argument: Discriminating men in order for women to gain more power leads to injustice and hinders human rights.

F3,P2: cause argument: Actual or imaginary injustices are exploited by groups that demand compensation from other groups,

P3: sign argument: Special rights for certain groups will generate division and conflict.

F1,P3: sign argument: When universal ideals are removed, people are deprived of motive and reasons to reach out across group boarders.

**T3: Identity political groups or movements are unison in their belief systems.**

P1: example argument: Identity is complete equality. If A is identic with B, everything true about A is true to B. Identity politics is all about creating the experience of individuals.

C1: example argument: The interests of individuals are not logically identical with a certain group's interests.

F1,C1: example argument: Individuals constitute an identity that blends with a variety of properties, not only by gender and ethnicity.

C2: example argument: Dependent on which issue is on the table, one can identify with shifting groups, and sometimes one might want to avoid being identified with groups overall.

F1,C2: rule argument: In areas where religious fundamentalists and ethno-nationalists threat and hinder people from assimilating and converting to other thought systems, this active choice of the individual is shown.

P2: example argument: Religious fundamentalists and ethno-nationalists can be used as an example of how identity politics can hinder people from choosing identity and thought systems.
Confrontation stage

The aim of Per Bauhn’s article is not to engage in a debate with an outspoken opponent but instead to have a general academic discussion on the subject of identity politics. Bauhn argues that there is a misunderstanding of the concept of identity politics and how it is being used in reality. This misunderstanding is the core of the confrontation of the text, in that some identity political groups such as nationalists, racists and misogynists (11,42,43,70) are using identity politics to grow in number and thus power.

Opening stage

Per Bauhn presents a two-fold view on the concept of focus for the discussion. He states that he is going to discuss identity politics from both a positive perspective, how it has had a positive impact on the history. But also the negative sides of identity politics are presented, how it can be used to create injustice. Bauhn furthermore highlights a certain misunderstanding common to ideas regarding identity as a group-building concept (9,37,56).

Argumentation stag

The argumentation of Per Bauhn is strong, presenting a variety of different arguments. Not only is he giving the reader historical examples of how identity politics have been of both positive outcome for democracy and human rights (20,31,34), but also how it can be used for the complete opposite purpose (3,70). But why should individuals unite around one identity? Bauhn argues that one of the main reasons is to mobilise supporters (12). These supporters might not be totally unison with the group (of identity politics) but sharing rights (or the lack of it) and or a problem (17,17,21). In the Western society, the identity as a citizen has been rooted in the view of the identity of being human, i.e. that being a human is being a citizen (thus giving human rights). If then a group is oppressed within a society, it can never be given more power than its equals (51). Since men (as a master group) have had unequal amount of power in the past, the balance cannot be fixed by giving unequal amount of power to women in the future.
That would still create an injustice society, and even worse it creates a never-ending circle of exploitation and guilt (55).

Many times this calls for context. In the examples of Revolutions (31) there were several different groups (16,28,29) coming together to make change, mostly because they had a common goal – universal human rights (17,26,36). Both the fight against slavery as well as for the civil Rights movement could exercise joint strength without giving up power and space. In other words the identity of the group wasn’t focused on a singular axis of identity rather than other factors such as shared injustices (from class). One way to unravel valuable ideas is to ask who protects the individuals right to choose identification (73)? Firstly one needs to further ask who is endangering this right. It is not only religious fundamentalists and ethno-nationalists (70) that can label and categorise an individual (stereotyping, bullying etc) but also groups “meaning well”, but also wanting to gain more power and space (12,60). Secondly this opens up to the discussion of who that has the privilege of representing oneself, but also others.

**Conclusion stage**

The conclusion is then that the identity of an individual is dependent of ones experiences (9), which naturally can change thus forcing the individual to revaluate one group belonging (59,63). Since an identity is a reflection of not only the self but also the group that one “belongs” to, there is always a risk that the political freedom and thought systems are compromised (26,58,59,60). Identity politics is also dependent on ideology but more importantly on universal rights (74,75). To apply identity politics to an ideology in it self would be to deconstruct it. Ideologies such as socialism, liberalism or the LGBT-movement need to include rather than exclude people in order to achieve universal human rights (25,50). Just as men and women from different classes could join each others in order to bring justice to France, or that black and white people could change the geopolitical situation in the US. But at the same time ideologies (by its symbolic actors) cannot lay claim to individuals’ voices (regardless of how similar they are) representing them.
The first thesis (T1) is strong in its conclusive power but falls since the second (T2) and third (T3) thesis is even stronger, this by intertwining with each other creating a powerful juxtaposition of arguments.

Bauhn provides a very important philosophical observation. One doesn’t share everything that is important in ones life just because one belongs to the same group (58). In an historical context, the positive examples (if one is pro human rights and democracy) can easily be companioned by less positive examples such as the ethnic identity politics in the Balkan War or growing nationalism in Sweden with citizens claiming that they have the “right” traditions, culture and race. The German population came together by using an identity political rhetoric, creating the Nazi-Germany leading to up to the Holocaust, and no matter how dreadful the history is, it was still carried out in “democratic” ways representing the “identity” of the people.

What can be seen in the analysis is also how dependent identity politics is of context. The previous research shows how different concepts and notions are perceived differently in different geopolitical areas, such as how immigration is handled in media in different parts of Europe, to how the Feminist movement in the US have undergone a change leading into different branches (especially the group of black feminist scholars separating themselves from the white hegemony). Per Bauhns philosophical discourse emphasises how the mechanisms of identity politics act much like they where positivistic, that they to often fail to see that the interest of the individual aren’t logically identical with certain groups (trying to force the individual into the ranks)(57,58,59,67,71). As can be seen in the conclusion stage, identity politics is dependent on ideology but more importantly on universal rights. In other words, the goal does not justify the mean.
Analysis 3

Article: 3: “We must see the identities before we can loosen them up.”

Source: Svenska Dagbladet Kultur 2014-06-17

Author: Nathan Hamelberg

T1: A more useful concept than identity politics is affinity politics.

P1: cause argument: Identity is a problem if it is allowed to cover up disagreements, which can happen when identity is reduced into a marketing tool.

F1,P1: cause argument: How can we reach out to the many in the fight for liberation, without for that matter excluding people from being a part of the fight?

F1,F1,P1: analogy argument: The same problems can be found in history, for instance in the anticolonial liberation movements in the 1900’s.

F2,F1,P1: example argument: Liberation is synonymous to the relaxation of “us and them”.

F3,F1,P1: cause argument: Unlike identity politics where the ones who possess double subordinated norms become marginalised if their political project is to only ally themselves with the ones sharing the exact same position.

A1,P1: rule argument: An idea or perspective may not be applicable to every context.

F1,A1,P1: consequence argument: A post-colonial perspective on multifaceted, changing identities and power relations may reasonably have a hard time winning support in a nation that has a notoriously hard time remembering its own colonialism.

P2: cause argument: Identity is a problem when people are casually made into spokespersons for a collective.

F1,P2: analogy argument: These spokespersons can come from groups whose issues include anti-racism, race stereotypes, trans-activism, Civil Rights, ethnic registries, intersectionality, racial profiling, racialised, white norms, gender-and race power order, afro-phobia, antiziganism, islamophobia, segregation, assimilation, integration and separatism.
T2: The aim for identity politicians is to become large and powerful but not too large.

P1: sign argument: To organise over certain boarders such as race, gender or sexuality would be to leave the stated goal.

F1,P1: sign argument: When to large majorities are created, others are rendered invisible and with that, their issues. This can therefore also happen to the own group.

Confrontation stage

Nathan Hamelberg represents an organisation called “Mellanförskapet” (the Interclusion), a group who shares the position of living with cross-cultural backgrounds (being “interanos”). The core ideological view of the organisation can be found in a concept called affinity politics (4,5). The argumentation in the text is built around how the author claims that movements should reject identity politics in order to adapt affinity politics (39,40,48,49,71,72).

Opening stage

Hamelberg states that there are several problems that one has to take into consideration when talking about identities, for instance by questioning which of the identities are political, and which aren’t (6)? Secondly Hamelberg sees a problem when identity is allowed to cover up disagreement (34). The main issue that Hamelberg points out is that the usage of the term identity politics is much too vague and poorly defined (21,22,24,25,26).

Argumentation stage

By summarising the argumentation on what identity is, Hamelberg can see that some identities are political (6,7) and that they can be formed by outside forces including lobby groups, editorials and PR-firms (8,9). There seems to be a greater need to appeal to interest individuals (8,9) in order to create new majorities (10). In a Swedish context this sort of actions can be found in many different discussions regarding for example
anti-racism, Civil Rights, white norms, and integration (17,18). Hamelberg is not only questioning the concept of identity and the importance of clarifying what one actually means when using it, but also shows how this diffuse concept also affects the usage of identity politics. The objections can be summarised into “when new voices get to speak as a collective it is identity politics (20). What the association Mellanförskapet does (through its symbolic actor Hamelberg) is to not only recon that its members might be very different in their identity (41) but that they can share negative experiences from the outside (44). These problems can be shared with other groups possibly not sharing the same identity variables (40,49). He comes back to this reasoning later on, using the work of the feminist Chela Sandoval (70). Hamelberg increases the sustainability of his argumentation providing both historical examples such as the anticolonial liberation movement in the 1900’s (50), the fight for the independence of Algeria from France (58), and currently the different groups and movements fighting poverty in the US (73,74).

**Concluding stage**

The main issue that Hamelberg reflects upon in his text is firstly how difficult it can be to define and use the term identity. Secondly, and most importantly, he brings up the issues with the concept of identity politics and how it can be used in any ideological direction without any concern of the problems it brings; especially how identity politics and its ability to only focus on the individual and the own agenda, hinders collaboration with other groups in order to achieve shared goals.

The conclusion of Hamelbergs argumentation thus is that regardless of how similar affinity politics (70) and identity politics are there are numerous differences that give strength to dismiss the latter (75). The most powerful of them being that identity politics fails to see the intersectional perspective (77); that common interests are stronger than the need to uphold purity within the own identity group (79).

The aim for identity politicians is to become large and powerful but not too large (10). What Hamelberg does is to point out that different groups (and symbolic actors) have a major part in shaping the debate both in what sense it should regard (from anti-racism to gender- and race power orders) and who that gets to have a saying in it. This
argumentation has a sort of self-reflexive stand since he is actually representing an organisation in the role as a symbolic actor for the group. Moreover it has a strong conclusive power since Nathan Hamelberg possess a marginalised identity but recons that this not only gives negative experiences to gather around but to actually reach out over identities in order to find common goals (through experiences of oppression), or as he puts it: “to see identities but creating a politic that exceeds them and sees common interests”.

Analysis 4

Article: 4: “The luxury of being able to represent oneself”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-10-30

Author: Amanda Björkman

T1: Identity politics regards the right of expression rather than action and actual opinions.

P1: consequence argument: Critique from opponents can be dismissed as for instance islamophobia or misogyny, instead of focusing on actually misdoings.

A1,P1: consequence argument: Can islamophobia or misogyny be covered up as critique towards made up misdoings?

P2: sign argument Critics can be excluded from the debate since they don’t share the same identity and hence cannot represent the groups being discussed.

C1: sign argument: Certain groups might use this tactic to gain power without having consensus.

F1,C1: analogy argument: Historical examples include the white supremacy in the Apartheid South Africa.

T2: Identity politics is liberal in its sense of being focused on opinions and actions.

P1: cause argument: When a politician represents him/herself in media, she can influence others to become politically active, not represent them.

C1: example argument: Liberalism focuses on universal human values rather than on the individual and his/her identity.
Confrontation stage

Amanda Björkman questions what she calls a love story between the Left Wing and the identity politics (2). She questions the ongoing focus on who gets to speak rather than what is actually being said, or as she puts it: “what has been said and done is secondary” (9). Two thesis statements are presented and argued against.

Opening stage

Although not calling it a form of liberal identity politics, Björkman gives an alternative to what she calls the leftist humbug identity politics (11). The main issue that her perspective highlights is the representation-part of identity politics.

Argumentation stage

At one point Björkman states that identity politics are not about actual opinions and actions (3,4), thus being leftist humbug (11). Then she states that it is not irrelevant (13) to measure who gets to be seen in media (16) and the political arena (30). This becomes contradictory and needs some clarification: who a politician is says something about who can be a politician (14). Björkman uses the politician Soraya Post, and a documentary on her, as an example of this reasoning (15,16,17). Post, being the first Roma person to ever hold a position in the European parliament becomes a symbol for the possibilities that have arisen in Sweden during the last couple of years (26). At the same time her story show how badly the Swedish state has treated its Roma population in the history (15,16,21) and in its recent time (21,23).

Concluding stage

Björkman highlights an important notion namely the luxury of representing oneself (1). Symbolic actors have a privilege (sometimes coming with an elite position) of getting space to talk about certain opinions (28), which doesn't necessarily mean that they can or should represent the group they have joined (or been forced into).
The usage of the term Left wing is in this text very broad and unspecified; are Mehmet Kaplan and Åsa Romson leftists? They would probably not agree with this implication since both represent the Green Party. Leftist symbolic actors could also argue that the Green Party is standing close to the liberals in the Swedish political landscape to even mention green symbolic actors for leftist (the Left Party was not invited to form Government together with the Green Party and the Social Democrats).

Can Soraya Post represent Roma-immigrants from Romania? From an identity political perspective she can, since they share a single axis of identity, namely being Roma. With this said Post possess a massive amount of power from having language skills, education, economical assets, political office, celebrity status and so on. With Amanda Björkman's perspective, Post can bring attention to the situation of the (different) Roma populations but not represent them. In the same way a woman in a management position cannot represent every woman in the business community, much less a political party cannot call itself equal just because it has a female party leader.

The conclusive power of the argumentation (to dismiss the thesis) is raised since she uses an actual elite person showing that the paradigm of redistribution is (in this case) more powerful than the paradigm of revaluation. The sustainability of the argumentation is however slightly lowered since Björkman is not reflexive (showing of her own power position). Further more it is lowered since she has some difficulty connecting the other symbolic actors (Kaplan and Bah Kuhnke) with the correct ideology, making her seem to be uninformed or lacking of knowledge.
Analysis 5

Article: 5: “Amanda Björkman: Linderborg is right about identity politics”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-09

Author: Amanda Björkman

T1: Identity politics hinders certain power holders to be exposed to criticism.

P1: example argument: White persons cannot discuss issues that might affect racialised persons, since they cannot share the same experiences.

C1: consequence argument: Marginalised groups needs to be safe in the debate and thus the needs of these groups can be more important than more collective fights such as the one of class.

A1,C1: rule argument: In a democracy everyone has the same rights and obligations, thus one group can never receive special treatment.

Confrontation stage

The author Amanda Björkman in this article highlights the rare occasion (2,3), when she and the leftist editor Åsa Linderborg actually agree with each other. Although they agree on the problem, identity politics, they disagree on whether liberalism or socialism is the one to be blamed for it (3,25).

Opening stage

Björkman begins by stating that the Left Wings fixation of the bodily has cornered the debate (10), laying the foundation for the whole argumentation - that it is not only the identity politics that is derailed but also the Left Wing.
Argumentation stage

Identity politics is portrayed as a different cosmos from the real world (13), with different kinds of laws. Björkman describes these rules, or the schism, as an identity fixation that puts a wet blanket over individuals and limits them (26). Linderborg is going to attack (!) on the identity politics (5), emphasising on the (claimed) crisis within the Left wing by dividing it into “the New Left wing” and the old one (6). Several times in the article Björkman comes back to this claimed crisis (10,23,24,27,28,30,36).

Continuing on the disagreement within the agreement, Björkman objects to Linderborg’s statement that the advocates of identity politics “actually are liberals” (29). This is seen as a form of master suppression technique that Linderborg uses when “the Left wing doesn’t represent the opinions that Linderborg finds to be good enough” (30,32). Åsa Linderborg is portrayed as symbolic actor since the own ranks “hopefully” will listen to her (36). Here Björkman could have argued for why and how identity politics as a process is not liberal.

Amanda Björkman seems to be a bit lost in her usage of concepts since she fails to describe the difference between intersectionality and identity politics (18). Which dimensions is she talking about, and how are they not being taken into consideration? It becomes especially confusing since she actually uses a form of intersectional analysis (although a simple one) stating that Bah Kuhnke can be examined. Bah Kuhnke is from a liberal perspective a feminist symbol (in the sense that she is a female and in power) and therefor can expose to objective criticism (16). How the criticism sounds and in what way it is objective is not stated, and therefor not open for the reader to decide on. This lowers the total conclusive power.
Conclusion stage

While disagreeing on many matters, the two symbolic actors from both sides of the ideological landscape can come together on some topics (38); showing how the identity politics is paralysing and leads to the end of the public debate (37,39). This does not mean that they agree upon whose fault it is.

Not only can Björkman aim severe critique towards identity politics but also towards the Left Wing in large (10,23,24,27,28,30,36) – hitting two birds with one stone so to speak.

What can be seen is that the notion of identity politics not only separates the feminist movement (in the sense of misogyny), but also the Left Wing. From a dualist perspective, this of course means that some ideological concepts can be shared; this in the sense of bot liberal and leftist actors agreeing (even if it is surprising for themselves), while the “New Left Wing” disagrees.

The text in it self becomes an example of the problems that identity politics face. Where other ideologies and movements can come together towards a common goal, advocates of identity politics stands alone. A strong rule argument for this is shown: “Damned if you do, damned if you don’t”.

Bah Kuhnke is from a liberal perspective a feminist symbol (17) and since she is gaining power within the society and its hierarchies, she must also be a target for criticism. Here a clash of ideological perspectives arises: what is just and reasonable critique and who is allowed to deliver it?

From the feminist perspectives following the paradigm of revaluation including an identity political perspective, all criticism must come from within; Bah Kuhnke, being a racialised, upper-class, educated person, can therefor only be judged by peers from the most marginalised group.

Analysis 6
Article: 6: “Judith Kiros: identity politics and Left Wing politics are not opposites”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-10

Author: Judith Kiros

T1: Identity politics and Left wing politics are not opposites.

P1: cause argument: It is the medias logic that creates this non-existing opposition between the Left Wing and identity politics.

F1,P1: example argument: The media often raises questions of representation and race stereotypes instead of racism and class cooperates within a capitalistic system.

A1,F1,P1: sign argument: This argues that the anti-racist movement also is critical to the capitalistic system, but which group does the author refer to?

T2: Feminism is an identity political method.

P1: rule argument: It is an ideology that is used to organise political groups.

A1,P1: consequence argument: This does not make the ideology an identity political method.

P2: example argument: it is a tool to make oppression and exploitation comprehensible.

F1,P2: example argument: To goal is to have a practical representation and visionary tool. This tool must be radical and not based on equality.

A1,F1,P2: example argument: From a classical, liberal, cultural and feminist standpoint, equality is the foundation as well as ultimate goal. Even in the often seems “radical”, within Marxist feminism the goal is still economical equality between men and women.

A1,P2: Other idea based concepts have this as a function such as intersectionality.

Confrontation stage

Judith Kiros article is a response to Åsa Linderborgs article on political correctness (Article 1). The main disagreement can be found in whether or not white persons should take part in fights that they aren’t a part of. In this text the example of the singer Tomas Ledin is yet again brought up.
Opening stage

People are not excluded when they want to claim solidarity with a fight that of which they aren’t a natural part of. It is however often problematised how people should organise themselves in order to be solidary. How can solidarity be used as a political tool in order to expose power?

Argumentation stage

Kiros is concerned of how anti racism becomes a question of representation and race stereotypes (29,30), which she blames the “media logic” (something that she is herself a part of). Here most of Judith Kiros argumentation fails since this is actually because of identity politics (whose sole purpose is representation). Further more Kiros states that Linderborg calls feminism a form of identity politics (22). This is however not true, firstly because it revolves around the equal value between men and women (which identity politics per se does not), secondly in the way that Kiros does not clarify which type of feminism she is discussing. The approach is rather described to fit Kiros own purpose of claiming feminism for the radical ideology. By stating that feminism is a form of “identity political method”, Kiros uses her role as a symbolic actor to diminish all other forms of feminism that don’t agree with her ideological view. The goal of anti racism is not equality but radical change (43,46,48,51). The goal is to dissolve the system, rather than to make it equal. Again the clash between the paradigm of redistribution and recognition arises (31,32). This argues that the anti-racist movement is also critical to the capitalistic system, but which group does the author refer to? Which group she isn’t referring to is stated: the liberals. In their hegemony, radical politics transforms into having the right haircut, using the right words and problematising ones music collection (27). What this means is not clarified, and how it differs from any other ideology isn’t explained either. What issues should be given space and why is of importance to create a broad movement according to Kiros (53,54,56) and also to see visions and interests coinciding (57). This does however not include Tomas Ledin.
Lastly Kiros argues that it is important to criticise the cis-norm since it opens up the understanding of gender oppression and broadens the feministic analysis; it opens up for more bodies and expressions (66,67,68). This comes after she has stated that the Right wing and Left wing are being trans-phobic since they dismiss transgender issues as politically correctness (63). The Left wing is also excluding its black members (including Kiros herself?) by not taking the oppression of both transgender persons and Afroswedish persons seriously. The discussion on politically correctness seems to have “derailed”.

Concluding stage

One must ask why it is so important to highlight Tomas Ledins appearance in the campaign. Can it be because of his white body? Then it could just as easily have been any other of the white bodies speaking out in the video like the famous rapper Petter or the pop star Oscar Linnros. If the aim is to uphold the “Us versus Them”-rhetoric the greater polarisation that is made the better, and then the choice of Ledin is arguable. Is Tomas Ledin claiming to be equal to Jason or is he aware of his own privileges and therefor knowing that he can be used as a symbol to bring awareness to the inequality? Again, is it fair to always assume that every action has an underlying racist purpose? This proves another argument that Kiros provides, that it in the liberal hegemony is all about having the right haircut, using the right words and problematising ones music collection. Ledin is not ok, Petter and Linnros is.

As can be seen, Kiros is asking for a more practical work within the movements in order to broaden them. A solution is to recognise how structural oppression is reproduced and to see what visions and interests coincide. How this is suppose to be done is not stated, i.e. there are no practical solutions presented. This lowers the conclusive power of the argumentation (although not lowering the sustainability or relevance). To ask everyone else to stop trivialising the issues and come up with concrete plans while at the same time not delivering any oneself is not moving the debate forward. Kiros fails to show examples strengthening her main argumentation (T1) since she on the contrary highlights the differences between leftist ideology and identity politics (31,32). The
second thesis statement (T2) holds very little sustainability since it uses very vague definitions of the concepts that she is referring to, while at the same time not actually giving any concrete arguments.

Kiros claims to be a part of the leftist, anti racist and feminist movement, which also happens to be the case with Linderborg; the Left Wing seems to be able to hold both. And using these titles is certainly of importance; the one that gets to represent the group can also define it (and it must be especially important since misquotations are being used). The context of Judith Kiros argumentation seem to be a sort of “either you are with us or against us”-rhetoric, where there is no room for discussion and even a slightly lack of knowledge leading up to making a mistake. She disguises this by using words such as openness and curiosity (62), but doesn't really follow them.

Analysis 7

Article: 7: “It’s about power…”

Source: Expressen 2014-11-12

Author: Valerie Kyeyune Backström

T1: There are unequal relations between Twitter activists and renowned debaters on the cultural pages.

P1: example argument: Symbolic actors, such as renowned debaters on the cultural pages, have the media space to carry out their opinions and ideas.

F1,P1: cause argument: They possess enough power to be of interest for gatekeepers.

A1,P1: sign argument: What defines a Twitter activist? Can anyone become an activist and how is the Twitter activist different from any other activist on social media?

A2,P1: example argument: A symbolic actor can be both a Twitter activist as well as a renowned debater (in any media).

F1,A2,P1: example argument: The author Valerie Kyeyune Backström is active both on Twitter and is a renowned debater in many publications.
F2,A2,P1: example argument: Backström possesses an unequal power position in comparison towards the group that she is representing.

T2: The public is not interested in segregation.

P1: authority argument: 80 percent of the afro-Swedish population live in rental flats.

A1,P1: cause argument: The public can only conduct power throughout political representatives.

F1,A1,P1: consequence argument: The public should vote for representatives that can change the living situation of the afro-Swedish population.

A2,P1: example argument: Other groups of immigrants are not important in the segregation?

F1,A2,P1: cause argument: Then is the afro-Swedish population not interested in other immigrants struggle?

P2: authority argument: People born in Africa have the lowest educational yield.

P3: cause argument: The Left wing ignored the Afro-phobia report.

A1,P3: example argument: Ignorance is an active action, and how can that action be proven?

C1: example argument: The public is interested in racist pastries and Tintin.

A1,C1: sign argument: Cannot the public be interested in discussing racist cultural symbols as well as segregation on other areas?

P4: cause argument: the public cannot be interested in segregation since only 20 percent of the majority population live in rental flats.

A1,P4: example argument: In the identity politics, only the marginalised of focus is of interest. Other marginalised groups are made invisible, such as people in poverty, young people and single mothers.

P5: example argument: Who is included in the term “the public”? Is it only adults who read newspapers?

A1,P5: rule argumentation One should avoid generalising populations.

A2,P5: consequence argument: The public can only be represented by symbolic actors in the editorials.

T3: Identity politics is a politic that is not based on everyone, it can therefore help marginalised groups to gain more power.
P1: cause argument: It aims to be based on the especially marginalised ones interests.

F1,P1: sign argument: If politics ignore groups that are not marginalised, marginalised groups will gain more power.

F2,P1: example argument: From the paradigm of recognition, revaluation of a certain minority can lead to increased power. However this does not include the devaluation of other groups.

C1: cause argument: Identity politics can increase gaps between groups creating an “Us vs. Them”-discourse.

F1,C1: sign argument: It can be seen in previous research, especially when it comes to immigrants versus native born inhabitants.

C2: cause argument: Conflicts between different marginalised groups can be created since the marginalised groups interest is seen as the most important one.

F1,C2: cause argument: 20 percent of the majority population lives in rental flats. Whether or not these are marginalised is not important since they are not afroswedish.

F2,C2: example argument: Since black men are more discriminated than white women on the labour market, white women are of no interest in the equality debate.

T4: The proletariat in Sweden mostly consists of non-whites.

P1: authority argument: 80 percent of the afroswedish population lives in rental flats.

A1,P1: cause argument: Other immigrants (consisting of white people from for instance former Yugoslavia, Eastern Europe and Greece) cannot be a part of the new proletariat.

P2: analogy argument: Other groups that does not own their own land, any material of significant value or other economical power, such as single mothers, unemployed or students are not a part of the proletariat.

P3: cause argument: Black men are more discriminated in the labour market than white women.

A1,P3: rule argument: Discrimination is not a dichotomy.

F1,A1,P3: rule argument: From an intersectional perspective, two marginalised groups oppression should not be put against each other.

T5: Solidarity can never be based in emotions.

P1: rule argument: Solidarity must be based in actions and results.
A1,P1: rule argument: There is no dichotomy between emotion and action.

F1,A1,P1: authority argument: Sociological studies shows that emotions are core to social movements.

P2: sign argument: In order to gain authenticity, the recognition of the group might lead to the devaluation of another group (higher in the hegemony).

F1,P2: example argument: Identity politics is based on individual needs rather than the “greater good”.

A1,P2: sign argument: This calls for the deconstruction of master groups by using nominal determiners.

F1,A1,P2: sign argument: Since it is often only symbolic actors that represent themselves in media, the identity politics can lead to misusage of the marginalised group.

F2,A1,P2: rule argument: An individual, regardless of group belonging, can never represent anyone else but herself/himself.

**Confrontation stage**

The article is written by the writer Valerie Kyeyune Backström as a response to Åsa Linderborgs contributions to the debate regarding identity politics. Backström argues that Linderborg has a one-dimensional view on class politics (stated in line 2,3,4,5).

**Opening stage**

The aim of Backström’s discussion is to “move the discussion forward” (10), this in order to help the Left wing (8). The main argument in the article is that the Left wing bases its class politics on emotions (17,20) and not actions and results (12,55). In this opening stage the ideological belongings of the actor is being revealed; that Valerie Kyeyune Backström is a member of the Left wing (9).

Backström and Linderborg agree upon that single expressions are more often highlighted in the debate. What these single expressions contain is being presented in line 35 (the pastry debate around the racial slur “negroball”) and 38 (The glorification of colonisation in the Belgian cartoon series Tintin). This sort of rhetorical argument is being used to influence the beliefs of the audience, in this case the readers. It also
functions as a way to present a “common sense”-knowledge since no references are presented, neither journalistic nor academic.

**Argumentation stage**

Backström argues that it is irrelevant to hear the voices of peoples hurt feelings or emotions when people are dying because of the racial power structure (21). Tomas Ledin is being used as a symbol for the non-racialised group of symbolic actors that in a campaign stood up against racism. Backström exemplifies her argumentation by stating that the emotions of these white actors needs to be quieted down in order to be able to discuss the more important matter – power (22,23,24). It is interesting how Backström says, “we need to”, not being a part of the group of white symbolic actors (see the intersectional analysis). Her argumentation is built on a discourse of the Left wing consisting of white individuals such as Ledin (20) and Linderborg (5) and a large non-white group. A sort of argumentation dilemma arises. Later on this discourse will be further examined. Backström defines the difference of opinion in the unequal power relation between twitter activists (5) but does not give the reader an explanation to whom is included in this diffuse group. The lack of nominal determiners when describing groups/movements is an often-recurring mistake in discourses, also in this article. That there is a difference of opinion between the two symbolic actors is evident when Backström states that she will avoid Linderborgs premises regarding that there is not an unequal power relation (5). However she fails in her dialectical argumentation since her intention is to reject Linderborgs discourse by not talking about it but ending up doing it anyway (5,6).

Backtröm has a hard time defining the Left Wing; while first stating that both her and Linderborg are a part of the political ideology (9,14), she makes it clear that they have (according to her) vastly different opinions regarding class politics (2,5). Again there is a lack of nominal determiners since the reader is not given any description or insight in what kind of movement this “Left Wing” is, other than that both Backström and Linderborg are a part of it (8, and later on implicitly at 14). Does this Left Wing have an ideological position, a party belonging or any other concept belonging?
The Swedish proletariat today consists of non-whites (48), in terms of living conditions and class (45), which is rhetorically defended by using the Afro-phobia report as a source (40). From an intersectional perspective this rhetoric becomes contradictory:

Working class + poverty + racialised = proletariat

Working class + poverty + white = Left wing

Firstly it fails to include ideology into the categorisation (white poor people cannot belong to the Left wing and thus must belong to the Right wing?). Secondly it categorises the proletariat outside of the Left wing, which contradicts other arguments within the text (9,59,60).

Åsa Linderborg is, together with all media, responsible for upholding the racial power structures, leading to the death of racialised persons (14,15,19,21,31,32). At the same time Backström clearly states that she has no part of this upholding of racial power structures (33). Backström uses both arguments from the paradigm of redistribution (28,29,44,45,53,56) as well as paradigm of recognition (12,15,24).

As was seen in the argumentation stage, Backströms definition of what the Left wing really is and who is a part of it is vague. This leads to many questions in this stage where one of the conclusions is that the Left wing has actively ignored the Afro-phobia report presented by Mångkulturellt centrum (41,49). That Backström has not ignored it, or any other individual black debaters (33) for that matter is clear but they was a part of the Left wing (9). Backström argues that the largest part of the Left wing as a movement consists of non-white persons (47,48), or is the proletariat not a part of the Left wing? At the same time the Left Wing is blamed for the fact that people born in Africa have the lowest educational yield (39) and that 80 percent of the afroswegian population live in rental flats (28), these racist actions are upheld by Åsa Linderborg and Aftonbladet personally (14,15,31,32,49).

Can an elite actor such as Valerie Kyeyune Backström represent the racialised identity politics with a proletariat perspective? From Backtröms liberal identity politics this
becomes difficult (64, 65, 66). In the intersectional analysis, Valerie Kyeyune Backström

can be categorised as follows: Middle class + educated + racialised = Left Wing, not

proletariat. Belonging to the group of elitist actors, she represents a group that is far

away from her own identity. This lowers the conclusive power of the first test (T1) since

she is not following her own examples. Secondly this kind of argumentation sounds

much like populist expressions:

“Instead of doing a Linderborg (the opponent), I am going to avoid answering her

premises. But as an alternative, I gladly do the Left wing, my political residence, a favour

and try to move the debate forward” (unlike the opponent who is, soon to be unravelled,

a racist). “To point out that even a cultural editor at a red newspaper is reproducing racist

perceptions shows how no one is exempted from these structures” (anyone can be against

“us”). “It is time that we start to politicise solidarity (unlike the opponents). Solidarity can

ever be based in emotions; it must be based in actions and result”.

What can be seen here is that it is quite easy to point out that the opponent is

incompetent, and while doing this avoiding giving any examples of actions that could

lead to a result (defeating racism and segregation).

Kyeyune Backström ends the text with her conclusion, which can be seen as quite odd

since she opposes her own argumentation (59-66):

“Identity politics is a political agenda that is not based on everyone. However it is not based

on the most marginalised group, but instead based the own group; i.e. it is a politic that is

based on a single axis of identity” (identified by the own group but labelled by the

others). Backström ends by stating that this is shallow, lacks solidarity and is liberal.

Much of the argumentation is focused on results and actions, but Backström does not

give any examples of how the power should be redistributed. Here there is a clash

between the paradigm of redistribution (following the authors leftist ideological belief

system) and the paradigm of recognition (following the identity political concept). This

lowers the conclusive power of the total argumentation.

Emotions are valid when they come from the (oppressed) individual (see analysis 6), not

from any others. To show solidarity with others is something bad (23, 50, 55). It is

interesting that creating an “us vs. them”-argumentation is of such importance for

activists with a separatism agenda, something that is not surprising since separatism
and identity politics many times go hand in hand (Heyes, 2014). Separatism seems to follow a one-way kind of schema, where it is important for the larger group to include marginalised groups while demanding that the opposite should be avoided (6,23). This leads to several questions regarding marginalised groups and their relation towards master groups, but also among their own members. How narrow can a group get without losing focus on the subject being discussed? Since the very foundation of the identity political perspective is based on authenticity of experiences, these questions are of great importance. In order to accept the argumentation presented by Backström, one needs to accept that experience, social status and power is static. However, as science shows, this is not the case. Cultural, social and economical power can be gained or taken away from a person, moving that person either up or down the hierarchy.

**Analysis 8**

**Article: 8: “...and about rights”**

**Source:** Expressen 2014-11-12

**Author:** Maria Ramnehill

**T1 Kajsa Ekis Ekman is trans-phobic.**

P1: consequence argument: Using the wrong pronoun for a person is trans-phobic since it diminishing the whole existence of that person.

F1,P1: rule argument: It is a human right to be able to express one own identity.

C1: consequence argument: An action does not determine a person’s whole ideological framework.

F1,C1: cause argument: There is a difference between unconscious and conscious actions.

P1,F1,C1: example argument: Kajsa Ekis Ekman is not consciously performing trans-phobic actions.

C2: example argument: Kajsa Ekis Ekman rejected her previous actions.

A1,C2: consequence argument: A person can never change opinion in any matters.
A2,C2: cause argument: Only the oppressed can determine whether or not an oppressor is in remorse.

T2 The only real tool for power that transgender persons have is social media.

P1: cause argument: Transgender persons are invisible in society.

F1,P1: example argument: Transgender women are battered, raped, hated, threaten and murdered in society.

A1,F1,P1: example argument: Other marginalised groups also suffers from these injustices, thus also sharing the same experiences.

C1: example argument: Transgendered symbolic actors can represent themselves in traditional media.

Confrontation stage

This article can be seen as a second part to Valerie Kyeyune Backströms article "It is about power...” (Combined: It is about power and about rights). It is also mentioned in the preamble (2). Maria Ramnehill aims to discuss how Linderborg takes on a derailed debate regarding identity politics within the Left wing and feminism. Where Linderborg claims that the different ideologies cannot be intertwined, Ramnehill claims the opposite. The confrontation between the two journalists can be analysed from the perspective of the second level of domination. The shared experiences of Åsa Linderborgs group of cultural context (in this context: heterosexual fertile cis-women) is in direct opposition to Maria Ramnehills group (transgender women), and it is here the conflict starts. This conflict is examined further on.

Opening state

Linderborg takes on a derailed debate regarding identity politics within the Left wing and feminism, but how is the debate derailed? Whenever someone doesn’t agree the debate is derailed? The argumentation is centered on a discourse claiming that the debate only focuses on in which ways the transgender movement is carrying out their agenda. Any critics of the transgender activist group (both on in social media and in real
life) are considered to be trans-phobic as well as a critique towards the identity politics as a liberal notion is considered to be trans-phobic (30,31). The feminist movement is trans-phobic (25) making it impossible to include the trans-gender movement.

**Argumentation stage**

Ramnehill uses a nominal determiner when she states that the trans-gender movement can be categorised into two large groups; trans-gender women and transgender men (55,56). These two groups separate themselves in their experiences of salary discrimination, double work, higher rates of sickness leave, diminishing in the public sphere. These experiences are shared with cis-women in exactly the same way, which according to Ramnehill, Linderborgs fails to see in her article (analysis 14). Linderborg states that women with an innate vagina share 200 000 years of experiences regarding reproduction and double work; and this can be seen as trans-phobic in Ramnehill’s rhetoric claiming Linderborg has made an active choice to be trans-phobic (47,48). But is that what Linderborg really is saying? Linderborg merely states that cis-women share these experiences, which is not the same thing as stating that no other has these experiences.

In the beginning of the article, Ramnehill states that that identity politics is a part of the Left wing as well as the feminist movement (since she denounces Linderborgs opposite stance in the matter). At the same time it is of great importance for Ramnehill to clearly separate The Left wing from the transgender movement(s) (37,42,43).

Transgender persons only have social media as a channel for (gaining?) power, except when writing in one of the largest newspapers in Sweden. Is Ramnehill representing the transgender community or herself? Again, is the transgender community unitary (especially since it is a Left wing concept, see article 1.2,)? Can a white transgender person represent a non-white transgender person?

**Concluding stage**
Maria Ramnehill concludes her argumentation stating that it is *cis-sexism* to say that an innate vagina gives common experiences. Cis-women’s shared experiences of oppression are not important since there are more marginalised groups experiencing the same kind of oppression.

As has been seen many times in both the current study as well as in previous research, it seems to be important for symbolic actors to uphold a certain “us vs. them”-discourse; so also in this article. Not only is it important to separate the transgender activist movement from the Left Wing movement, but also from within the trans-gender community. In the constant comparison between cis-women and transgender women, transgender men are hidden (55). Nowhere in the argumentation the latter groups experiences are mentioned. Are this because of Maria Ramnehills own belonging, and the identity politics focus in the individual and its own representation? From an intersectional perspective Maria Ramnehill belongs to the following group: Middle class + educated + white + transgender woman. If one where to apply the argumentation from the first part of this article series (article 6), several weaknesses with the identity political perspective arises. Firstly Maria Ramnehill cannot be a part of the Left Wing. She does not claim to be a part of it per se but mentions how she is a part of the “trans-activist” movement, which indirect is pointed out to be a part of the Left Wing (43,44). At the same time Ramnehill is white, which is in direct opposition to Kyeyune Backströms discourse, that identity politics is only for the own marginalised group (is the afro-Swedish group more marginalised than white transgender persons?).

Again one can see the tendencies of identity politics where it is of great importance to create an “us versus them”-discourse. The experience of oppression of the group is more authentic than anyone on the outside. To share experiences between groups is impossible. Or as Ramnehill puts it: “Transgender-like identities have existed long before feminism was created - is it not time to take us seriously now”. That feminism and trans-activism would be juxtaposed is incorrect (25,42,63). Many questions arise when the argumentation is built only on normative thesis statements; one needs to back up opinions by some factual arguments otherwise the sustainability is lowered.
However, this does say that the conclusive power cannot be high, emotional arguments can be incredibly powerful.

**Analysis 9**

**Article: 9: “Nina Björk: No power is greater than the economical power”**

**Source:** Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-12

**Author:** Nina Björk

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**T1: Economical power is the greatest.**

P1: example argument: Profit controls the society. Work can only be performed if someone earns a profit.

F1,P1: sign argument: The pursuit of profit determines what we produce and for whom we produce.

C1: cause argument: Economical power is only greatest for those who possess enough social, and cultural power to not having to worry about it.

C2: example argument: Power is always situational, i.e. determined by context.

F1,C2: cause argument: The economical power can in some situations be lowered by for instance democratic tools preventing corruption, and bribery etc.

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**T2: If the goal of the Left wing is a socialist society there is an opposition between identity politics and the Left wing.**

P1: consequence argument: Identity politics in it self have no affect on society or its hierarchical order.

F1,P1: cause argument If a marginalised group is given the ability to move past other groups within the society, the society is still unjust.

F2,P1: sign argument: Identity political movements such as nationalists, separatists, Civil Rights movements etc. have not been able to build societies that take all humans’ equal value in respect.

A1,F2,P1: sign argument: A socialist state might have other preconditions for succeeding in building an equal society.

A1,A1,F2,P1: cause argument: Since identity has nothing to do with ideology there is no correlation between loosely built groups and system change.
Confrontation stage

In the text Björk reasons around two concepts exemplifying how inequality takes its form in regard to skin colour, gender, class background, sexuality, appearance and body functionality (24): “the power to” and the “power over” (23,26). The confrontation in the text can be found in the criticism of identity politics, how it only can solve the problem with the “power to” (37).

Opening stage

Nina Björk position herself outside of the quarrel between Åsa Linderborg and Judith Kiros (2,5), testing Kiros statement, that there is no opposition between identity politics and Left wing politics.

Argumentation stage

If the goal of the Left wing is a socialist society there is an opposition between identity politics and the Left wing (8,11); identities have nothing to do with breaching the current capitalistic competitive society (9). The majority, privileged and unprivileged, still lacks a “power over”, and therefor lacking control (33). One can be a man, white and/or heterosexual without having the “power over” even if ones “power to” is larger than many others in sense of gender (30). The “power to” can be seen as the individuals chances to advance in the society (find it easier to have a residence, get a job, achieve a class journey). It is based on his/her skin colour, gender, class background, sexuality, appearance, and body functionality (21,22,23,24,25). The “power over” can be seen as the driving forces in a system: Who controls the housings, the jobs, the production, the economic resources, the media channels and the state apparatus? (26,27,28).

Not only is Björk questioning what identity politics as a concept really stands for, but also how it would practically take its form. If identity politics (regardless of ideological view) would succeed, that some identities no longer have a disadvantage in the queue, in
the competition, and no longer in the possibility to be the one that has the power over what is produced (regardless of ethnicity, sexuality or gender), would the society then be egalitarian (53,55,56,57)? She here questions how the definition of an egalitarian society would be (58). As long as some have economic power and therefor can control other people's work, the identity politics cannot succeed (60).

**Conclusion stage**

Nina Björk takes on a voice of being one of the “majority” or the larger masses (42,44). Further more she uses an anonymous bloggers view on “identity politics”, which distance her from the role of being a symbolic actor (while still being a symbolic actor since she represents and creates opinions in printed media). If the goal of the Left wing politics is every humans equal opportunities to advance within the current society, the goal of free social movement within an extant hierarchy (12,13,14), the argumentation of Kiros becomes the opposite to the leftist idea (sounding much like several of the symbolic actors speaking for the liberal side of the debate).

With the examples of the “queue” and how society is a system, Björk actually performs (although a simple) intersectional analysis. Depending on the context a man, white and heterosexual can lose his “power over” (loss of social and/or cultural power) and thus be oppressed (30). This does not, in any way, argue that there isn't a white norm in society, just that a generalisation that all whites, all men or all heterosexuals are in power over their own social advancement (or being targeted with guilt by association) is not changing the system per se. That the system would change just because new identities take place in an already existing capitalistic system is the bottom line of this argumentation, and here is the clash between the advocates of identity politics the largest.

The first tes (T1) of the argumentation holds little to none sustainability without for that matter losing relevance. Power is highly relevant to these sorts of discussions. However, the arguments for this sort of tes are too few and don’t take the other sorts of power into
consideration (a more ingoing discussion on for instance white norms or other social injustices could have raised the conclusive power).

The second tes (T2) is not as easy to evaluate. Firstly it must be taken into consideration that the whole argumentation is built around a Left wing context; the conclusive power can therefor be tested from other ideological views with other outcomes. However, since both the actors on each side of the debate are in fact leftist actors it can be argued that a socialist approach for testing the tes can be used (since the arguments for the tes within the text also follows a leftist idea). The thesis statement holds ground since it both is relevant, has a moderate sustainability and conclusive power (in the sense that it follows the whole thought process from idea to conceptualisation).

The argumentation does not in any way argue that marginalised identities shouldn't have a residence, get a job, and achieve a class journey. Rather it argues that the “power to” and “power over” are productions of an unjust system. This is the essence of the whole argumentation, to see the difference between what certain concepts actually stand for and what happens when they are operationalised.

Analysis 10

Article: 10: “The leftists fighting internally need the liberal heritage”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-18

Author: Erik Wijk

T1: The Left wings basic behaviour is based on a contentious representation fixation.

P1: example argument Key to the leftist ideologies is that finding trustworthy friends becomes just as important as pointing out enemies.

F1,P1: analogy argument: Already accepted groups within the Left wing, such as the Marxists reject the new identity political groups.

A1,P1: sign argument: This is not unique to the left wing rather a shared tactic by all sectarian, radical and essentialist groups.
**P2: sign argument:** The actual debate indicates that there is an internal struggle within the Left wing over representation.

**F1,P2: example argument:** This struggle can be seen both on a group level (older and younger, Marxists and identity political advocates etc.) and on an individual level (symbolic actors).

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**T2: The concept of Universalism should be taken back from the liberals.**

**P1: sign argument:** Universalism can neutralise suspected traitors such as sectarian, radical and essentialist groups.

**F1: example argument:** Class hate or gender bitterness are extremely strong emotions and important driving forces that can cloud the actual goal of equality.

**C1: consequence argument:** Universalism covers up patriarchal, heterosexual, cis, and other power structures.

**F1,C1: consequence argument:** Universalism and human rights are only a harmless façade.

**A1,C1: sign argument:** There is no certainty that identity political groups such as nationalist or race-oriented groups would challenge these power structures either.

**P2: rule argument:** No critique towards systems of oppression can be possible without having the foundation of humans equal value.

**F1,P2: consequence argument:** Universalism is the core in the fight for transgender persons, undocumented immigrants, outside European immigrants, Muslims, women, workers, people living rurally, children, the mentally ill, disabled people or any others rights.

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**Confrontation stage**

The article locates itself between Åsa Linderborgs article on political correctness (see analysis 1) and Judith Kiros defense of identity politics (see analysis 6). Where Wijk welcomes Kiros thoughts on the Left wing, he doesn’t agree on the solution (40). Instead Wijk asks for solutions within the classical liberal ideas (but not the liberal party politics, see section 28).
Opening stage

The article consists of two different argumentations. Firstly Wijk discusses the ongoing (and seemingly never ending) debate over what the concept “Left wing” really is and should be defined as, but also who is allowed to be part of it. Secondly he presents solutions to this debate – universalism (30).

Argumentation stage

In the section 6-26 the problem is highlighted, while a solution is not presented. Although Wijk encourages the Left wing to “open up for more bodies and expressions” (8), it might not take its form in the way that identity political advocates such as Kiros would want (30). Further more Wijk presents a very polarised Left wing, where vastly different groups are included such as: older Marxists (4), younger identity political advocates (5), violent radicals (9), US-critics (9), culture journalists (6), or even an editor (2). When any of them speak up they represent the whole movement, while at the same time rejecting any other actors claim to represent the whole movement. Wijk reinforce this argument by using an example from the leftist history. When the First International stated that “The liberation of the working class must be reached by the working class alone”(17), it was immediately a contradiction since the writers weren’t a part of the working class (it was written by the arch-bourgeois Karl Marx, and arch-capitalist Friedrich Engels). This is however not only an example of how broad the concept of the Left wing is, but also an argument against identity politics. Sectarian groups can be replaced since ideas and ideologies are not based in “bodies” (15,21,22,24,25). The Left wing is divided into new groups and into which one each individual should be categorised is not easy, but is still done by the symbolic actors of the movement; it becomes important to neutralise suspected traitors (25). Wijk seem to have a difficult time mapping out these different groups within the movement but finds that the older Left wings commitment is born out of one’s own experience of oppression, disadvantage and vulnerability (22) while at the same time being skeptic towards conditions and ideas that are valid for all people (31,32). The newer Left wing on the
other hand aims to include more bodies and expressions (8) but also blurs the class analysis (33), which creates this clash between the groups. The identity becomes more important than universal human rights for the Left wing (15) and this in turn creates a tactic of pointing out opponents as liberals (26).

Conclusion stage

It can be seen as paradox that a debater with a leftist profile is urging the Left wing to embrace liberal ideas. But what he actually states is that the movement has a heritage (of universalism), and therefore actually challenge the ownership if the concept. Wijk argues that many within the Left wing see anti-racism, LGBT-rights, and fights for equality as a threat to the movement (10,11,12,13). This while a leftist actor such as Kiros can reject all other ideological views that don't rise from the essentialist perspective (including Wijk himself, see section 30,31,32). The biggest disagreement between the essentialist identity politics that Kiros represents and this proposed Universalist Left wing that Wijk argues for is that the first tends to fight for a certain group as a part of everyone’s war on all; that oppression is absolute and something that can be monopolised for oneself or the own group (22). The result would, according to Wijk, be a fight where violence and revenge becomes just as natural as in the Old Testament, the White House or the Islamic State. From an identity political perspective it is better to condemn an innocent rather than to let a traitor go free (25). If others in the movement are marked as racists, misogynists or homophobes their chances of being spokespersons for the movement is reduced. And at the same time symbolic actors arguing for a more individual based analysis can be marked as liberals (26). Is Wijk’s argumentation then just an attempt to meet both sides in the middle? The conclusion is that identity politics can be used to highlight injustices and problematise a movement but in itself doesn't have solutions since individual’s ideologies are not based on their identities. Wijk does also highlight that using the term Left wing is highly problematic since it does include a vast amount of groups and individuals.

The debate in itself tests the first thesis statement (T1) and proves it. The second thesis statement (T2) holds several arguments that hold a high conclusive power but isn’t
relevant to the thesis statement. While the importance of applying a Universalist concept to the Left wing is argued for correctly, the main tes contains several questions. Is it only liberals who have argued for equality and human rights? As can be seen in the argumentation stage, there are several examples of the Left wings complex relationship with these ideas, but at the same time the actual concept of the Left wing is diffuse.

**Analysis 11**

**Article: 11: “Judith Kiros: Identity politics is about surviving”**

**Source:** Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-20

**Author:** Judith Kiros

**T1: A socialist identity politics’ long-term goal is to dissolve the importance of identity.**

P1: sign argument: In order to end racism, the system in which bodies are oppressed needs to dissolve.

F1,P1: sign argument: Socialism without identity politics would end capitalism but not end racism, discrimination against disabled or LGBT-oppression.

F1,F1,P1: sign argument: When focus is aimed at marginalised individuals, unequal positions can be unraveled.

A1,F1,P1: rule argument: From a more classical Marxist socialism, the system has a built in process to create equality for all groups (the collective).

P2: cause argument: The fight for equal rights also strengthens and maintains the criticised system.

F1,P2: example argument: All systems of oppression are interwoven with the capitalist society.

A1,P2: consequence argument: If all humans posses equal rights in the way of having the same opportunities to social mobility, there cannot be a system with oppression.

**T2: Identity politics is not only about social mobility, but also about survival.**
P1: cause argument: Identity politics is a policy that regards survival and livelihood of the group it represents.

F1,P1: example argument: It is not the social mobility (the poverty) of the Afro-Swedish population that is important, rather that they die.

A1,F1,P1: consequence argument: Poverty and increasing mortality are closely linked.

C1: cause argument: Social mobility is based in economical, cultural and social power; if an individual lacks certain power in a bad system there is a risk of persecution, violence or death.

F1,C1: cause argument: Identity politics is only a process of bringing individuals together because of a shared experience of oppression.

F2,C1: sign argument: Whether identity politics where to be based in a socialist or liberal ideology it would still revolve around a marginalised group moving from one point to an other.

Confrontation stage

The article is an answer to Nina Björks article on identity politics (see analysis 9). The confrontation can be seen in Kiros claiming that Björk has misunderstood the concept of identity politics (2,3). In the text Kiros discusses how Left wing politics and identity politics can be intertwined, how it functions and ends by asking for a more open debate on the topic.

Opening stage

In the opening stage Kiros explains that identity politics is a policy based on certain politicised and marginalised identities (7), and how these groups need identity politics in order to survive (1). Since identity politics in itself is not an ideology (16), it needs socialism to function.

Argumentation stage
Kiros argumentation is built around a critique towards the capitalist patriarchy, in which systems of oppression are institutionalised (41,42,43). How other ideologies are not relating out of necessity to how the society is constructed is not stated. It is then not unique to the identity politics to have concepts of “equal rights” and “justice” as their own (9,10). The capitalist system can be torn apart (15) when the situation of marginalised groups (racialised, or Afroswedish, or transgender, or LGBT-persons) are made the highest priority (7). If equal rights are given to everyone the system is only maintained (13). Further more identity politics is not only about social mobility (the groups increased social, and cultural power) but also about surviving. No other philosophical, ideological or political movement is about surviving, and thus is opening up for systemic and personal violence on all marginalised groups (23,24). This includes Feministiskt Initiativ, who is in opposition to Kiros movement (red anti-racists and feminists, see section 17,18). Kiros agrees with Björk that a white cis-man necessarily doesn’t have “power over”, which contradicts her identity political argumentation (white cis-men can never be oppressed since they are not marginalised, and can only be equal to marginalised groups when their identity is dissolved, see section 35,43). For racism to stop existing, bodies must stop being of political importance, which is the goal with the identity politics (37,38,39). In the capitalist competitive society, all oppression is interwoven (43), and therefor identity politics and socialism must be intertwined (40). This theory is, according to Kiros, contested by both the Left wing and people involved in identity politics (45, 51), which tries to depoliticise identity politics. Hence, the identity politics cannot be a unified movement (questioning if Kiros can be a spokesperson for it, see section 18). The article ends with requests from Kiros. Firstly that the discussion should be more practical (55), that it should try to find alliances and issues that can unite (57,58). No suggestions are made.

Conclusion stage
Kiros explains how identity politics can be a part of the Left wing (or socialist ideology). It is however a quite simplified definition that leaves you with many unanswered questions. Firstly it is only stated that some groups are politicised and marginalised, not how. Secondly, there is again confusion in what the Left wing really is. Here Kiros attacks the feminist (and socialist) party Feministiskt Initiativ for upholding the (liberal, capitalistic) system that institutionalises oppression (17,18,19,20). If it is because they have another feminist focus than Kiros, or if they prioritise the issue differently is not stated. Note that the critique that Kiros presents towards equal rights and justice (9), are similar to what many critics have said about identity politics (see analysis 1,5,10,13,14). Equal rights are only interesting when capitalism and liberalism end. How Liberalism as an ideology should be eradicated is not stated. At the same time the critique towards the actual debate that Kiros presents (55) sound very similar to the critics as well (see analysis 4,5). It becomes more interesting to discuss who should have the right to discuss rather than actual political suggestions. There is also a contradiction between the text and Kiros previous article (see analysis 6), since she in the latter claims that feminism (although not stating what sort of orientation) is an identity political method, whilst she in the current argumentation states that identity politics is not ideological in itself. This lowers the sustainability of the argumentation but only if it is not valued in itself.

In the end Kiros asks for several different things. Firstly she argues that the discussion should be more practical, in the way that the tools and methods of identity politics are not clear. This is arguably an answer that should come from Kiros herself since she (unlike the opponent of the argumentation, Björk is), is an advocate of identity politics, but it also exemplifies the actual debate and the conflict of interests (53); it is still not agreed upon that identity politics is something that the Left wing should be involved in (thus an identity political discussion cannot take place, see section 55). How the identity political movement supposes to find “allies” is difficult when even a socialist, feminist and anti racist party such as Feministiskt Initiativ are not accepted, may be a question that the proposed debate should examine.
The credibility of Kiros is from an identity political perspective very low. Firstly she talks about the situation of transgender persons but also about LGBT-immigrants (42). Since she is not a part of any of these groups she breaks her own rules (to never represent a group or movement that one does not belong to). This lowers the argumentation from an identity political perspective but not from an intersectional one. Identity politics with the definition that Kiros presents contradicts her definition of the goal. Identity politics can only present a policy that is built around certain politicised and marginalised groups (either racialised or LGBT etc.). Socialism takes its form from a whole class. Both concepts therefor have to have an “other”-part. What can be seen in section 35 is that the final goal of identity politics is the dissolvent of oppressed identities. What the argumentation fails to explain is what defines an oppressed group (other than oneself) and if other groups are allowed to continue to have their identities 40,41,42.

The first tes (T1) holds a high level of sustainability since it only describes the long-term goal of a socialist identity politics, not specifically how. The relevance therefor is not as high. A strong argument against the tes is also that the tes is based in an assumption that the only political ideology that can end oppression is socialism. If all people would believe this there would be no need for democratic elections, no wars or other conflicts. Further more there is always an uncertainty with philosophical normative thesis statement that is presented as factual ones. Therefor the argumentation holds a weak conclusive power.
Analysis 12

Article: 12: “Moa Matthis: Not only the Left Wing has a bloody history of double entry”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-12-10

Author: Moa Matthis

T1: Both the Left and Right wing have a history of building structural oppression.

P1: example argument: The right wing has separated black men from white men, leading to a racist society.

F1,P1: analogy argument: The American Declaration of Independence was written to defend the slave trade.

F1,F1,P1: analogy argument: Although it stated that: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal”, it did not include black men.

P2: analogy argument: The left wing has a history of treating women as second-class citizens.

F1,P2: cause argument: The union, SAF (the employers confederation) and science agreed upon this division.

F2,P2: example argument: Women’s salaries are still not equal to men.

F3,P2: cause argument: The working class men were paid with the money taken from the working class women

T2: Identity politics can highlight oppression but not end it.

P1: example argument: Identity politics can only highlight the oppression of the specific individuals.

F1,P1: sign argument: White working class men could only argue for themselves.

F2,P1: sign argument: With an identity political voice, “we” and “all” as defined by already existing bodies (within that group), is being questioned.

F3,P1: cause argument: For instance the working class men and women where, because of the identity political perspective required to have conflicts of interest in order to give power to the marginalised group.
F1,F3,P1: analogy argument: In the case of the Clothing workers congress this is exemplified by how the women was forced to see the men as enemies rather than the system in which they all were exploited.

**Confrontation stage**

Moa Matthis is entering the debate by question the argumentation of Erik Wijk (analysis 10), Nina Björk (analysis 9), and Åsa Linderborg (analysis 1). She also concurs with Judith Kiros in her questioning of Linderborg (analysis 6). History again plays an important role in the identity political debate; there is a focus on what certain groups have done towards other groups (2,6,13,24,47).

**Opening stage**

The main concept of Matthis’ article revolves around the creation of “Us” and “All” (or everyone), and how both the Left wing and Right wing uses these universal categories to include and favour some groups (16,17,18,19). Where the liberals have used identity politics to defend slave trade (2,3,13,47,50,51), the Left wing have used it to defend injustice to women (24,30,32,35,38,45,46,47,64).

**Argumentation stage**

Matthis questions the relevance of Wijks historical example by showing of liberal examples of exploitation (13), and later on also on leftist examples (24). Here Matthis argues for the usage of identity politics since it can be used to reveal otherwise invisible groups that the “we” and “all” hinders. Groups that are invisible cannot enjoy “equality” if they don’t “exist” (18,19). Both the Left wing and Right wing has a history of injustices. “We” and “all” have been used to describe the group in power (white men). These groups have used identity politics to identity oppression and organise themselves around these experienced feelings of injustice (18,35,38,42).
Matthis dismisses Nina Björk’s argumentation in a quite discreet way stating that: “Nina Björk separates ‘power over’ and ‘power to’ is analytically stylish but it is strategically misguided” (36,37), using positive words while at the same time stating that Björk is wrong. In other words, Matthis argues that there is no separation between “power over” and “power to”, rather they are a creation of the capitalistic competitive society (38).

It is context that defines how society is shaped (2,6,12,24,47,48), and identity politics is a way of taking on the only reasonable choice to a new community (39,40,41,42). In order for these new communities to arise and prosper there is a need for “enemies” instead of standing united. Men have during the history been taught that men were better workers, since women was encumbered by “certain handicaps” such as emotions, menstruation and children (6,45,46), white men have been taught that black men couldn’t be equal since they weren’t “real” men (2,13,14,15), and so on. Hence Identity politics can be used to describe how the Western mainstream politics include and benefit some distinctly defined bodies (16,17,18,19,20,21). The idea of justice becomes important when taken seriously (22). An example of this is the issue of unequal salaries between women and men (26). According to Matthis reasoning Linderborg and Björk are wrong in their reasoning since they uphold a structured oppression (36,37,54, 57,58,59,62,64) by failing to see that political fights are struggles for symbols and representation (56). The symbolic actors on the Left wing create and uphold the loyalties that help the current structured oppression to continue (61).

**Concluding stage**

Matthis argumentation concludes that the society’s function and what moral and ethical factors that are driving forces affects the outcome of equality and justice (21,22,24,38,41,42). Neither the political Left wing or Right wing have a clean record dealing with injustices since moral and ethics have been defined after the bodies of that time. The concept of identity politics can therefor be used to reveal new bodies, but cannot change the moral and ethics leading to equality and justice. On the contrary Matthis argues that it divides groups and upholds systems of oppression (33,39). Men and women must unite to get past inequality (66,67). The identity politics can for
instance help working class women gang up, but it can also be used for ethnical Swedes to organise themselves into a nationalistic party. Further more identity politics lacks the tools for finding common experiences of injustice since the focus always is on what separates rather than what unites the group. Working class men are according to Matthis satisfied with the exploitation of the working class women (35,38,43,44); it becomes more important to uphold the fight between the sexes rather than to fight the system (creating the unjust salaries). This argumentation tests and gives strength to the second thesis statement (T2) since both very precise examples are given (presented by prominent scholars, i.e. an authority argument), as well as a sign argument (54, 64).

This sort of text puts the reader through the “academic” test; not only should the reader be familiar with terms such as “postmodern identity politics” (57), the different versions of the Marxist philosophical tradition (58) and realpolitik (and how it can take on “the” Marxist theory, see section 59), but also the theories of Aristotle (48). The debate also demands that the reader actually reads the other symbolic actors texts (sometimes several articles from each).

Analysis 13

Article: 13: “Yoav Bartal: Identity politics is building walls within Sweden”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-27

Author: Yoav Bartal

T1: If we accept identity politics and the special treatment, we risk giving up the ambition of Sweden as a common and including project.

P1: cause argument: Identity politics becomes a strategy for income creating so called “immigrant projects”.

F1,P1: sign argument: Immigrants risk segregating themselves in racialised communities.

P2: cause argument: The racialised theories behind some of the identity politics holds back or even disbands the joint resistance against racism.
F1,P2: sign argument: This since some symbolic actors are allowed to judge who really is racialised and who isn’t.

P3: sign argument: There is a risk that groups given special treatment will become lazy and not contribute to society.

A1,P3: cause argument: In which way is there a correlation between special treatments such as quotas for women or immigrants into work places, or special care for people with disabilities and being lazy?

C1: consequence argument: What is special treatment? Should citizens with disabilities not be able to receive extra benefits from the state? Should Special needs education be forbidden in schools?

F1,C1: sign argument: If they do not receive language courses, immigrants risk getting stuck in a negative circle where a chance of finding jobs, education and incoming is low. This in turn becomes a obstacle towards affording language courses.

**T2: Sverigedemokraterna structure their ideologies around the same maxim of unequal rights, thus being a form of identity politics.**

P1: sign argument: When some groups receive special treatments such as extra resources to end segregation, well fare or free schooling, this is unequal to those that are in no need of these treatments.

P2: cause argument: The group categorises and define themselves around their experienced oppression, in turn creating groups revolving around a single axis of identity.

C1: example argument: Sverigedemokraterna is not a marginalised group in society, and can therefor not be advocates of identity politics.

A1,C1: example argument: Many members of this political party are uneducated (low in social power), are unemployed or retired (low in economical power) and have self-perceived experience of oppression (since their cultural power is “contested”).

**Confrontation stage**

The text and its argumentation revolve around a conflict between the liberal Yoav Bartal (66) and the advocates of identity politics, including Judith Kiros and the Left Wing (18), the racialised identity politics (9,11,12), and Sverigedemokraterna (SD, see section
Bartal argues that a continued identity political progress might risk the nation (25) and bring it back to a sort of communist Iron curtain mental wall (4,5,7).

**Opening stage**

People different from the norm, which are different in regard of gender, sexuality, skin colour and ethnicity (10), gains unequal special treatments and thus creating an unequal society. Bartal argues that a continued identity political progress and its focus on the minorities (and not the individual) might risk the nation (25).

**Argumentation stage**

It is first in the very end that Bartals ideological belonging is revealed (66) – namely in liberalism. However, the text presents several arguments hinting on his worldview (16,17).

Bartal argues that people immigrating to Sweden must be able to learn Swedish, get a job, pay taxes and support their relatives (51). This process should not cost the society anything and Bartal highlights that these “immigration projects” are unfair (23). Earlier in the text he also states that it is not only the “racialised” immigrants that lives of the Swedish society (19,20,22,23) but all people different from the norm (the white norm stated at section 35), which are different in regard of gender, sexuality, skin colour and ethnicity (10). All different from the white norm gain unequal special treatments and thus create an unequal society. How has the value of privileges been reduced? Bartal gives several examples: the citizens feel a lesser obligation to see to their children arrive on time for school, behave and do their homework (44), the citizens also feel a lesser obligation to vote and take part in the democratic process (47).

Bartal is also worried that Sweden will lose its ambition of being a common and including project (25). When marginalised groups (11) close the door to other groups (upholding the role as the “others”), they play right in the hands of opponents such as racists (27,28,29). This is also seen in the equality debate where all men (34) are being blamed (by whom is not stated). In the same way Bartal is critical to the identity political
approach to structure (which can also be seen in analysis 2), where all white persons are considered to be racists since they don’t have racism on the top of their agendas (considered to be structural white norms, see section 35).

**Concluding stage**

Sweden democrats (28,29,30,40) and marginalised groups (19,23,28,32,33, 40) are only demanding rights, while the liberals are contributing (39,66). Further more, identity politics locks people up in excluding classification systems (60,61) such as being racialised or non-racialised (or in other words being non-white), having a certain gender or sexuality (10).

The “racialised” identity politics and how this concept is used as a strategy for income (19) is the focus main argument of the text. The reasoning seems to come back to one underlying meaning: that all identities and included statuses are selectable. Immigrants choose be segregated (19,32,40,52,53). “Racialised” advocates of identity politics are lazy and irresponsible (39,40). Again the others (from the liberals) are brought to the agenda (See for example analysis 6). Identity politicians such as Judith Kiros and her Left Wing comrades (18) are too lazy with our children (44), they don’t vote (47), work or pay taxes (49). The argumentation does not provide any facts or statistics on how these claims and neither any references. This lowers the sustainability of the argumentation vastly.

The principle that every human is unique and possesses its own value outside of the group is not a unique view of Bartal, but shared by others. For instance liberal feminists sees the individual woman, working hard, as an example of how women can be successful regardless of how the surrounding functions. It is here the differences between the more collectivistic ideologies and the individual-based ideologies are clear. This is also exemplified in the analogy argument “communist Iron curtain mental wall”, which for liberals clearly has a more negative connotation than it would for more radical socialist ideologies.
An interesting aspect of Bartals argumentation is the absent definition of “us” while there is a great emphasise on the “them”. While being meticulous in his explanation of how racists and other advocates of identity politics function and are, he uses a vague “we” when talking about himself and his ideological fellows.

Even though the sustainability of Bartals thesis statements is acceptable, the relevance of the argument is not. It is difficult to apply a liberal perspective (that the individual can change ones living situation without any help) on a marginalised group (here on immigrants) and generalise on how they are lazy and not interested in integration. The second tes (T2) on the other side is both relevant and holds a high conclusive power.

**Analysis 14**

**Article: 14: “Solidarity beats identity”**

**Source:** Aftonbladet 2014-12-03

**Author:** Åsa Lindeborg

**T1 The goal justifies the means.**

P1: example argument: Since the power relation is asymmetrical the legit actions are asymmetrical as well.

F1,P1: consequence argument: In order to break stagnated unequal relations in society, psychological violence can be accepted.

F2,P1: example argument: In radical ideologies such as political extremist groups (including Nazi-groups, Left wing-terrorists and radical feminist groups), violence is a just a method in order to achieve long-term goals (such as domination, equality or the break down of the patriarchy).

A1,F1,P1: rule argument: All citizens in a society are equal to the law.

A2,F1,P1: consequence argument: It is against all democratic decency.

C1,A2,F1,P1: rule argument: Who sets the values for democratic decency?

C1: example argument: The discriminated can also exercise power.
F1,C1: example argument: There are different kinds of power and they are dependent on context.

F2,C1: cause argument: Unified minorities can reverse asymmetrical power relations by using slander, boycotts and/or bullying.

C2: sign argument: Who is allowed to represent a minority?

**T2 The Left wing is prejudiced.**

P1: example argument: Leftist elite actors can assault powerless groups unhindered.

F1,P1: example argument: The power relation is asymmetrical.

A1,P1: sign argument: Is the asymmetrical power relation unique to the Left wing? No

A2,P1: consequence argument: Who decides which groups are powerless?

F1,A2,P1: sign argument: can powerless groups be part of powerful movements without losing their status as powerless?

A1,F1,A2,P1: example argument: Power is not stagnant, it changes in relation to situation, counter-part and arena.

C1P1: sign argument: If the Left wing is prejudice, minorities are excluded.

F1,C1: analogy argument: Afro-Swedish groups are given space to have seminars etc. at one of the largest socialist forums.

F2,C1: analogy argument: Afro-Swedish symbolic actors such as Valerie Kyeyune Backström and Judith Kiros represents the Left wing in media.

C1,P2: consequence argument: Since white cis-persons are not supposed to talk about racialised or transgender experiences one must separate the Left wing.

A1, C1,P2: example argument: The Left wing is not a unified movement sharing a similar ideological perspective.

C2: rule argument: All movements and ideologies have forms of prejudices.

F1,C2: rule argument: It is impossible for a movement to render prejudices from certain individuals.
Confrontation stage

Åsa Linderborgs article can be seen as a defense speech, where she tries to give answers to many other symbolic actors. Thus numerous confrontations can be found, dividing the discourse into several different ones. The journalist, author, and press secretary for the trade union Komunal, Kawa Zolfagary argues that twitterers (people active on the social media Twitter) have no power compared to Linderborg (26). This notion of social media power will be used many times in the debate. Åsa Linderborg also has a confrontation with the journalist Maria Ramnehill (36, see analysis 8), and the journalist and play writer Alexa Lundberg (42,52) regarding how the author and journalist Kajsa Ekis Ekman (34) is persecuted for her alleged trans-phobia. In the end of the article an ideological debate on what the Left wing stands for and whom the movement belongs to is discussed with Judith Kiros (analysis 6,11) and Valerie Kyeyune Backström (126,161,265, see analysis 7). Thus three different topics or areas of discussion can be found: Transgender & social media activists (1-57), the Left wing (58-107) and lastly how racialised persons take place in the Left wing (108-55). These topics are rooted in the identity politics debate.

Opening stage

Åsa Linderborg states that the Left wing is attacked or blamed for having several prejudices (14,19,20) and at the same time she (continues) to question how the concept of identity politics is leftist (15,78,97).

Argumentation stage

Even in the beginning of her argumentation, Linderborg gives a clear example of her discourse: that she is being accused of being against all forms of identity politics (16). In the sentence just before this statement she questions in which way identity politics is leftist (15). If Identity politics is leftist, can it only touch upon concerns for the Left wing? Are there no liberal or conservative transgender persons? Are there no racialised persons living in the upper-class?
The liberals and the liberal hegemony seem to be one of the most insulting things for many of the “leftist” symbolic actors (see analysis 2), including Åsa Linderborg (161,167,172,181). Since the different symbolic actors (from both sides) do not share a definition of the concept it can be hard for the reader to follow the argumentation. Where Kiros (166, see analysis 6) takes of in her identity political approach, liberal hegemony concerns attributes for identity building (haircuts, clothes etc.), using the right words (maybe not always used outside of the own group) and having the right music taste (again as the group). As a “liberal” example of the liberal hegemony, Linderborg mentions Yoav Bartals (see analysis 13) strive of a national identity that is spared of the mechanisms of the capitalistic system, a strive that is similar to the nationalistic Sverigedemokraterna. But what does Linderborg mean by this? Going back to the core of identity politics it is the authenticity of the (believed) oppression that an individual feels, and later is shared with other individuals feeling the same oppression. In Bartals case it is the national identity that is somehow oppressed (much like Sverigedemokraternas view of a oppressed group of true ethnic swedes).

This is why identity politics, as a radical process, is difficult to apply to the Left wing (socialist) movement. Its categorical mechanism hinders a socialist (and with all its ideological branches reaching for the same goal) strategy to deconstruct the class hegemony. Linderborg exemplifies this by pointing out these liberal (or individualistic) factors that also can be seen in the example of Bartals (claimed) liberal hegemony (173,174,176,177,178). But mainly this shows how identity politics creates conflicts between groups from both the paradigm of redistribution and the paradigm of recognition. It can regard an identity in line with the nationalistic view of Sverigedemokraterna (109, 178: white+ heterosexual+ middle class/ working class) or a capitalistic liberal hegemony (117,172,181 middle/upper class+ wealthy).
Concluding stage

What Linderborg questions is if anything is justifiable in order to give the oppressed minority more power. In her rhetoric she uses the hate and threats towards her fellow colleague Kajsa Ekis Ekman, which has been persecuted (28,29,33,34,35,39,40) for her book *Varat och varan* (2010-2011), where she used the wrong terms when describing transgender persons (see analysis 8).

In section 145-149 Linderborg questions the logic of identity politics and its desire for representation.

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Åsa Linderborgs first thesis statement (T1) revolves around transgender identity politics and its focus on whether or not the Left Wing is trans-phobic (1-57). As a normative thesis statement it has a lower sustainability since it does not include any authoritative arguments but is high on relevance since she uses actual examples (both sign arguments and example argument) to show what the consequences of identity political methods looks like.

The second thesis statement (T2) can be found in the second part of the text (58-107), and revolves around the issue of who gets to define and represent the Left Wing. As can be seen in the analysis, this is an ideological term with vastly different descriptions depending on whom one asks. This lowers the conclusive power since it becomes
difficult to argue against or for something that is not clearly defined; the Left wing is a complex group to generalise around.

Note how Linderborg takes several male actors (even from the Left Wing) comments to her argumentation (26,107), high lighting an important notion – that although they cannot share the exact same experiences (then again, who can), they can still exchange opinions. From an identity politics perspective this would be impossible since only symbolic actors who share the same levels of oppression i.e. experiences can represent each other. This is exemplified in the sections 145-149: the identity politics demand that the highest level of complex identity categorisation (sharing notions with the intersectional perspective), in order for a person to represent oneself.

For afro-swedes, the issue of not being able attends universities and not being able to get into the housing market is very important (and justly so). Racialised persons can carry out this fight, but no others, only the ones matching the complex identity (afro + poor +uneducated +? +?+? = ?).

For other racialised groups, these questions can be seen as less important. The last couple of year’s undocumented migrants from other EU-countries such as Romania have come to Sweden in search for a better future. Many of them lack food, clean water, housing (except for tents) and education. In the rhetoric of identity politics themselves can only represent them in media, politics and other instances. These struggles become irrelevant in other groups agenda settings. For transgender persons (or at least for their symbolic actors), the need to deconstruct the biological gender is far more important than to discuss whether or not a non-white person can go to university.

The case of the EU-migrants is a powerful argument when questioning the identity politics since it brings in even more complex variables that needs to be dealt with in order to conduct a relevant intersectional analysis (in turn to be able to find which group the individual can represent). Are EU-migrants a part of the Swedish society (can they be included into the Left Wing or the “proletariat”)? Are all EU-migrants (regardless of original home country) leftist, or are there members of the “proletariat” that share
ideological ideas with the Right Wing or other conscious ideologies? If the latter is true, then can any Roma person represent the whole Romani population?

**Analysis 15**

**Article:** 15: “Identity politics is a well-fare disease”

**Source:** Svenska Dagbladet Kultur 2014-12-27

**Author:** Thomas Engström

**T1: Identity politics is a well-fare disease.**

P1: example argument: Only a society in peace, prosperity and with well-functioning legal principles can be bothered to suffer from racism, segregation and increasing gaps between the rich and the poor.

A1,P1: cause argument: Racism, segregation and increasing gaps between the rich and the poor are not emotional statuses, rather economical problems which are actual to many people.

A2,P1: sign argument: Fallacy arguments such as: “Since I’m not poor and live in society, the society cannot have people in poverty” hold little to no sustainability.

P2: sign argument: When vulnerable groups can raise their voices, it is a sign of something well.

F1,P2: cause argument: Only threats of physical violence holds marginalised groups back.

**T2: Liberalism is the answer to all problems in society.**

P1: example argument: Liberalism is a philosophical tradition that puts the right before good.

A1,P1: consequence argument: The right for whom?

A2,P1: example argument: What is the good?

C1: cause argument: Not all problems in society can be general.
F1, C1: cause argument: Sickness is a problem for sick citizens (although it can become a financial issue in societies with universal healthcare).

F2, C1: cause argument: Property tax is only a problem for those who own property.

**Confrontation stage**

The confrontation in Engströms argumentation can be found in the relation between liberalism as an ideology and identity politics as a concept. It is also a fight between the “good guys”, the liberals, and the “evil guys”, namely the Left wing (and/or the identity politicians).

**Opening stage**

Thomas Engström has a strong message that he argues for: not only is identity politics wrong but a disease that Sweden has to be purged from. Further more Engström argues that the Western society (15,18) today is to concerned about the packaging of new political theories (23) and how we portray and express our identities (20).

**Argumentation stage**

The text can be divided into three different parts: the first discussing identity politics and the Left Wing (1-57), also known as the problem. The second part discusses liberalism and its contribution to the western democracy (58-81), or the real remedy. The last part highlights how this problem (identity politics and other left wing theories) has a common source the US (82-94). The author has a quite infected relationship to the US.

The critique that the author has against identity politics is harsh. Not only is identity politics and its followers shallow (18,19) and at the same time difficult (22,36,43), but also a hopeless case of arrogant (21) and immature behaviour (even animalistic) from young people without any real life experience. The whole existence of identity politics is even questioned (85).
Engström argues that there is no relation between certain individuals' special positions and the Right wing ideologies (being which? See section 54). Further more Engström argues that liberalism can be thanked for democracy, the Swedish legal system, equality (including anti-racism and feminism?) and free trade (59-69).

**Concluding stage**

The glorification of liberalism (59) is key to Engströms text and is seen as the true and final definition of this liberalism. All other definitions coming from identity politicians (see analysis 1) is considered to be a sort of absurd “hyper-liberalism” (57) close to anarchism (55) and Satanism (56). What kind of pentagrams and joyful parties (57) these “hyper-liberals” have is not stated. On the notion of borrowing theories and concepts from the US, Engströms explanation to the perfection of the Swedish liberalism is that while the US is stuck in an eternal 1965, Sweden is benefiting from several “liberal” ideas such as democracy, a functioning legal systems, equality and free trade (59-69). Engström further more warns us from being influenced by the American identity political theories since they can bring Communitarianism (87).

To summarise the argumentation, Engström states that anything else than liberalism is a childish and hopeless struggle to be something that can only be considered as the lowest artistic expression known to mankind - for instance the Left Wing and identity politics.

Engström seems to fail in his own argumentation since he on the one hand uses the French revolution as a prime example of the greatness of liberalism while at the same time claiming that there are no individual special positions to be found in the Right wing. The French revolution was as Brauhn points out (see analysis 4), a result of a premature identity political process where citizens of a certain class belonging came together. This argumentation gives an example of how the concept of identity politics is not very well defined; how is not the joining of liberal individuals a result of individuals' special position (54)? But what is then the liberal’s main agenda (or goal)?
It is interesting to see that Engström not only aims heavy critique towards the concept of identity politics (1, 21,24,26,49,58,84,85) but also at the Left wing (36,50). This polarisation of the Left wing seems to not only come from within the Left wing (see analysis 1), but also from the outside. Discussing, testing, proving and questioning ideas or concepts is keen to the social sciences (though not in the terms of Engström). With this said, it of course becomes difficult if the symbolic actors of the concept currently discussed hinders it. Engström exemplifies this by showing how terms such as “liberalism” or “imperialism” are thrown at people as soon as they don’t agree. It is however unfortunate that the author doesn’t follow his own example by using this tactic himself, bantering and slandering everyone that does not agree upon the liberal ideology that he presents (21,24,35,43,48,57,58,67,72,85,87,93).

It all comes down to the last few sentences in the text; one can try to belong to a group (based on identity?) but it is not a human right (instead it is the human’s sacred right). What the difference is between universal human rights and this sacred right is not stated. But what does this mean? Does liberalism allow people to try to become rich and thus changing class group? Can a cis-person be allowed to leave the heteronormative state of always being considered a heterosexual? Should a transgender person “try” to become complete? Or are all of these sacred attempts animalistic and immature attempts to flounder in the “wrong” direction (to use Engströms own description on everything that is not liberalism)?

The first thesis statement (T1) hold little relevance if analysed from a collective perspective since it is focused on the individual. Moreover the conclusive power of the whole argumentation is not increased by the fact that the second thesis statement is normative and lacks in amount of example arguments.
Appendix 2

Article 1

Article: 1: “It damn must be politically correct”

Source: Aftonbladet 2014-11-07

Author: Åsa Linderborg

1. It damn must be politically correct
2. Åsa Linderborg: the opinion police poison the debate regarding race and gender.
3. Following I will think out loud.
4. The subject that I want to discuss –
5. identity politics –
6. is so complicated that I don’t have anything but questions.
7. Still I want to draw up a foundation
8. to what I hope to be a constructive debate.

9. I see myself as politically correct.
10. That will say,
11. I strive to work for every human’s equal value and opportunity
12. regardless of gender, ethnicity, race (if we now use that term), sexuality, disability etc.
13. To the definition of PC (politically correct)
14. the category class never is accounted –
15. It often ends up that way when the Left wing is getting along with the liberals –
16. but I am also class conscious.
17. Naturally I also possess prejudices,
18. and I can of course act selfish in certain situations,
19. but I try to be as solidary I can.
20. I dare to say,
21. the most PC-people do.
22. Freedom of speech often makes it difficult,
23. it is easier to be PC if one think that prejudice expressions should be forbidden,
24. but sometimes one is forced to do the ideologically delicate wrestling matches.

25. Everyone calling themselves democrats and humanists must be politically correct,
26. otherwise one is something else,
27. but some have taken positions that feels impossibly unyielding.
28. This is often built on mistrust,
29. where one refuses to admit to someone’s good intentions.
30. The climate starts to feel like
31. the one found in leftist circles during the 70’s;
32. a dogma that resulted in purges.
33. The politically correct starts to tip over to some kind of authority consciousness.
34. I shall state some examples:

35. In the book *Varat och varan* (Being and goods),
36. Kajsa Ekis Ekman foolishly
37. calls a transgender woman for “him”.
38. One can interpret that as an expression of trans-phobia.
39. Or one can see it as lack of knowledge.
40. The fair thing to do
41. would be to test the generous interpretation,
42. lack of knowledge,
43. and Kajsa Ekis Ekman have over and over said that she used the wrong pronoun,
44. but it hasn’t been accepted.

45. On the international women’s day
46. Maria Sveland organised a grand evening at *Södra teatern*,
47. which was subject for boycott by some transgender persons and feminists,
48. since Kajsa Ekis Ekman was one of the speakers.
49. They therefor arranged an “alternative festival”,
50. since they as transgender persons
51. “weren’t feeling safe in the feminist room”
52. if Ekis was there.
53. There was also a boycott in Malmö when Kajsa Ekis Ekman were invited
54. by Socialist doctors, The Left Party, Fi (Feministiskt Initiativ), RFSL (The Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights) to name some.

55. The critic have also regarded that Kajsa Ekis Ekman writes that
56. the transgender woman appropriates femininity just like
57. whites appropriates blacks etc.
58. Even here she has nuanced herself –
59. it was a completely misplaced analogy that was going to explain something else entirely –
60. but it’s not enough.
61. It has also occurred critic against that Kajsa Ekis Ekman mainly writes
62. about cis women that prostitutes,
63. when it is also common that transgender person do it.
64. (a cis person is a person that is unambiguously and always have been defined as either a male or female by the outside world, opposite to a transgender person).
65. It is a criticism that has affected others than Ekis.
66. At the same time it is hard to understand
67. how she should have acted,
68. since there is a maxim that reads:
69. “never talk about us. Talk with us. NEVER talk for us.”
70. The thing is that Kajsa Ekis Ekman also have criticised surrogacy,
71. which has stirred up mostly the liberal side of the LGBT-movement.
72. In other words:
There is both a troubling and sloppy use of concepts as well as an ideological conflict to be found.

Kajsa Ekis Ekman is also a columnist at ETC (a leftist newspaper).

The editorial staff was this spring,

four years after the book was published,

contacted with a demand that Ekis should quit writing there.

On Twitter the following repression have been stated:

Any one linking to an article by Ekis gets a yellow card,

two gets a red.

After the 8th of March-event

there was an infected debate on social medias

where persons standing up for Ekis got anonymous messages;

if they didn’t change their minds

their employers would be contacted and they would lose their jobs.

ostracism, McCarthyism, Stalinism...

call it whatever.

but the one demanding that an opponent

should be excluded from the social community or shouts for a professional ban

can never be believable when hen is talking warmly of human rights.

Identity politics has a lot of concepts that are difficult to handle

when oneself is not active in the discourse.

The language pitfalls are everywhere,

there are many that falls

even though they didn’t want anything else but to show empathy and solidarity.

But the concepts also hold categorisations that sometimes hide rather than reveals power structures.

Nina Björk wrote an article in Dagens Nyheter about perinatal health care and women who gives birth.

In social medias it was considered to be cis normative since men also can give birth

(that will say men who previously have been defined as women and that have kept their genitals).

Liv Strömquist is now releasing the comic book Kunskapens frukt (the fruit of knowledge),

which is about “what is often called the female genital”.

She has also been accused of being a messenger of the cis normativity.

It is not enough writing

“what is often called”,

it is still seen as she rubs in that only women have vaginas,

when it can also be humans that are men that have it.

I can understand that the transgender persons feel excluded,

but the fact is that 99.5 % or more of all women have a cunt

which gives us a lot of common experiences on

wage discrimination, double work, higher sickness rates, diminishing in the public space etc.
112. Of course transgender women are women and transgender men are men,
113 but if we can't talk about willies and pussies we deny the gender oppression.
114. Then we can't talk about the patriarchy or even fight for gender equality.
115. There are also identity politicians that states this:
116. the word gender equality should go,
117. since it implicates that men and women are “natural” and given categories.
118. Then it is not much left of feminism.
119. And there is not much left of the Left Wings system critic
120. when everything comes down to an extreme individualistic micro level.
121. Plain and simple liberalism.
122. The core message in the identity politics is that prejudices exist all the time.
123. This is true,
124. and I was a couple of years ago honest enough
125. to formulate my own,
126. with reason to Ruben Östlunds Play.
127. I mean that the film reinforces the colonial gaze on black persons in a way that
128. destroys a century of anti-racist struggle;
129. when I came out of the theater
130. my brain flashed hundreds of stereotypes.
131. It is from an anti racist (and class) point
132. I hate that movie.

132. Because of this
133. I am now accused to have racist prejudices every time I see a black person:
134. Åsa Linderborgs critic towards Alice Bah Kuhnke doesn’t regard
135. that the minister of culture is incompetent,
136. rather that she is black.
137. With this argumentation technique
138. there are no possibilities to discuss at all.
139. The public discussion is murdered.
140. If one does skin colour of everything,
141. one does not see the power if it for ones isn’t white.
142. If one make the issue of representation superior,
143. one covers up the ideological (and class) contradictions
144. that after all exists.
145. All black persons does not strive in the same direction
146. and doesn’t have the same socio economical interests.

147. For me as a socialist
148. all humans equal value and possibilities goes without saying,
149. it is the actual liberation project.
150. But the identity politics as it is now
151. seem to start having a strong liberal bias.
152. This is moreover symptomatic for the whole Left wing,
153. which means that many identity politicians who really are liberals
154. can call themselves left while many liberals think that the Left wing because of the
identity politics has completely derailed.
154. It is more liberal than leftist to make representation a question of skin colour and not structure.
155. It is what makes us stuck in the symbols –
165. *Lilla Hjärtat.* negroball (a pastry)
166. which are as important,
167. but never extend to deal with the living conditions in Gottsunda.
168. We stare us blind in the differences in one individual work -
169. an author who made a mistake when she thought she was doing right
170. one can banish –
171. instead of looking at an entire structural level.
172. It is much easier,
173. a book one can throw away,
174. but to overturn an entire suppression
175. requires a political response of a different kind than the Liberals are prepared to.

176. The question of representation is important,
177. but it is limiting in a shallow liberal way.
178. For the individual,
179. it may be feasible and important as a symbol,
180. but it can never lift a whole collective.
181. In the same way
182. my individual class journey haven’t been a way for the whole working class ascending.
183. Sure you can set quotas for the women in company boards,
184. but it’s still a damn board.
185. While identity politics makes the question of representation superior it hit hard against all stereotypes.
186. It is also easy to sign up to.
187. I myself am tormented by all conventionalized images of the working class
188. whether they come from the right or left.
189. but even here the authoritarian mind can strike.

190. Recently some wanted to stop Ulrich Seidls movie Paradise Love from SVT’s schedule.
191. It is considered prejudiced since it portrays black male prostitution in Kenya.
192. This is reminiscent to the feminist film criticism in the 90s,
193. which was about to never portray women as victims.
194. But the problem is that women often are victims.
195. It does not stand in contradiction to also showing strong female characters.

196. If the culture cannot deal with how black people are exposed to racism in the labor market,
197. then we make oppression invisible.
198. At the same time,
199. it becomes a problem if black people is not also depicted in other ways.
200. That is why it is good that Alice Bah Kuhnke is a minister
201. and Obama President,
202. because this kind of representation makes us associate black people with a lot of different things.

203. One major problem with identity politics is that it more often earnestly blame and divides.
204. One should feel guilty for not taking part in the fight,
205. while not being allowed to join because one does not understand how it is to be black, gay, transgender, etc.
206. Shut Tomas Ledin, you're not Jason, do not come here and wave your passport!
207. People who want to show solidarity gets to hear,
208. that you lack empirical experience and thus empathy to understand these issues
209. But what struggles can I as a white heterosexual be in?
210. What does the fight benefit from if Tomas Ledin stays at home and keep his mouth shut?
211. All experiences cannot be explained to others,
212. but we must trust that everyone still has the ambition to understand.
213. There is a difference between personal experience, ideology and social structure.
214. If we don’t get that all forms of solidarity is impossible and thus a mass movement.

215. The world history would have been different.
216. One can take out a patent on experience,
217. but one can never take out a patent on the fight.

218. This text can certainly be read as that I,
219. as a white leftist wants to put up guidelines –
220. that I am authoritarian, putting it simple –
221. and that may be,
222. but we still need to be able to have a discussion about what the fight should be about.
224. If we are serious that oppression is a structure (and not just a prejudiced culture) to be changed,
225. we must work broadly.
226. The issue is complicated and I certainly have simplified it on a number of points,
227. but it does not trouble me at the moment.
228. I hope that the dialectic,
229. that is,
230. the willingness to discuss our way forward,
231. will prevail over the authority consciousness.
232. The only thing I can possibly apologise for,
233. is that I haven’t written this text a long time ago.
Article 2

Article: 2: “Old injustices in a new version.”

Source: SvD Kultur 2014-06-16

Author: Per Bauhn

1. Old injustices in a new version.
2. Identity politics can be of good and contributed to us getting a democracy.
3. But if it is used to give power and space to just one specific group,
4. only a new version of old injustices will come,
5. writes philosophy-professor Per Bauhn.

6. In a strictly logical meaning
7. identity is complete equality.
8. If A is identic with B, everything true about A is true to B.
9. Identity politics is all about creating the experience of individuals
10. so that their most important interests coinciding with a certain group belonging.
11. Nationalists, racists, feminists, anti-racists, socialists, fascists –
12. they all can use identity arguments to mobilize supporters.

13. The result doesn't always have to be morally reprehensible.
14. Democracy, as we know it,
15. was for example established with the help of identity politics.
16. A territorially separated population
17. came to see itself as a collective of citizens with rights.
18. From the beginning one had in common
19. that one used to be minions to a more or less sovereign ruler.
20. One did not always share a common language, as the case of France 1789.
21. But if citizens together can exercise a common responsibility for a society,
22. they need to understand each other.
23. Even democrats have been interested of an identity politics
24. that intends to have one or more languages,
25. but the purpose is then to include rather than to exclude,
26. and to create conditions of a common political freedom.

27. Civil rights were early seen as local and territorial separated application of human rights.
28. The identity that citizens was perceived as
29. sprung out of the identity as humans.
30. It was therefore explanations of humans rights was included
31. in both the American as well as the French revolutions in the 18th century.
32. This also meant that a leveler for a continued democratisation was built in.
33. Governments could be hold responsible for how well the local politics answered to the human rights.
34. This happened in the United States.
35. Where both the fight against slavery as well as for the civil Rights movement could seek support in the definitions of human rights that was a part of the actual nation-building.

37. The identity thinking on the contrary becomes morally problematic when it isn’t put in relation to universal human values.
38. An identity politics that does not have any other goal than to give power and space to a certain group cannot become anything else than a new version of old injustices.
39. If for instance men’s talk of “fittstim” (roughly translated into cunt shoal) is replaced with women’s talk about “male creeps”,
40. the world would not be a morally better place.
41. And if the discrimination of ethnical minorities are replaced with a positive special treatment of the same minorities,
42. it is not necessary that justice is greater.

48. What does happen when one gets rid of universal ideals is that one deprive people of motive and reasons to reach out over group boarders.
49. Equal rights can motivate everyone.
50. Special rights for certain group will generate division and conflict.
51. The society transforms, from being a common responsibility of all citizens to a prey for groups to quarrel about.
52. Actual or imaginary injustices are exploited by groups that demands compensation from other groups,
53. who in turn feels unfairly exploited and of guilt.

56. Further on the issue of the individuals right doesn’t disappear.
57. Regardless of what identity politicians might think,
58. the interests of individuals are not logically identical with a certain groups interests.
59. Individuals constitute an identity that blends a variety of properties,
60. not only by gender and ethnicity,
61. but also in regard of esthetic, athletic, politically, professionally and other interest.
62. One does not share everything that is important in ones life with only one group.
63. Dependent on which issue that is on the table one can identify with shifting groups,
64. and sometimes one might want to avoid being identified with groups overall.

65. People aren’t passive receivers of identities,
66. which they are then locked up within.
67. They are actors who choose to identify with something,
68. and they can do new choices all the time.
69. If people wouldn’t have had any choice in any of these questions,
70. religious fundamentalists and ethno-nationalists wouldn’t be forced to make such efforts as they do
71. in order to threaten and hinder people from assimilating and converting to other thought systems.
73. But who protects the individuals right to choose identification
74. and who protects her against the oppression and attempts from the group to do such choices,
75. when the identity politics is disengaged from universal human rights?

Article 3

**Article: 3: “We must see the identities before we can loosen them up.”**

**Source:** SvD Kultur 2014-06-17

**Author:** Nathan Hamelberg

1. We must see the identities before we can loosen them up
2. Identity politics have become a concept that is used causally to reject all kinds of protests.
3. At the same time the ones trying to organise themselves over group boarders have a hard time finding methods to do so.
4. A more useful concept than identity politics is “affinity politics”,
5. claims Mellanförskapets Nathan Hamelberg.

6. Identities, which of them are political, and which aren't?
7. Homeowners, majority Swede, taxpayer, tenant owner, afro-Swedish, Northerner, adopted, undocumented?

8. Lobby groups, editorials and political PR-firms daily formulates politics
9. that appeals to different identities.
10. Majorities are created,
11. and in the same time others are rendered invisible –
12. and other issues.

13. Despite or because the political speech, expression and conversation
14. have always come from the identity,
15. the last three years have been characterised by outcries
16. when new voices, groups and issues have appeared in discussions regarding
17. anti-racism, race stereotypes, trans-activism, Civil Rights, ethnic registries, intersectionality, racial profiling, racialised, white norms, gender-and race power order,
18. afro-phobia, antiziganism, islamophobia, segregation, assimilation, integration and separatism.
19. To simplify it,
20. the objections can be summarised into “when new voices gets to speak as a collective it is identity politics.”

21. I have heard appeals for solidarity –
22. to in some form reach over identities,
23. being defined as identity politics.
24. Both Kippah-walks and Hijab-shoutouts have been declared as identity politics.
25. To act against the Police, correctional service and the Swedish migration boards project REVA have been portrayed as identity politics.
26. In particular the testimonies of racism sprung out of REVA have been described as identity politics.
27. To in the context talk about white norms,
28. how the police work affects people in very different ways if they are white or not is seen as identity politics.
29. The entrance of the gender, race and sexuality in politics
30. is sometimes considered cause for the superficiality in politics.
31. Maybe the questions are superficially formulated sometimes,
32. but the political superficiality did not come with the anti-racism or feminism,
33. it came with the PR-firms, the morning shows and gambits.
34. Identity is a problem if it is allowed to cover up disagreements,
35. which can happen when identity is reduced into a marketing tool.
36. And if people casually are made into spokespersons for a collective.
37. Then it can just be as paralyzing as a party whip.

38. When the association Mellanförskapet (the Interclusion) was formed
39. we where determined that the condition interclusion was not worth recognizing
40. only the power of negative experiences,
41. and the problems that comes from living and growing up
42. as a cross-cultural “Interano” in todays Sweden.
43. The problem is not to live with multiple cultures,
44. but the surroundings expectation on purity.
45. To be an interano is to be double and not half,
46. speaking to Soran Ismail.
47. One is questioned
48. and in the extension ones groups entrance into politics depends much on
49. if it from the outside can be formulated unequivocal problems for the politics to solve.

50. The problems are the same as for the anticolonial liberation movements in the 1900’s:
51. how can we reach out to the many in the fight for liberation,
52. without for that matter exclude people from being a part of the fight.
53. Fanon for instance
54. saw the relaxation of “us and them” as synonymous with liberation.
55. However, it was not possible to fast-forward to the relaxation
56. by stopping talking about us and them;
57. white Frenchmen in Algeria
58. could take roles that contributed to the independence of Algeria
59. when they realized that they had different assumptions than the Arabic Algerians.
60. That those thoughts have not been raised seriously
61. among the antiracist activists in Sweden is not surprising:
62. a post-colonial perspective on multifaceted, changing identities and power relations
63. may reasonably have it hard to win support in a nation that have a notorious hard time remembering its own colonialism.
64. The same problem was formulated,
65. if a bit different by the second-wave feminists:
66. the Patriarchy cannot be opposed
67. without temporarily accepting the classification of humanity into the oppressed categories that the Patriarchy has created,
68. if only to be used as a tool to highlight inequality.
69. In "Methodology of the Oppressed"
70. the Chicana feminist Chela Sandoval talks about affinity politics rather than identity politics.
71. That the ones who are double or more subordinated norms
72. becomes multiple marginalised if their political project is to only ally themselves with the ones sharing the exact same position.
73. Undocumented Mexican working class women in the US,
74. who shares experiences of super-exploitation (often isolated in housework), sexism, racism and lawlessness
75. can for instance not only turn to the ones sharing all these conditions,
76. but will be strongest if they turn to the American women movements, male workers (migrated or not) and migration political activists etc.
77. Simply intersectionality in practice.
78. There we have the key,
79. to see identities but creating a politic that exceeds them an sees common interests.

Article 4

Article: 4: “The luxury of being able to represent oneself”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-10-30

Author: Amanda Björkman

1. The luxury of being able to represent oneself.
2. The Left Wings love story with identity politics is in a passionate state.
3. Instead of discussing opinions and actions
4. it more often is discussed who’s got the right to express and critic them.
5. In that way critic towards the minister of Housing Mehmet Kaplan
6. can be dismissed as islamophobia
7. and journalists exposures on the minister of environment Åsa Romson
8. can be described as “women bullying”.
9. What has been said and done is secondary.
10. The Right Wing on the other side.
11. is quick on dismissing the whole thought on representation as leftist humbug.
12. But if the calculation exercises on different groups presence in different context
13. is often abused it doesn’t mean that they are irrelevant.

14. Who is a politician says something about who can be a politician.

15. In the first episode of the documentary series “a Roma on a journey”
16. which was aired on SVT (the Swedish public service broadcast) yesterday
17. we got to follow the politician Soraya Posts journey through Feministiskt Initiativ
18. to the office in Brussels.
19. From second to first class,
20. from damned to parliamentarian,
21. as she herself puts it.
22. And it is an important journey –
23. not only for herself.

24. The Swedish states treatment of Roma people and travellers
25. is an ugly chapter in both the country's and Posts personal history.
26. In the program she tells about how her mother was forced to do a late abortion
27. and after was sterilized against her will,
28. 21 years old.
29. She was not considered suitable to have more children.

30. And even if the scientific racist mappings and the forced sterilizations are relegated to history,
31. the chapter is not as closed as we rather want to believe.
32. The exposure of the Skåne Polices Roma-file is a painful reminder of that.

33. It is not hard to understand that Post during her childhood felt distrust towards society.
34. But the documentary also shows on the ground gained during her lifetime:
35. Today she is the first Roma person in The EU-parliament.

36. To be situated inside the corridors of the EU-parliament is important,
37. but not foremost so that she can represent certain opinions
38. connected to the fact that she is a Roma or a woman
39. rather that others can see themselves in her.

40. Something that hopefully can inspire more to believe in the society that has failed them.
Article 5

Article: 5: “Amanda Björkman: Linderborg is right about identity politics”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-09

Author: Amanda Björkman

1. Amanda Björkman: Linderborg is right about identity politics.
2. Suddenly it happens.
3. I read Åsa Linderborg and realise that I agree with her.
4. On a spread in Aftonbladet this Friday
5. the culture editor goes to attack and
6. this time it is the New Left Wings baby,
7. identity politics,
8. that stands in the firing line.
9. And rightly so.
10. The Left Wings fixation of the bodily has cornered the debate.
11. What is said and done is categorically moved out in the periphery.
12. All that's left is our bodies.
13. In the identity politics cosmos
14. white men’s objections cannot be explained as anything else than offending.
15. And when objective criticism is aimed at a black female minister
16. it is believed to be afro-phobia or misogyny.
17. Not due to the fact that she possesses power and therefor are examined.
18. Anyone not taking all dimensions of the intersectional analysis into consideration should watch their backs.
19. Linderborg concludes it as
20. “One is suppose to feel guilt because one is not taking part in the fight, while one at the same time is not suppose to take part since one cannot understand how it is to be black, homosexual, transgender etc.”
21. Damned if you do, damned if you don’t.
22. Linderborg critic is based in a disappointment over that new categorises
23. are allowed to obstruct the view of the golden and overall collective fight,
24. the one of class.
25. From a liberal perspective
26. the schism rather regards how the identity fixation puts a wet blanket over individuals and limits them.
27. Linderborg cannot restrain her self from pointing out that
28. the identity crazed within the Left Wing
29. “actually are liberals”.
30. When the Left Wing doesn’t represents the opinions that Linderborg finds to be good enough,
31. they cannot be leftist.

32. Everything that is bad must of course be liberal.
33. With that said:
34. Linderborg puts a finger on an important and unfortunate development
35. in the public debate.
36. Hopefully the critic can be received better coming from the own ranks.

37. Because identity politics is paralysing and leads,
38. to use Åsa Linderborgs own words,
39. to the “murdering of the public debate”.

Article 6

Article: 6: “Judith Kiros: identity politics and Left Wing politics are not opposites”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-10

Author: Judith Kiros

1. Judith Kiros: identity politics and Left Wing politics are not opposites.
2. Who is really Jason?
3. It’s not Tomas Ledin anyway.
4. But why is that?
5. Is it because identity politics,
6. which Åsa Linderborg writes about in her article on political correctness,
7. “blames and divides” (Aftonbladet 7/11)?

8. I don’t think so.

9. The discussion regarding Tomas Ledins’s appearance in the campaign was this:
10. Does the action of solidarity hide what the campaign tries to disclose,
11. namely the structural racism?
12. How can a more effective campaign look –
13. one that acknowledge that we are treated differently,
14. that Jason walked around with his passport in his pocket
15. while white persons left it at home?

16. Short: People are not excluded
17. when they want to be solidary with a fight that they aren’t a natural part of.
18. It is however often problematised how people should organise themselves in order to be solidary.
19. How can solidarity be used as a political tool in order to expose power?

20. I will not discuss every example that Åsa Linderborg brings up,  
21. but instead focus on what I recon to be the central:  
22. an intended contradiction between what Linderborg calls identity politics (feminism, trans-activism, anti racism and so on) and Left Wing politics.  
23. A contradiction that I,  
24. who is both a leftist anti racist and feminist active.  
25. doesn’t see.

26. We can agree that we live in a liberal hegemony.  
27. Radical politics quickly transforms into having the right hair cut,  
28. using the right words and problematising ones music collection.  
29. And anti racism becomes –  
30. partly because the media logic –  
31. more often a question of representation and race stereotypes  
32. than about how racism and class cooperates within a capitalistic system.

33. But who is responsible for that?  
34. When the Afro-phobia report was published in February  
35. I looked forward to a discussion on class and racism towards black persons in Sweden.  
36. The poverty within the Afro-Swedish population is widespread and grave.

37. That discussion didn't come –  
38. not from the Left Wing either.  
39. Is the Left Wing afraid of splitting the movement by talking about how class is gendered, racialised, lived?”  
40. And what image does one then have of the worker  
41. and what bodies that can frictionless be part of the Left Wing?

42. Just like feminism  
43. other identity political analysis or methods of organisation are tools to make oppression and exploitation comprehensible.  
44. And just like feminism  
45. the goal can be practical (representation) and visionary.  
46. Anti racism for example,  
47. may well regard stereotypes.  
48. but it can also regard the dissolving of a system  
49. that justifies abuse and exploitation of non-white bodies.  
50. Not equality,  
51. but radical change.

52. During the time it is important to work both in the present and for the future,  
53. to create a broad movement.  
54. And for a broad movement to be,
55. there is need of a recognition
56. of how structural oppression is reproduced both within the movement (what issues are given space and why?)
57. and in the society at large (where does our visions and interest coinciding?).

58. Right now it is important to find a balance between practical work –
59. what can we do now, and for each other –
60. and to be system critical.
61. We cannot afford to let the one exclude the other.

62. But this demands openness and curiosity.
63. People from both the Right Wing and the Left Wing dismisses transgender issues as politically correctness,
64. without seeing that it regards something very concrete:
65. survival in a hostile time.

66. To criticise the cis-norm (that everyone should identify oneself with the sex assigned at birth)
67. opens up the understanding of gender oppression and broadens the feministic analysis.
68. It opens up for more bodies and expressions.

69. I don’t see a conflict, only potential for solidarity and strength.
70. A potential that we in the Left Wing should seize.

**Article 7**

**Article: 7: “It is about power...”**

**Source:** Expressen 2014-11-12

**Author:** Valerie Kyeyune Backström

1. It is about power...
2. Valerie Kyeyune Backström regarding
3. Linderborgs one-dimensional view on class politic.
4. Instead of doing a Linderborg –
5. and pretend that there are no unequal power relations between Twitter activists and renowned debaters on the cultural pages -
6. I am going to avoid answering her premises.
7. But as an alternative,
8. I gladly do the Left Wing,
9. my political residence,
10 a favour and try to move the debate forward.
11. Even I can feel a disinclination that the discussion
12. regarding racism so often is reduced to single expressions.
13. At the same time it isn’t that simple:
14. to point out that even a cultural editor at a red newspaper
15. is reproducing racist perceptions
16. is to show that no one goes safe from these structures;
17. it is not the individuals intentions
18. rather the total result that counts.
19. It is therefore the absurd to talk
20. about Tomas Ledins eventual hurt feelings,
21. when people dies because of the racial power structure.
22. We need to stop talking
23. about feelings,
24. and instead talk about power.

25. I agree with Åsa Linderborg that there is a problem
26. that we often reside in single expressions,
27. often placed in literature,
28. when 80 percent of the Afroswedish population lives in rental flats
29. compared to 20 percent of the majority population,
30. when black men are more discriminated in the labour market than white women.
31. But I would say that it is the media’s,
32. and therefor also Aftonbladets,
33. fault rather than individual black debaters.
34. This is what the public is interested in:
35. racist pastries,
36. but not housing segregation,
37. or statistics over poverty.
38. Tintin -
39. but not that people born in Africa has the lowest educational yield.
40. When the Afro-phobia report was released
41. by Mångkultureellt centrum earlier this year
42. it could have been the start of a more initiated conversation
43. regarding political solutions to racism.
44. In it is shown how race
45. is to distinctly connected with class and living condition,
46. not only in books,
47. and that the Swedish proletariat today
48. in large consists of non-whites.
49. In stead the report was ignored by the Left Wing,
50. that sooner talks about torchlights processions and manifestations,
51. rather than statistics,
52. rather flashing passports
53. than distributes resources.

54. It is time that we start politicises solidarity.
55. Solidarity can never be based in emotion,
56. it must be based in action and result.
57. Otherwise it only becomes empty words,
58. far more banal than what Alice Bah Kuhnke gets accused of being.
59. If not even the Left Wing can include more people in its class analysis,
60. whom does it act for?
61. Is that not the very definition of Identity politics?
62. A politic that isn’t based on everyone,
63. and especially not the most marginalised ones interest,
64. rather solely the own group.
65. It sounds shallow and un-solidarity.
66. And kind of liberal.

**Article 8**

**Article: 8: “...and about rights”**

**Source:** Expressen 2014-11-12

**Author:** Maria Ramnehill

1. Maria Ramnehill sees
2. the same Linderborg getting lost within Feminism.
3. Åsa Linderborg takes on a derailed debate
4. regarding identity politics within the Left Wing and Feminism
5. in Aftonbladet (7/11).
6. That the debate has derailed we can probably agree upon,
7. although not why.
8. Her starting point takes off in diminishing the debate
9. around Kajsa Ekis Ekmans book “Being and goods”.
10. No, it is not only an innocent ignorance to write
11. “the transsexual can force everyone to call him a woman”
12. when using transgender women as a metaphor for someone who,
13. without any understanding takes on another ones external attributes.
14. in order to show the Internet activists uncompromising attitude,
15 Linderborg claims that
16.trans-activists ignores Ekmans apology,
17. but that is simply not true.
18. She never used the words excuse or sorry.
19. She wrote that she wouldn't have used the same example today,
20. only to immediately defend that she wrote it.

21. When we talk about structures,
22. we are ignored.
23. So lets take an example,
24. relevant since it seems to mirror
25. a feministic history of trans-phobia,
26. and points out that this has just passed
27. without that any has reacted
28. is a sign of the structural trans-phobia.
29. The answer is that we must
30. "stop with the fixation of individual"
31. whereupon the trans-phobic statement
32. is reduced and explained away.
33. what is happening when one is not heard
34. is that one starts to shout.
35. The only real tool of power
36. that transgender persons have is social medias.
37. If we never get to speak about trans-phobia within the movement,
38. we will never be able to in a sane way
39. together
40. be able to work against trans-phobia on the outside either.
41. So we instead discuss the tone of trans-gender activists
42. rather than how we will work against trans-phobic structures within the
movements.
43. Is it a problem for the Left Wing that some held an alternative party,
44. that later got cancelled because of hatred and threats?
45. Or that I eventually have unfollowed someone on Twitter?
46. Does it mean that Åsa Linderborg is trans-phobic when not following me?

47. We have screamed and screamed and obviously you haven't listened,
48 because Linderborg dismisses the critic regarding cis-sexism
49. stating that an innate vagina gives common experiences on
50. salary discrimination, double-work, higher numbers of sickness leave, diminishing in
the public sphere.
51. Here it becomes obvious
52. how important the problem with lacking representation is.
53. If Linderborg had cared to listen
54. she would have known that
55. transgender women shares the exact same experiences.
56. Transgender women all around the world
57. are being battered, raped, hated, threatened and murdered, discriminated and
denied the most basic rights,
58. and you have the guts to lash out against “the rights fight”
59. calling it “identity politics”?
60. The critic is not new,
61. the only thing is that it is throughout social medias
62. that you have heard it.
63. Transgender-like identities have existed long before feminism was created
64. – is it not time to take us seriously now?
1. Nina Björk: No power is greater than the economical power.
2. Judith Kiros writes in DN (10/11) that
3. there is no opposition between identity politics and Left wing politics –
4. an opposition that she claims that
5. Åsa Linderborg is seeing in her article on politically correctness in Aftonbladet (7/11).

6. If Kiros is right or wrong in this I believe
7. depends on how we see the goal of the Left wing.
8. If the goal with the Left Wing politics is a socialist society,
9. that will say a breach of the current capitalistic competitive society.
10. I think she is wrong.
11. Then there really is an opposition between identity politics and the Left wing.

12. However if the goal of the Left wing politics is
13. every humans equal opportunities to advance within the current society,
14. that will say the goal of free social movement within an extant hierarchy,
15. I think she is right.
16. Then there are no opposition between identity politics and Left wing politics.

17. What do I mean?
18. By accident I came across an anonymous blog post at Sverige.PK
19. which describes this so well.
20. The blogger writes about people who stand in line to a limited room
21. and asks who got the power to jump the queue.
22. “Who find it easier to get a residence, to get a job, to do a class journey.”
23. The power to advance in the queue has to do with
24. “skin colour, gender, class background, sexuality, appearance and body functionality”.
25. This is “the power to”.
26. The blogger also writes that there is “power over”.
27. “Who controls the housings, the jobs, the production, the economical resources, the media channels and the state apparatus”?
28. What are the driving forces in that system?

29. What the blogger means is that
30. you can be a man, white and heterosexual without having the “power over” even if your “power to” is larger than many others in sense of gender.
31. The privilege to jump the queue, to advance, to get it better
32. is a limited and conditional privilege.
33. “A privilege to move within the queue, no more, no less. The majority, privileged and unprivileged, still lacks a ‘power over’, lacks control.”
34. Our society claims to believe in all humans’ equal value
35. and at the same time is unequal.
36. It is unequal both in “the power to” and the “power over”.
37. Identity politics can only solve the problem with the “power to”.
38. The “power over” has nothing to do with identity;
39. it has to do with ones position in the economy.
40. It has to do with the actual reason for why we produce what we produce.

41. Put it like this:
42. In the private sector of our society,
43. work can only be performed if someone earns profit out of it.
44. The majority of us can see how endless amounts of jobs that we would want to be performed
45. and at the same time we have a high level of unemployment –
46. but the workload can only be carried out if it is possible to do profit out of them.
47. And the same thing goes for the consumption stage:
48. we can see any level of needs from people when it comes to both goods and services,
49. but if the people who accommodate these needs do not also have enough money, their needs of satisfaction remain unsatisfied.
50. The pursuit of profit determines what we produce and for whom we produce.
51. In the labour market the one who can make money work decides –
52. this has nothing to do with identity.

53. Let us imagine a situation in which identity politics has really succeeded;
54. some identities no longer gives a disadvantages in the queue, in the competition –
55. And no longer in the possibility to be the one that has the power over what we produce.
56. All possible identities would have this position of power, black and white and straight and gay, and cis and trans people.
57. Would we then live in an egalitarian society?
58. Again: it depends on how we define an egalitarian society.
59. That some, no matter who they are,
60. with economic power can control other people’s work and the satisfaction of needs is not my definition of such.
Article 10

Article: 10: “The leftists fighting internally need the liberal heritage”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-18

Author: Erik Wijk

1. The leftists fighting internally need the liberal heritage.
2. When Åsa Linderborg (Aftonbladet 7/11) criticised the aberrations of identity politics
3. my Facebook friends was separated into two incompatible camps:
4. the more Marxist characterised, often older, shouted “finally!”
5. while the more identity politically oriented, often younger, squirmed in agony, “my
day is ruined!”

6. It is therefor liberating to read Judith Kiros (DN 10/11)
7. who shows that the two perspectives are not only compatible
8. but also enriches each other, “it is opening up for more bodies and expressions”.

9. Maybe the division is just a symptom of the frustration and confusion arising after the
Gothenburg riots and 9/11 punctured the leftist upswing around the turn of the
millennium.
10. It is sadly absurd that the visualisation of previously relatively silenced oppressions
11. based on gender, sexuality, skin colour, background, ideology, religion etc.
12. have come to be seen as threats by many in the Left wing
13. whose very essence is to work for equality, gender equality and justice.

14. One way to loosen the knot
15. can be to keep in deterrent memory that the contentious representation fixation who
the identity of the political are accused of is in fact a part of the whole Left wings basic
behaviour.

16. In 1864 it was even formulated in the bylaws of the First International:
17. “The liberation of the working class must be reached by the working class alone.”
18. It is both amusing and very memorable that this initial legitimation of leftist
sectarianism was written,
19. not by a worker, but by the arch-bourgeois Karl Marx
20. whose occupation was financed by the arch-capitalist Friedrich Engels surplus from
the family’s factories.

21. The quarrelsome, sectarianism, exclusion, fixation of representation –
22. nothing is harder to understand since real leftist commitment is born out of one’s
own experience of oppression, disadvantage and vulnerability.
23. It is a struggle, it is a war.
24. To find trustworthy friends become just as important as pointing out enemies.
25. And to more or less summarily neutralise suspected traitors is perceived as a necessary evil in a cruel world.
26. Those who really just are fellow sufferers are chopped into small pieces accused of being liberals.
27. I believe that a part of the cure for this unnecessary civil war can be found in the liberal heritage!
28. Forget Björklund,
29. but imagine the English, French or American revolution.
30. It is about the universalism.
31. The belief that there are conditions and ideas that is valid for all people everywhere
32. has been regarded with skepticism by the Left wing,
33. who think that it blurs the class analysis, and even more so by the contemporary identity politics,
34. who in turn argues that the universalism in therewith covers up patriarchal, heterosexual, cis, and other power structures.

35. But none of these power structures’ criticism would be possible without a basic idea that all people are equal.
36. That every human being has the right to live a full worthy life and freedom from oppression.
37. Class hate or gender bitterness is extremely strong emotions and important driving forces –
38. but let us not forget that the goal is equality!
39. If one want to fight for transgender persons, undocumented immigrants, outside European immigrants, Muslims, women’s, workers, people living rurally, children’s, mentally ill’s, disabled people’s or others rights
40. one has to start from universalist beliefs.
41. Human rights.
42. The alternative would be to say that one fights for a certain group as a part of everyone’s war on all,
43. where violence and revenge becomes just as natural as in the Old Testament, the White House or the Islamic State.

44. Those who claim that universalism and human rights becomes a harmless façade
45. does not understand that ideas become significant only when someone takes them seriously.
46. If all people are equal then every kind of oppression –
47. political and private, socially and economically, locally and globally -
48. must be fought with the highest seriousness.
49. It is up to you to apply the 1789’s, 1793’s, or 1948’s human rights –
50. in homes, on the streets, at workplaces, activist groups, in parliament –
51. and the outcome is still uncertain.
Article: 11: “Judith Kiros: Identity politics is about surviving”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-20

Author: Judith Kiros

1. Judith Kiros: Identity politics is about surviving.
2. In Nina Björks text on what is called identity politics,
3. she seem to mean that it is not able to combine with Left wing politics,
4. if the goal with the Left wing politics is a socialist society (DN 12/11).

5. Probably no one is surprised when I say:
6. I don’t agree.

7. Identity politics (a policy that is based on certain politicised and marginalised identities)
8. relates out of necessity to how society looks today.
9. Therefore the concept "equal rights" or "justice" is formulated
10. within how the system is formulated today –
11. the liberal capitalism (or as Björk calls it, “the queue system”).
12. It can easily create problems,
13. then the risk is that the fight for equal rights also strengthens and maintains the system criticised.
14. But is that a necessity?
15. Not if the identity political strategies are combined with a socialist ideology.

16. Identity politics in itself is not an ideology,
17. which is why for example Feministiskt Initiativ received critic from several red anti-racists and feminists during the election campaign –
18. We meant, among other things,
19. that identity politics without socialism threatened to accept the system within which these oppressions occurred.

20. But what we must remember
21. is that identity politics and the argumentation put forward is not about social mobility, but also purely crass,
22. about survival, about living.
23. not to being subjected to systemic (again I mention the poverty of the Afroswedish group) or personal violence (see the increasing hate crimes towards blacks, Roma people, muslims).

24. (That a white cis man necessarily don’t have any “power over” –
25. to again cite Björk –
26. probably no one with an class analysis would argue against.)
28. Identity political tools and methods have certain limitations,
29. but that they would not be relevant for the Left wing or a leftist politics
30. with socialism as a goal
31. I don’t agree with.
32. An identity politics that is part of a socialist analysis
33. understand that the goal is not the short-term work (to lift the housing segregation,
to prevent state violence against transgender bodies, to work on skills in the acceptance
of LGBT refugees)
34. but the long-term:
35. to dissolve the importance of identity.

36. Shortly:
37. if I don’t want racism to exist,
38. I would not want that one of the systems that gives my body its political importance
to exist either.
39. That is the goal.
40. And the reason why it has to coexist with my left politics
41. is simply because I do not believe that the end of the capitalist competitive society
42. would mean the end to racism, discrimination against disabled, the LGBT-oppression
43. or the patriarchy (even if all systems are interwoven with, and to a certain extent
institutionalised by the capitalist society).

44. There is a tendency for both the Left wing and the people involved in identity politics
45. to depoliticize the identity policies and theories.
46. But read Angela Davis, or Frantz Fanon, or Athena Farrokhzad and Tova Gerge’s
“Queer is socialism” (Aftonbladet 17/3 2008).
46. Don’t these texts question the premise of capitalism, colonialism and whiteness, or
capitalism, patriarchy and sexuality?
47. Aren't their goals to reveal how capitalism works and reproduces through bodies
and systems –
48. reveal to ultimately dissolve?
49. I think so.

50. As Emma Dominguez writes (ETC 17/11 2014)
51. it feels as the Left wing are nagging while the Right wing sticks together.
52. I can enjoy a fight –
53. they often expose conflicts of interest,
54. and at best makes us sharper.
55. But the identity political discussion should be more practical:
56. what tools and methods can we use?
57. How should our alliances look like?
58. What issues unite us,
59. and when does our interests set us apart?
60. There I find that we have more to gain.
Article 12

Article: 12: “Moa Matthis: Not only the Left Wing has a bloody history of double entry”

Source: Dagens Nyheter 2014-12-10

Author: Moa Matthis

1. Moa Matthis: Not only the Left Wing has a bloody history of double entry.
2. In the draft of Thomas Jefferson’s American Declaration of Independences
3. there was a passage on the British slave trade.
4. It was deleted.
5. In the year 1791,
6. Olympe de Gouges wrote a “Declaration of women and female citizens rights”
7. which both were an ironic and furious comment to the “Declaration of human and citizens rights”.
8. She was executed.

9. It is not only the Left wing that has a long and bloody history of group exclusion.
10. Neither is it lonely in the double entry that Erik Wijk is highlighting
11. when he pointed out that the First International
12. was written by an arch-bourgeois and financed by an arch-capitalist (DN 18/11).

13. Jefferson was only one of many slave owners who
14. signed the text which second paragraph so beautifully starts:
15. “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal”.
16. Actually the concept of identity politics should reasonably be used to describe
17. how the political, western mainstream
18. who both on the Right wing and Left wing gladly talks universal about
19. “we” and “all” in practice have been formed to include and benefit some distinctly defined bodies,
20. instead of being implicated on the perspectives that uncovers this fact.
21. These perspectives can instead show that ideas and words of justice and dignity
22. becomes “important first when someone takes them seriously”,
23. as Wijk puts it.

24. For example an important moment like this happened at the Clothing workers congress in 1959
25. when Greta Lundin enter the podium:
26. “I have been wondering over why I should have less paid when I perform the same work load as for instance Lennart.
27. He has 4.35 SEK and I have 3.11 SEK. Then I am afraid of asking anything further.”
28. When one read the historian Yvonne Hirdmans “With a forked tongue. LO and the gender order”
29. in which Greta is quoted
30. one understands why she did not dare
31. since it easily becomes uncomfortable when someone takes the words seriously.
32. Her question did not only expose the unspoken identity political practical consequences
33. in the shape of negotiated women's salaries and real conflicts of interest.
34. it also exposed what it was going to take
35. in order to move past a situation where the working class men were paid with the money taken from the working class women.

36. How Nina Björk separates “power over” and “power to” is analytically stylish
37. but it is strategically misguided (DN 13/11).
38. Lennart’s “power to” in relation to Greta is a supporting beam in the structure that upholds the “power over” in the capitalistic competitive society.

39. History is a long range of examples of how easy people
40 who should stand united
41. is secreted by identity based ideologies and practitioners
42. who creates an imagined community based on gender, race, class, nationality, sexuality and so on.

43. The reason why Lennart did not go up to the podium and asked why his salary was higher than hers
44. did not only depend on that he was satisfied with the state of things.
45. More importantly is that he was taught that men were better sorts of worker,
46. since women was encumbered by “certain handicaps” such as emotions, menstruation and children.
47. The union, SAF (the employers confederation) and science agreed upon it,
48. and if they wanted to they could have referenced it back to Aristotle:
49. Lennart was not Greta.
50. It was a truth in the same way that it was a truth that Jefferson's “but”
51. neither included black men or women regardless of skin colour since they,
52. just as little as Greta,
53. was fully humans.

54. It is therefore one cannot separate a “prejudice culture” from structured oppression,
55. like Åsa Linderborg wants to,
56. and it is therefore the political fight is always a struggle for symbols and representation (Aftonbladet 9/11).
57. What Nooshi Dadgostar calls the “postmodern identity politics”
58. and sees as a reaction to a Marxist philosophical tradition,
59. is actually a realpolitik that takes Marx theory on how the false conscious -
60. for example Lennart’s –
61. and creates loyalties that really favour the status quo (Aftonbladet 17/11).

62. In her answer to Linderborg
63. Judith Kiro (DN 19/11) asked a simple question:
64. "Is the Left Wing afraid of splitting the movement by talking about how class is gendered, racialised, lived?"
65. With Greta and the long history in mind
66. it is difficult to answer anything else but yes to that question.
67. And think about why that fear is benefiting.

**Article 13**

**Article: 13: “Yoav Bartal: The identity politics is building walls within Sweden”**

**Source:** Dagens Nyheter 2014-11-27

**Author:** Yoav Bartal

1. Yoav Bartal: The identity politics is building walls within Sweden
2. Our perceptions on community and foreignness are not carved in stone.
3. We celebrate the 25-year anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.
4. A whole continent took the Iron curtain between east and west for granted,
5. before the Soviet union imploded and a new conceptual world emerged.
6. Nowadays Prag and Krakow are parts of the same mental map of Europe as Vienna and Paris.
7. In the Swedish debate the craze forces for new mental walls have gained stronger foothold.
8. The return of the identity politics –
9. or as it is now is called, racialising –
10. is all about special treatment of people because of gender, sexuality, skin colour, ethnicity and so on.
11. For instance the debate forum Rummet (the room) was created,
12. “A separatist website where only racialised persons are allowed to be heard”.
13. It is good that the advocates of identity politics engages in the fight against racism
14. and that they reveal experiences of powerlessness and oppression.
15. What is problematic is that they select a theoretical model that forces everyone into
their classification, as racialised or non-racialised.
16. It is collectivist humanity, which leave little space for individuals
17. and puts aside the principle that every human is unique and possesses its own value
outside of the group.
18. Judith Kiros writes at DN Kultur that identity politics is the Left Wings strategy for
survival (20/11),
19. For many identity politics is also a strategy for income.
20. Sweden did during the 1990's and 2000's perform a series of integration efforts,
21. at the premises of identity politics.
22. In practice it regarded political special treatment for ethnical organisations
23. where project funding where paid out to various “immigrant projects”.

24. If we accept identity politics and the special treatment
25. we risk giving up the ambition of Sweden as a common and including project.
26. How can this have happened,
27. that the racialised theory is allowed to define the resistance against racism and let
SD dominate the discussion of what holds Sweden together?

28. An explanation is that the established parties have capitulated to both SD’s as well as
these identity politics maxim of unequal rights.
29. According to SD
30. ethnic Swedes have the right to a general well-fare
31. as long as one gets rid of the immigrants,
32. while the identity politics is built around that all minorities automatically are
discriminated by the majority society
33. and therefor have the right to special treatment.

34. The fight for equality cannot be won through blaming all men.
35. In the same way the fight against racism cannot be won by blaming the “white
norm”.
36. There is a need for a story about Sweden,
37. which can unite all disparate people in this country:
38. a community that is including.
39. We should work towards a society where everyone contributes,
40. and not only demands rights.

41. Take the free of school as an example.
42. That our children will succeed in school is not a right that the state can guarantee.
43. We that have the privilege to become parents in such a generous country as Sweden
44. actually have an obligation to see to that our children comes in time for school,
behaves and does their homework.

45. We who lives in a democracy,
46. where we get to be part of the election of who is going to have the political power
47. have a responsibility to take part in these democratic processes.
48. We who have the privilege to live in a well-fare state
49. have a responsibility to work and pay taxes.
50. We who move to Sweden from another country
51. have a responsibility to learn Swedish, support ourselves and our relatives.

52. Politicians must stop persuade the voters that life within a well-fare state means
53. one big privilege catalogue without any own sacrifices.
54. By being clear of what obligations and duties that comes
55. with being a citizen in Sweden
56. the value of the privileges are being reestablished.
57. This does also create an inclusive approach to what Sweden is.
58. Being Swedish is not only something one is because of generations of northern lumberjacks.
59. It is also a community that one can belong to by ones own efforts.

60. Identity politics is a dead end
61. since it wants to lock people up in excluding classification systems.
62. We should be stuck in our small boxes in which we either discriminate or be discriminated.
63. The founders of the well fare state,
64. who once dreamed of a country of class climbers,
65. feels a shrug of resignation.

66. Yoav Bartal is a strategic advisor, former press secretary and political adviser (the Liberals) in the Cabinet office.

Article 14

Article: 14: “Solidarity beats identity”

Source: Aftonbladet 2014-12-03

Author: Åsa Lindeborg

1. Solidarity beats identity.
2. Åsa Linderborg regarding
3. gender oppression, racism and the strategies of the Left Wing.
4. My article regarding identity politics have raised much reaction,
5. and I will summarise my thought so far.
6. Everyone that has contributed cannot be addressed,
7. I have surely missed many entries and also misunderstood some.
8. I myself have been misinterpreted,
9. but this is not the time to say “I haven't said that”.
10. This text can be divided into three parts.
11. Partly some words about how the debate is taking form,
12. partly some thoughts regarding the feminism,
13. and that the question that is of most importance:
14 what prejudices can the Left Wing be blamed of,
15. and in which way is identity politics leftist?
16. It is claimed that I am against all forms of identity politic.
17. I am not sure of that at all,
18. I have tried to start an honest discussion without a locked position.
19. It is the dogmatism and persecution that I am rejecting,
20. and theories that claims to be anti capitalistic
21. without being able to explain how.

22. A part of the critic aimed towards me
23. regards how I “assault the powerless”,
24. preferably transgender persons.
25. Twitters have no power
26. compared to Åsa Linderborg, says Kawa Zolfagary.
27. Surely the power relation is asymmetrical,
28. but not being able to discuss an exposed persons actions
29. would be to contribute to the diminution.
30. And discriminated can also exercise power.
31. When it is being tweeted that Nina Björk is ‘an insect’,
32. something happens with her.
33. A group of campaigners on social medias
34. tries to stop Kajsa Ekis Ekman from appearing,
35. the last couple of days in Helsinki and London.
36. We have the right to scream, excuses Maria Ramnehill.
37. Yes of course,
38. and it is about time that transgender persons gains a voice.
39. But what we are talking about right now is a mob
40. that is determined to take away an authors work.
41. It is against all democratic decency.
42. It is probably difficult for Ekis, understands Aleksa Lundberg,
43. but transgender persons are still the most victimised at a structural level.
44. The one being oppressed can treat others however hen wants,
45. it is still worst for hen.
46. It is an extreme maxim,
47. which I think
48. most transgender persons doesn’t sign up for.
49. The Left Wing definitely shouldn’t

50. The ideological questions are more fun to address.
51. Aleksa Lundberg argues
52. that we need to stop thinking in terms of biological gender
53. since that dichotomy is the actual premise to oppression –
54. We need to stop identify ourselves with the assigned gender.
55. That is a nice but perhaps utopian idea.
57. Half of the planets population has been assigned with a womb.
58. This gives us
59. since two hundred thousand years joint experiences
60. regarding reproduction and division of labour.
61. For 3,5 billion humans the patriarchy is reality.
62. The ambition is to be as non-categorical as possible
63. when one categorises
64. but it is unavoidable that we talk about very large groups,
65. even when there is women who has penises
66. and men that gives birth to children.
67. Nevertheless most of us are comfortable with our vaginas
68. although we might not always be comfortable
69 with the norms and roles that are bound to them,
70 and especially not the subordination that we also been assigned.
71 The urgent problem cannot be that there are different genders,
72 rather that we have oppression.
73 Feminism has never been as sprawling as it is now.
74 Where is Gudrun Schyman in this debate?
75 The questions cuts through Fi,
76 her ecumenical standing
77 where all opinions are equally welcome is not possible in the long term.

78. Norm criticism must be obvious for everyone in the Left Wing
79. and it has always been this way
80. though many state the opposite right now.
81 It is the culture radical tradition,
82. common to the liberals and leftists,
83. that have made Sweden the most progressive country in the world.
84. it is not the Left Wings fault that
85. forced sterilization did not end until 2013.
86. Politics is one thing organisation is another.
87 Of course there is a prejudice within the Left Wings daily undertaking,
88. just like in any other places.
89 Homosexuals and transgender persons
90 attract gaze that heterosexuals are relief from.
91 Racialised –
92. being courteous using that word,
93. must fight more than others in order to get through the organisation,
94. just like people with a disability.
95. I understand
96. that they also witness that they sometimes sees themselves as “alibis”.
97. But the ones talking about how mean and bad the Left Wing is,
98. should specify which Left Wing they talk about.
99. It becomes odd when standing in the largest auditorium
100 inside the ABF-house at the Socialist forum
101. saying “we don’t have a voice within the Left Wing”.
102. Obviously that is not true.
103. This does not relief me from the responsibility
104. as head of Sweden’s only national and radical culture page.
105 Aftonbladet, with all of its editorials,
106 must recruit more broadly.

107 Eric Rosén has a point
108. when stating that Identity political debaters have the same description of reality
109. as Sverigedemokraterna:
110. The power belongs to the Leftist journalists.
111. Firstly it is the female pencils that is of focus,
112. it is them that has to go.
113. To be ill-tempered,
114. I could state that it is evidently a viable career path.
115. to fixate at the Left Wing opinion makers,
116. but as a anti racist and anti capitalist strategy it does not seem convincing.
117. The structural oppression is projected onto singular individuals,
118. but the more centric of the individual we get,
119. the collective gets lesser power to move forwards its position,
120. Rosén writes.
121. This does not mean that intellectual leftists shouldn’t be able to be
122. scrutinized and brought down in the gravel.
123. I don’t expect even comradely criticism,
124. I don’t feel any them and us.
125. All I asks for is that the critic is objective.

126. Judith Kiros and Valerie Kyeyune Backström accuses the Left Wing
127. to always be white,
128. even though it holds a lot of racialised.
129. They pretend that they don’t hear their opinions -
130 talk about rendering invisibility.
131. This illustrates how the identity politics blinds the ideological differences.
132. As an example of the “Leftist prejudices”
133. it is stated that the Afro-phobia report that was released in February this year,
134. has been neglected.
135. Yet again I don’t really know what the “Left Wing” means,
136. but it is correct that the report went pass Aftonbladet Kultur.
137. Now I have read it.
138. It is revealing in many ways,
139. but is limited in since it is more of the character of
140. “get on board with this formulation” than
141. “do this adjustment”.
142. Everything ends up in the clumsily demand
143. that the academic community need to take the issue of Afro-phobia seriously.
144. This shows how academic this is;
145. One points out injustices,
146. but it is up to someone else to come with the solutions.
147. A theory that lay claims on being activist for more than the ones advocating it,
148. becomes very weak if it does not give suggestions of political practice
149. for the collective one represents.
150. What right does one have if one comes six hours late to work
151. because the police hunts undocumented migrants?
152. For many the lack of organisation is more desperate
153. than the lack of representation.
154. The undocumented are only one example of the things
155. the now bashed Left Wing is taking care of.

156. All identity politicians vow their class perspective
157. but now have a very hard time giving class a place in the reasoning.
158. (For one exception, see Alma Mäkeläs blog Ett oskrivet blad).
159. White privileges is one of those terms
160. that now becomes to categorical when used without concern of class differences.  
161. *Liberal hegemony* is another term being tossed around.  
161. In which way does Judith Kiros mean that  
162. identity politics challenge “the liberal hegemony”?  
163. It is probably here that we can find an opening towards a common ideological critic,  
164. provided that we agree upon what the liberal hegemony really is.  
165. I’m not sure that we are.  
166. In Judith Kiros strange version  
167. the liberal hegemony regards a  
168."radical politic that quickly transform into having the right haircut, using the right words and problematizing ones music collection“.  
169. But still,  
170. both the Left Wing and identity politics means that there is objective conflicts  
171. and that it is conflicts that leads forward.  
172. A perfect example on how this liberal hegemony takes its expression  
173. is Yoav Bartal who is angered over the identity politics  
174. while in the same time requests a collective story of all that lives here.  
175. Ergo:  
176. he wants to have a national identity,  
177. one that ignores the conflicts that are inherited within the capitalistic system.  
178. It is nothing that separates this with the dream that *Sverigedemokraterna* have,  
179. more than that Bartal embraces diversity.  
180. But still he does it,  
181. because that is how the liberal hegemony functions  
182. and what has made Sweden kind of unique.  
183. Many are probably seduced by the identity politics  
184. since it is highlighting the leftist key concept "oppression".  
185. But it is a difference between exclusion (black people, women, gays... are not allowed to join)  
186. and exploitation (exhaustion, value, profit).  
187. I therefor believe that Moa Matthis is wrong  
188. when she claims that the men of the working class are satisfied  
189. that their women earn less.  
190. I refuse to believe that men are such sadists  
191. and also the women salaries limits the whole households freedom of movement.  
192. The only ones benefiting from this are employers.  
193. In the same way it is not only racialised persons that suffer from racist economical mechanism;  
194. The salaries are pressed over the whole line.  
195. The salary gap rooted in gender and race divides the collective,  
196. that is a conscious strategy from the Capitalism,  
197. even Marx and Engels realized that.  
198. That is why the Left Wing always call out: Keep the class together!  
199. If one where to believe something else, one knows very little about the Left Wing.  
200. I still haven’t gotten any answer on how the identity politics is a leftist project  
201. and a leftist practice.
202. By Left Wing I mean a movement that is not only norm critical
203. but also works for another mode of production other than Capitalism.
204. A giant leap, a historical leap.
205. In another word, Socialism.
206. It is the dream about Socialism that is the dagger in the flesh,
207. without it there is not much left of the Left Wings uniqueness.
208. So to the strategic question
209. of who is allowed to be involved in the antiracism and when.
210. If one is truly concerned about state of things
211. one can't afford excluding anyone.
212. That is something we learned during the 1930's.
213. If one says that “you can participate that time, but not that time”
214. one gives legitimacy to the liberals,
215. who doesn't actually want to participate,
216. but rather stay at home.
217. As publicists they can silence their bad consciences
218 by giving the identity politics standing byline and
219. an own pod where they get to say things about others that they could not print in a
magazine.
220. Oh, how open-minded and tolerant we are!
221. they can think about themselves,
222. while at the same time drops every other critic of society.
223. Exclusionary can be a strategy that cultural writers can afford,
224. but hardly everyone.
225. Ergan Shortall gives a new point of view in the “I am Jason”-example.
226. He means that the softhearted campaign contributes to the whole capitalistic idea:
227. Everyone is welcome as long as they subsume in the hierarchy.
228. Right now we should open our hearts,
229. because that can lower the salaries as hell.
230. Identity politicians that claims to have a class perspective
231. cannot go past questions of social dumping, collective agreements, lower starting
salaries etc.

232. Erik Wijk claims that the Left Wing
233. must embrace the liberalistic universal idea that all humans are of equal value.
234. Of course!
235. But the problem is that the identity politics begins partially:
236. it is about me.
237. Unfortunately it often ends there:
238. me, me, me.
239. A lasting expression so far is precisely this,
240. that the discriminated is not required to care for any other power structures.
241. To many have uttered: “you will never understand me”.
242. Saying that,
243. one in a parallel consequence renounce the right and the possibility to “know”
anything about any other groups:
244. if you can’t understand me,
245. I don't have to learn anything about you or understand who you are.
246. It comes down to us having to count on always being on our own.
247. I don’t think so.
248. I believe that solidarity beats identity.

249. In my previous article
250. I claimed that “one can monopolize experiences, but one can never monopolize the struggle”.
251. Here I have changed opinion.
252. It is, like Malcom Kyeyune writes,
253. a postmodern ballast to say that
254. “all knowledge is completely subjective”.
255. What happens when two racialised persons have two completely different experiences?
256. asks the bloggers Roya Hakimnia and Arash Hakimnia
257. on the blog Socialism och barbari.
258. a paradox shines over the whole debate:
259. the identity politicians views themselves as underdogs and avant-gardists
260. but still gets roused now that they get their perspective questioned.
261. This is the sad thing with many of them –
262. they feel that they are finished thinking.
263. They are done, set with what is right or wrong
264. and anyone that does not think alike is marked as prejudice.
265. Judith Kiros and Diana Muliniari claims
266. that it is the identity politics that is feministic and runs the antiracist struggle.
267. It is both an unhistorical as well as a shady way to diminish others commitments.
268. There are many who of different reasons don’t want to have this debate,
269. some claims that it “shatters the Left Wing”.
270. That is a descent authoritative view.
271. A lively, democratic movement must think in the completely opposite way –
272. Problematise and debate more.

Article 15

Article: 15: “Identity politics is a well-fare disease”

Source: SvD Kultur 2014-12-27

Author: Thomas Engström

1. Identity politics is a well-fare disease
2. The individuals’ relation to the group has been a constant source for debate in 2014.
3. SvD’s Thomas Engström looks back
4. and defends the human right to choose a belonging that she tries to have
5. – or not to have.
6. Who can claim to be the same person through life?
7. In Todd Haynes film “I’m not there”
8. Bob Dylan is portrayed, 
9. in order to be readily understandable in his mysterious acts of transformation during 
his careers gantlet, 
10. by a number of actors 
11. – everything from a black American boy to a middle age white Australian woman. 
12. the wonderful thing is that his essence remains intact, 
13. and it is spelled awkwardness and rebellion 
14. – also to himself, also against himself. 
15. It is with other words difficult to think of a more typical representative for the 
Western society, 
16. which has always tossed itself between arrogant conquering wars and spiteful, 
17. contra productive self hate. 
18. But when it at the same time happens large transformations on the surface, 
19. not much is happening at the core. 
20. One is and belongs to what one has once been feed with. 
21. This does not hinder some from spending their whole lives flounder to the other side 
in a hopeless struggle. 
22. And if there are difficult, interesting people 
23. there soon will be new political theories – 
24. the lowest artistic expression known to mankind. 

25. Identity politics is not a remedy, 
26. it is a well-fare disease. 
27. Only a society in peace, prosperity and with well-functioning legal principles 
28. can afford to devote itself in an institutionalised quarrelsome of the kind 
29. we’ve been given examples of during 2014. 
30. But the debate is apparently a sign of something that is fundamentally well, 
31. of how the society is safe enough for vulnerable groups, 
32. who now dares to lift issues which would in less stable times have been meet with 
brutal violence. 
33. With this said, not everything is enjoyable. 
34. A struggle for the individual liberation based on the weight of admitting the group 
belonging... 
35. The field is so covered with paradoxes that one soon cannot breath in the 
undergrowth. 

36. To be able to understand the sectarian contradictions that cuts through parts of the 
Left Wing right now one needs to realise how central the hate is – 
37. the hate towards the others miscomprehension. 
38. It is the same feeling that can fill a Sweden-democrat when seeing a spokesperson of 
Stockholm’s media elite. 
39. Since the hate is perceived as rising upwards, 
40. towards the oppressor, 
41. it can flow freely without infusing any guilty conscience. 
42. On the contrary: 
43. The angrier one gets, the more noble one feels. 
44. One is sort of angry on the unrighteous. 
45. And then one is impatient,
46. this honorary signature for both progressive and populist forces.
47. Impatiens on the border to madness.

48. It is fully possible that identity politics in absurdum leads to a form of “liberalism”,
49. a fragmentation of the society until only individuals remain.
50. That is how Åsa Linderborg seems to perceive it
51. when she with a certain desperation asks for a bit of tranquility and reflection on the identity aspect (Aftonbladet 7/11).
51. But this use of language –
52. where “liberalism” have replaced “reaction” and “imperialism” as curses from the Left Wing –
53. is clouding more than clarifying.
54. If one want to stare blindly at individuals’ special position as something critical for Right Wing ideologies,
55. one can also include extreme variants such as Anarchism –
56. or why not Satanism,
57. this, should we call it hyper-liberalism with pentagram and joyful parties.

58. Liberalism is namely something else than an animalistic immature longing for a parent-free society.
59. Liberalism is a philosophical tradition that puts the right before the good.
60. Maybe the utmost expression for this ardent rigorous manner,
61. is that our legal system rather discharges one hundred guilty than letting one innocent be penalised.
62. The rules must be crystal clear and equal to all,
63. that will say that they must be for instance colour blind and gender neutral.
64. Large parts of the sometimes-entitled critic towards the liberal western order regards,
65. just like the Free trade issue,
66. the demand for more of the same medicine.
67. The ones really resenting the liberal view do whatever they can to reinvent the wheel.
68. Because of this, tens of new isms are created each year and let loose in the debate,
69. with confusing results.

70. These days the isms in mind almost always comes from the US,
71. which have taken over the role as the restlessness concept factory previously possessed by France.
72. Identity politics is unfortunately an unusually strange product to import to our latitudes.
73. The US have had an immigration in a scale ten times longer than ours,
74. and one of the ethnic groups, the blacks,
75. where brought against their will.
76. The difference between our conditions couldn’t be bigger.
77. What Håkan Lindgren so aptly and beneficially describes in this newspaper (27/10) does not to go past:
78. Our Swedish culture is young since the “modern” has reset it.
79. It is we, and not the US, that is the new world.
80. It is the US, and not we, that have ancient problems and constant need for radical solutions.
81. In this moment a new generation is showing its powerless anger out in the street. One has tired of living in an eternal 1965.

82. How does one defeat the institutionalise, utmost real racism
83. that is found in both the US and here?
84. The problem with the identity political theory,
85. if it even exists,
86. is that it is immature and unconsidered.
87. One of its many offspring's is the so-called Communitarianism,
88. which in the midst of all misery advocates ethnically proportional juries in criminal cases:
89. an all black jury black should only be allowed to sentence a black,
90. a Spanish-speaking by Spanish-speakers, and so on.
91. (The lack of history is striking:
92. one of the achievements with the Enlightenment and French revolution was the disbandment of special courts compositions for different societies.)
93. The hysteria of affirmative actions is often the outcome when public complaints of underrepresentation is attempted to be outdone with some kind of concrete proposal for action.
94. But snake venom is still snake venom even if it says "political science" on the bottle.

95. It was not easy before,
96. when Sweden was homogeneous
97. and hundred of thousands where forced to escape famines and crossing oceans in order to find something more bearable.
98. It isn’t easy now either,
99. when the gates have been open to an outside world,
100. which we both compete with as well as need,
101. and in turn is in need of us.
102. and the common mans emptiness that Håkan Lindgren talks about
103. does not allow to be filled with more frigid buckets of modernity, meritocracy and market efficiency.
104. Just like identity politics, liberalism is bound to be guilty.
105. In the physical cosmos where we all consists
106. there exists groups, traditions and communities.
107. It is important that we get to choose which ones to try to belong to or leave.
108. Try, because it is not a human right to belong to which group one wants.
109. But it must be each human’s sacred right to strive to the place where one heart belongs.