

# Conference on Literacy, Empathy and Social Sustainability 2017

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## BIOS

**Jonas Asklund** has a PhD in Comparative literature and is a Lecturer in Swedish at Halmstad University. His interests in scholarship include education, children's literature, comparative literature, emotions in literature, and reader-oriented research. He is one of four literary researchers that initiated the project "Advancing the quality of fiction-related empathy intervention training in the nursing program (fall 2014-fall 2016) ," a cooperative project with nursing specialists at Halmstad University. He was also part of a cooperative project with the Regional Library in Halland, "An observational study on Promoting Literacy in Halland County, 2016." Together with Anna Fåhraeus, he is currently working on the research project "How can we develop a model for better inclusion at the public library? A new model for integration in reading circles at the libraries in Halland county (Oct. 2016-Oct. 2017)." This project is also supported by the Regional Library in Halland County and Halmstad University. He can be reached at [Jonas.asklund@hh.se](mailto:Jonas.asklund@hh.se).

**Matthijs Bal** is a professor of Responsible Management at the University of Lincoln, UK. Before joining Lincoln, Matthijs has worked at universities in Bath, Amsterdam, and Rotterdam. His research interests concern the future of work, and in particular how people shape alternative realities at work. He has conducted research on how fiction may affect empathy, and currently he is involved in research projects aiming at investigating why and how fictional narratives may influence people's perceptions of their work, careers, and ethical decision making. He strongly believes that fiction teaches people things that no textbook can, and therefore has also high relevance in relation to our working lives. He has written numerous articles including, "Learning from literature: empirical research on readers in schools and at the workplace" in *Scientific Approaches to Literature in Learning Environments*, eds. M. Burke, O. Fialho and S.Zyngier, Amsterdam, John Benjamins, 2016, pp. 19-37 (with F. Hakemulder and O. Fialho); "The influence of fictional narrative experience on work outcomes: a conceptual analysis and research model" for *Review of General Psychology*, 36, 2011, pp. 722-758 (with O.S. Butterman and A.B. Bakker) and "How does fiction reading influence empathy? An experimental investigation on the role of emotional transportation." *PLOS ONE*, 8, 1, 2013 (with M. Veltkamp). He can be reached at [mbal@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:mbal@lincoln.ac.uk).

**Katarina Eriksson Barajas** is Professor of Education at Linköping University, Sweden. She teaches Research Supervision and PhD courses in Education and Child Studies. Her interests in scholarship include children's literature, comparative literature, cultural studies, discursive psychology, education, film studies, gender studies, and reader-oriented research; she focuses

on uses of fiction by applying a discursive approach to everyday practices related to literature, film and theater. Eriksson Barajas' recent publications include the articles "Eight Books to Promote Reading. Experiences from a Book Club in Grades 4–7," *The New Review of Children's Literature and Librarianship* (2016), "Discursive Reception Studies – A Path toward Knowledge about Fiction in Everyday Life," *Journal of Literary Theory*, (2015) and the coming article "Methodological Reflections on Investigating Reception of Fiction in Public Spaces", *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*. She can be reached at [katarina.eriksson.barajas@liu.se](mailto:katarina.eriksson.barajas@liu.se).

**Lotta Bergman is a researcher** in the theory and practice of teaching and learning Swedish. She is senior lecturer at the Department of Culture, Languages and Media (KSM), faculty of Education and Society at Malmö University. Her research concerns young people's language and knowledge development in the subject Swedish and Swedish in a democratic and multicultural society, literary reading in and out of school, passionate readers and librarians reading promotion activities. She can be reached at [lotta.bergman@mah.se](mailto:lotta.bergman@mah.se).

**Cecilia Björkén-Nyberg** is a Senior Lecturer in English at Halmstad University. Her research is situated at the intersection of English fiction, sound studies and technology. She is currently studying audiobook listening from the point of view of audio narratology and audio therapy. She can be reached at [cecilia.bjorken-nyberg@hh.se](mailto:cecilia.bjorken-nyberg@hh.se).

**Anna Fåhraeus** has a PhD in English literature. She started out working in Renaissance Studies with a focus on masculinity and race. Her interest in the social contexts of literature and in working in the teacher education program led to a greater focus on modern literature, narratology and cognitive research. She was the project leader for the research project "Advancing the quality of fiction-related empathy intervention training in the nursing program (fall 2014-fall 2016)," a cooperative project with nursing specialists and literary researchers at Halmstad University. She also led a cooperative project with the Regional Library in Halland in, "An observational study on Promoting Literacy in Halland County, 2016." Together with Jonas Asklund, she is currently working on the research project "How can we develop a model for better inclusion at the public library? A new model for integration in reading circles at the libraries in Halland county (Oct. 2016-Oct. 2017)." This project is also supported by the Regional Library in Halland County and Halmstad University. She can be reached at [anna.fahraeus@hh.se](mailto:anna.fahraeus@hh.se).

**Olivia Fialho** is a post-doctoral researcher at the Department of Media and Culture Studies, Utrecht University, on the project "Uses of Literary Narrative Fiction in Social Contexts" of The Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research ([finditinfiction.org](http://finditinfiction.org)). She holds a PhD in Comparative Literature (University of Alberta, 2012) and contributes to empirical studies of literary reading and education, literary awareness, and pedagogical stylistics (e.g. *Language*

*and Literature*, 2007, 2010; *English in Education*, 2011). She co-edits *Scientific Approaches to Literature in Learning Environments* (2016) and co-coordinates the PALA-SIG on Pedagogical Stylistics. She can be reached at [o.fialho@uu.nl](mailto:o.fialho@uu.nl).

**Frank Hakemulder** has a background in literary theory and comparative literature. He conducted his Ph.D.-research (1998) at the Department of Literary Studies at Utrecht University and the Department of Psychology at the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign). He specializes in the psychology of literature, focusing on the effects of reading literary texts on outgroup attitudes and moral self-concept. On this subject he published several books and articles (e.g., *The moral laboratory*, 2000).

Currently he supervises two national research projects in the Netherlands: one pertaining to the experience of being absorbed in fictional worlds (*Narrative Absorption*, in press), and the other on how such experiences affect social perception and self concepts ([www.finditinfiction.org](http://www.finditinfiction.org)). He teaches Media Psychology and Communication at the Department of Media and Culture Studies (Utrecht University), and trains students in the Humanities in methods of the Social Sciences (see *Science and Humanities: New Research Methods*, a text book he wrote in collaboration with Will van Peer and Sonia Zyngier, 2012). From 2012 to 2016 he was president of the International Society for the Empirical Study of Literature and Media. He can be reached at [f.hakemulder@uu.nl](mailto:f.hakemulder@uu.nl).

**Karin Kukkonen** is associate professor of Comparative Literature at ILOS, University of Oslo, Norway. Her research project *How the Novel Found its Feet* (2013-2016) investigated the stylistic changes in the eighteenth-century novel that made its writing more immersive and emotionally involving. She can be reached at [karin.kukkonen@ilos.uio.no](mailto:karin.kukkonen@ilos.uio.no).

**Anne Mangen**, Anne Mangen is professor of literacy at The Reading Centre, University of Stavanger, Norway. She is currently doing empirical research on the effect of digitization on cognitive and emotional aspects of reading. She can be reached at [anne.mangen@uis.no](mailto:anne.mangen@uis.no).

**David Peplow** is a Senior Lecturer in English Language at Sheffield Hallam University, UK. His research interests include discourse analysis, stylistics, and health humanities. David has written two books on reader response and literacy practices in group settings: 'The Discourse of Reading Groups: Integrated Cognitive and Sociocultural Perspectives' (Routledge; co-authored with Joan Swann, Paola Trimarco, and Sara Whiteley), and 'Talk About Books: A Study of Reading Groups' (Bloomsbury). He can be reached at [d.peplow@shu.ac.uk](mailto:d.peplow@shu.ac.uk).

**Cecilia Pettersson** Cecilia Pettersson is a PhD in Comparative literature at the University of Gothenburg. In her dissertation *Marked by the past? Memory Intricacies and Aesthetics in the Swedish Novel of the 1990's*, she deals with how memories is formed and problematized in Swedish fiction from the 1990s and in contemporary scientific research. Since 2011, her research has been focused on the importance of reading for health and well-being. In July

2017, she begins a study funded by the Swedish Research Council, where she investigates whether bibliotherapy is a suitable complement for treating women with postpartum depression. The study is part of the project “Mother anyway – literary, health-related and medial narratives”. She can be reached at [cecilia.pettersson@lir.gu.se](mailto:cecilia.pettersson@lir.gu.se).

**Anja Rydén Gramner** is a PhD student in pedagogy at Linköping University, Sweden. She has a background in literature. Her research interest lies in the learning opportunities created by using fictional works in higher education. She can be reached at [anja.gramner@liu.se](mailto:anja.gramner@liu.se).

**Allison Skerrett** is associate professor of language and literacy studies in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at The University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Skerrett’s teaching and research focus on adolescents’ literacy practices, both in and outside school, and secondary English education in contexts of racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Dr. Skerrett’s publications appear in educational journals such as the *American Educational Research Journal*, *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, and *Urban Education*. Her new book, *Teaching Transnational Youth: Literacy and Education in a Changing World* (2015), published by Teachers College Press, is the first to examine the educational opportunities and challenges arising from increasing numbers of students who live and attend school across different countries. Dr. Skerrett was selected for the Literacy Research Association’s Early Career Achievement Award in 2013. She can be reached at [askerrett@utexas.edu](mailto:askerrett@utexas.edu).

**Elisabeth Skog** works as a librarian at Halmstad city library where, among other things, she is responsible for the talking book services. Together with a colleague she runs the library pod. She has also a keen interest in poetry and in arranging poetry circles. She can be reached at [bibliotek@halmstad.se](mailto:bibliotek@halmstad.se).

**Maria Wennerström** holds a PhD in Literature and is lecturer at the Department of Education. Between 2011 och 2015 she was part of a project entitled “Reading Fiction in the Internet Society. The Function of Literature in the Personal Development and Social Orientation of Young Adults”, financed by the Swedish Research Council. As part of this project she conducted two large studies where she investigated how young adults relate to literary fiction, and presented the results at for example The International Society for the Empirical Study of Literature, in Montréal 2012, and at the International Conference on Narrative, in Manchester 2013. She is one of the authors of *Litteraturen på undantag? Unga vuxnas fiktionsläsning i dagens Sverige (Literary fiction marginalized? Fiction reading among young adults in Sweden today)* (Torsten Pettersson, Skans Kersti Nilsson, Maria Wennerström Wohnr, Olle Nordberg, Makadam 2015). She is currently initiating an explorative project together with TD Johan Wickström about the use of fiction in academic teacher training. She can be reached at [maria.wennerstrom-wohrne@uadm.uu.se](mailto:maria.wennerstrom-wohrne@uadm.uu.se).

**Johan Wickström** is Deputy Director and Academic Developer at the Unit for Academic

Teaching and Learning at Uppsala University. He holds a D.Theol. (PhD) in History of Religions. Wickström has a background as Senior Lecturer in Didactics of Religion. His doctoral thesis examined the use of Old Norse narratives, history and myth in Swedish schools (diss. *Våra förfäder var hedningar: Nordisk forntid som myt i den svenska folkskolans pedagogiska texter fram till år 1919, 2008* ). He has also written texts on inclusive teaching in Higher Education (report *Mångfaldsmedveten pedagogik för universitetslärare, 2011*) and on the use of texts in religious education (article "Didaktisk textkompetens"). He also has an interest in critical approaches to dominating educational concepts in higher education (article: "Dekonstruerad länkning: en kritisk läsning av Constructive Alignment inom svensk högskolepedagogik och pedagogisk utveckling", 2015) and is currently initiating an explorative project together with Dr. Maria Wennerström Wohrne about the use of fiction in academic teacher training. He can be reached at [joan.wickstrom@uadm.uu.se](mailto:joan.wickstrom@uadm.uu.se).