Educational Activities: From Binary to Gender-Plural Approaches[1]

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Summary

Even if parents, educators and teachers often still unwittingly or unreflectedly raise and educate children to internalize typical male or female behavior, a glance at everyday life in today's society shows that children who do not want to be categorized as female or male, as well as parents who no longer correspond to the stereotype patterns of femininity and masculinity are not an exception but rather provide an insight into the diversity of actually lived lifestyles. What kind of pedagogy would be required to do justice to the diversity of all those forms of existence – along with a regard to the manifold manners of existence in terms of gender?

Relevance of Gender for Pedagogical Theory and Practice

If since the 1970s the women's movement has contributed to educational practices being reviewed regarding their inherent, normative notions of gender, and if the women's movement has, in connection with the demands for equal rights for girls and women, brought the encouragement of girls by providing specific offers for girls in day-to-day pedagogical work to the foreground of the pedagogical debate, then it has become increasingly clear that, with the departure from essentialist notions of the nature of women and thus also of men, we can no longer assume homogeneously conceived genders of 'woman' and 'man', but rather that the differences among women and the differences among men are just as manifestly present as different forms of gender relationships. The call for a pedagogy that fosters boys became louder, with both the feminist work for girls' development as well as that for boys' development often remaining rooted in essentialist notions of the *right* girl and the *right* boy. Thus, in an edition of

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professional texts related to daycare ('KiTa Fachtexte') with the title 'Gender in the context of the work with children in the first three years of their lives' ('Gender im Kontext der Arbeit mit Kindern in den ersten drei Lebensjahren'), Tim Rohrmann (n.d.) writes that there are highly diverging opinions about the point in time when children recognize their own sex as such and comes to the conclusion: "Children may from a very early age refer to themselves as a *boy* or *girl*. But only later do they understand that there are two sexes, which sex they themselves belong to and – above all – that this will not change."[2]

Besides such still active essentialist and essentializing approaches, the understanding of the constructedness of gender based on interactions and discursive performances has made clear that the two categories of *female* and *male* are in fact unable to represent a supposed essentiality of specific groups of human beings and thus fall short of conceptually encompassing the actually lived diversity of genders. The suggestion made by Baltes-Löhr[3] to situate gender on a continuum which is not limited by the cornerstones of *female* and *male* but is comprised of the four dimensions corporal/physical, psychological, social and sexual gender, and thus considered modifiable, plural, polypolar and intersectional, could represent a possibility for describing the different genders in their historical, cultural, spatial and biographical variance. On the basis of this, suggestions could be developed for pedagogical work with children and adolescents regardless of their gender, without gender-appropriate, -reflecting or -sensitive pedagogy stabilizing precisely what it purports to overcome, i.e. a traditional gender order of women/girls and men/boys that regards – often surprised, frequently irritated – trans and inter persons as a singular exception at best, and essentially as confirming the normality of gender binarity.

Gender as a norm

If Spinoza talks of bodily persistence as a human condition, and if Hegel expands this idea by positing that persistence is only possible where there is mutual recognition,[4] then Foucault supplements this with the concept that "the norms of recognition function to produce and to deproduce the notion of the human" (Butler 2004: 31-32). According to Butler (2004:48) "the norm has no independent ontological status, yet it cannot be easily reduced to its instantiations;

2 | Rohrmann, Tim: Gender im Kontext der Arbeit mit Kindern in den ersten drei Lebensjahren. URL: http://www.kita-fachtexte.de/fileadmin/website/FT_Rohrmann_OV.pdf [03.01.2014].

3 | For an attempt at a definition of terms see the contribution by Christel Baltes-Löhr in this publication: Always Gender– Always Different.

4 | "If we are not recognizable, if there are no norms of recognition by which we are recognizable, then it is not possible to persists in one's being, and we are not possible beings; we have been foreclosed from possibility." (Hegel according to Butler 2004: 31).

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it is itself (re)produced through is embodiment, through the acts that strive to approximate it, through the idealizations reproduced in and by those acts."

Gender in its normative dimension can thus far be understood as "a form of social power" and as an apparatus "by which the gender binary is instituted. As a norm that appears independent of the practices that it governs, its ideality is the reinstituted effect of those very practices." (ibid.). The triad *norm – practice – ideal* however also contains the possibility of a subversive change of the triad's respective aspects through repetition and the repetitions' inherent possibility of gradual shifts, e.g. of gender practices in space and time. In this, the performative and historical structure of gender is revealed. Gender not only determines the "very criterion by which we judge a person to be a gendered being [...] or the recognizability of the human" (Butler 2004: 58), but also "how we do or do not recognize ourselves at the level of feeling, desire, and the body [...]" (ibid.). This debate is embedded in the question of how the human condition comes into being. Here too the principle holds that "the history of the category is not over, and the 'human' is not captured once and for all." (Butler 2004: 13). At this point Butler makes a remarkable reference to pedagogy when she emphasizes that "part of rethinking where and how the human comes into being will involve a rethinking of both the social and the psychic landscapes of an infant's emergence." (Butler 2004: 14).

However, it remains doubtful in how far the offer for infants demanded as a necessity by Butler is tenable in this form. With reference to the observation that queer theory radically questions a categorial gender attribution, Butler writes:

> "It does not follow, therefore, that queer theory would oppose all gender assignment or cast doubt on the desires of those who wish to secure such assignments for intersex children, for instance, who may well need them to function socially even if they end up changing the assignment later in life, knowing the risks." (Butler 2004: 7f)

This raises the question of whether the perspective of a dedramatization of gender would not benefit the children much more, as it would relegate the issue of gender towards the background cause it to lose its importance altogether. Nevertheless, it is not only difficult to understand why children should be offered an orientation which needs to be overcome later; one should also consider at this point whether a less rigid and more plural understanding of gender would not also benefit those children who have been attributed the gender *female* or *male* and who have adopted this attribution. How much energy could be saved which so far has been mustered by children, adolescents and also by adults in order to be recognized as a *proper* girl/woman or as a *proper* boy/man, how many

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gender-related conflicts could be defused or avoided. The definition of gender as a continuum suggested by Baltes-Löhr (see footnote 3, p. 314) would in its practical use and implementation provide everyone with more breathing space for a wider range of developments.

In the following, it will be demonstrated how a pedagogy that aims to do justice to such a demand for manifold possibilities of development could look like.

Pedagogy and gender

Issues of education and socialization as well as concepts of femininity, masculinity and gender relations have increasingly become the focus of public and academic debate since the beginning of the women's movement in the late 1960s.

Thus Tervooren (2006) describes the path from gender-specific socialization to performative gender, Kunert-Zierl (2005) orders the phases of pedagogical girls' and boys' work in decades from 1970 onward, and Rhyner and Zumwald (2008) observe gender through different lenses to gain new perspectives. Regarding youth work, Rose and Schulz (2008) point to the constraining limitations of various gender terms. These four perspectives will be discussed briefly in the following, concluding with the work of Olaf Stuve (2001) and Jenny Howald (2001) who argue from the viewpoint of queer theory.

Drawing on Liegle (2003), education is to be understood as "a bipolar – transferring and acquiring – activity in the framework of (inter- and intragenerational) relations." (Liegle 2003: 16). Both poles of education – transfer and acquisition – relate to and depend on each other. "Transfer can only become effective if it encounters the willingness and the ability to acquire." (Liegle 2003: 16). Education is attributed to the field of the acquiring activity, i.e. the acquisition pole of schooling and parenting.

> "Learning can be understood as an individual and in each case distinct processing of information and experiences within the environment, and thus the notion of learning has a close relationship with the aspect of acquisition in the concept of schooling and parenting and hence with the concept of education. Learning describes the mechanisms and the regularity of the processes for the acquisition of the world." (Liegle 2003: 17)

Likewise significant is the term 'development', which denotes the shifting of the human personality in its biographical course regarding physicality, knowledge, skills, views as well as behavior. In this, biological principles play as much of a role as experience and learning. "Enabling, accompanying, supporting and stimulating education, learning and development can be described as the most general goal of schooling and parenting." (Liegle 2003: 18)

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The significance of the gender dimension for pedagogical theory and practice involves explaining the forms of those processes of development and construction which contribute to someone choosing whether or not to adopt a gender, and thus the question which role parenting and schooling, education, learning and socialization inside and outside the family or other forms of socialization within the private sphere can play in these development and construction processes.[5]

And again: social determinacy versus active appropriation/assignment of gender

According to Tervooren, theoretical models of socialization tend to be located more on the side of passive experiencing (according to Liegle: the pole of *transfer* in the concept of schooling and parenting) (Tervooren 2006: 10), while constructivist approaches emphasize the subjects' own activity (the pole of *acquisition* in Liegle's concept of schooling and parenting) (Tervooren 2006: 20). According to Tervooren, the debate of the 1970s about the gender-specific socialization, particularly regarding the emancipatory aspect of schooling and parenting (Dausien quoted by Tervooren 2006: 10), increasingly centered around the socialization of girls whose opportunities in life are seen by Metz-Göckel (2000: 105 f.) as disadvantaging and deficient. The concept of the 'gender role' developed in 1970s socialization theory principally stems, according to Tervooren, from a notion elaborated by Talcott Parsons of socialization as an internalization of social values and norms, in which however the subject is accorded little space as an agent. The gender roles fixed by society are something to be adopted by the child, who occupies a position *vis-à-vis* the adult that is deficient in every way and dimension (Tervooren 2006: 11 f.).

Biological determinism gives way to social determinism (Hopfner 1999: 135 ff.), unless, as with Hurrelmann (1983, 1986), the concept of the "productively reality-processing subject" (Hurrelmann 1983: 91) gains importance. Nevertheless, the differences between gender groups conceived as bipolar are frequently regarded, in terms of socialization theory, as considerably more significant than the differences among girls and among boys. According to Tervooren, Hagemann-White (1984) sees socialization as the appropriation of the gender binary, which is however fashioned by children acting as active subjects. Hagemann-White nevertheless remains in the bipolar spectrum of the gender binary.

The departure from a deficient perspective on the receiving, socializing child is replaced in the field of childhood studies established in the late 1980s by the view of children "as producers of culture, as social actors and equal members of society whose perspectives have to be developed." (Honig 1999 according to Tervooren 2006: 13). The everyday practices of children are examined with the help

5 | For non-familial forms of the private see Butler (2004).

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of ethnographic research tools. The everyday practices of children are examined with the help of ethnographic research tools. Besides gender, great significance is for instance attached to the children's ethnic background (Tervooren 2006: 13).

According to Tervooren there is an increased perception of individuals' own actions not only in childhood studies but, with the beginning of the 1990s, also in gender studies, with a new emphasis on the construction of genders and the concept of 'doing gender' (West/Zimmermann 1991) underscoring the interdependent actions of social actors: gender is continuously produced and reinforced interactively by the individuals themselves. This constructivist turn is taking place in educational sciences just as much as in educational sciences and sociology of education, and has an enormous influence on the gender debate (Bilden 1991; Lemmermöhle et al. 2000). This approach continues to be criticized – from the perspective of the theory of socialization as well – for its the overemphasis of intersubjective interactions at the cost of structure-theoretical categorizations (Lindemann 1993). Ethnographical childhood studies tend to ignore the power of structures and the social-historical evolvement, but the approaches based on the theory of socialization instead tend to lack emphasis on the actors' own and co-construction – in particular when involving the staging, the construction of genders.

The staging of gender identities corresponds to the performative turn, fueled in particular by the works of Judith Butler. Staging and performance does not mean that the agent has a free choice in the representation of the genders (Goffman 1994: 15). In the context of all environmental circumstances it is the performative act of the acting subject by which gender is continuously produced through acts of speech and physicality. In the necessity of repetition lies the perspective of a subversive shift of gender identities and gender.

However, so far it remains unclear "how from the constant everyday failures to achieve the ideal norm, which are however extremely diverse in their concrete realization, new patterns can emerge that acquire normative as well as formative authority." (Tervooren 2006: 20). In the near future it will therefore be necessary to closely observe the processes of the performative practice of gender, and to leave sufficient room both for the interactions and the impact of structures and norms. This approach is ultimately able to take an intersectional perspective into account which, besides the plurality of the genders, considers aspects such as socio-economic status, ethnic orientation, age, regional background etc.

Gender-sensitive children's and youth work: more than girls' work or boys' work?

With regard to girls' and boys' work, Kunert-Zierl (2005) provides theoretical comments on the individual decades from 1970 onward, together with a de-

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scription of developments in the field. For instance, in the German version of Montessori educator Elena Gianni Belotti's work from 1975 we find notions of gender-specific conditionings of girls and women that begin with pregnancy and orientate girls ineluctably towards their role as housewife and mother (Kunert-Zierl 2005: 28). Ursula Scheu (1977) describes the same in her work: "Wir werden nicht als Mädchen geboren, wir werden dazu gemacht" ('We are not born girls, we are made to be them'), clearly alluding to Simone de Beauvoir's comment from 1949, when she writes in 'Le deuxième Sexe' ('The Second Sex') that "One is not born a woman but becomes one." (de Beauvoir 1949). Scheu, whose work saw more than 20 editions until 2000, regarded girls as victims of patriarchal structures. In her view, they should practice in gender-homogenous groups to acquire skills that boys already possess as it is, for instance physical resistance. A corresponding program for boys is only demanded in theory, but not implemented in practice. Combined with a Marxist critique of society, capitalist society is held responsible for the development of a specifically feminine identity. In everyday pedagogical practices this leads to specific offers for girls to liberate them from what the female educators believe to be a situation of oppression, and to support and guide them on their path to emancipation. It should only be mentioned in passing that, also in the late 1970s, Maria Mies understood women's studies as alignment with oppressed women and as a search for ways out of oppression to liberation (Mies 1978).

Attempts to question such essentialist and deficient images of femininity emerge when, with regard to the mother-daughter relationship, processes of mutual repression are identified (Osterland 1978 referenced by Kunert-Zierl 2005: 31). However, in this the differences between women continue to be discussed under a negative sign, when women, in this case mothers and educators, are seen to be in a competitive relationship with regard to the child, particularly the daughter, and not as persons contributing to the construction process of the children's gender – with all its dimensions – , only occupying different positions with different perspectives in the same field of education. Thus, even approaches that have a critical take on the concepts of motherhood and daughterhood still continue to fit the mould of the old, traditional competitiveness between women. The rivalry for winning male favor and recognition is substituted by the rivalry for gaining the favor of the child (Kunert-Zierl 2005: 32). In the sense of a recognition theory drawing on Butler (Butler 2001), motherhood, too, would be constructed through the child's recognition, with the respective gender of the actors carrying an importance that should not to be underestimated. We have to ask ourselves whether motherliness reacting to an appreciative son would take a

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different form than the one constructed through the appreciation of a girl,[6] and in what way a situation in which the child's gender does not seem to be morphologically unambiguous could generate turbulences. In the same way, one would need to examine the constructedness of fatherliness. Another question one could add here, with regard to the debate about the professionalization of educators, is whether the educator as well becomes an educator through the recognition of the children, how this process of construction is formed and which effects ambiguous gender attributions elicit in education professionals.

With regard to the construction of gender, Kunert-Zierl notes that in the 1980s the discourse shifted its attention increasingly towards the significance of the subjective, active part played by girls and women in the construction of gender. The topic was now that of female subjectivity, and with that the question whether, according to Breitenbach/Hagemann-White, deeply rooted, and also partly cherished, so-called female characteristics thus far regarded as deficient "did not in fact also have their good sides." (Breitenbach/Hagemann-White 1994: 254). A revaluation of the still polarly conceived gender difference took place in favor of feminity. Female forms of coping with issues in everyday life were now in high regard, girls and women could make their voice heard and receive more space both in a symbolic and a haptic sense. In the youth centers, this was the phase in which girls' groups, spaces for girls and specific offers for girls were created. The aim was to recognize and encourage the girls' strengths.

In 1981 Michael Brunke called for gender-specific boys' work, with a view to relativizing male role behavior, particularly with regard to male aggressiveness. 1987 Ottemeier-Glücks explained the necessity of antisexist boys' work which enables boys to reflect their role behavior and to generate "the ability to suffer from one's own role." (Ottemeier-Glücks 1987: 345). The idea was to expand the male concept of self by so-called traditional female features and behaviors such as cooking, washing and cleaning. Although antisexist boys' work was supposed to contribute to the "end of patriarchy" (Ottemeier-Glücks 1988: 381), ultimately perpetrator-victim schemata remained just as virulent as the general allocation of boys to the potential dominant group the girls faced as the potentially oppressed.[7]

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6 | In 1984 Hagemann-White already noted: "A mother does not smile at her son more or less frequently than at her daughter, but differently: her smile carries a different meaning and different emotions. The meaning and the emotions arise from the social significance which being a future man or a future woman carries." (Hagemann-White 1984: 74).

7 | This perspective is still very much evident in the 1997 campain 'Aktiv gegen Männergewalt' ('Active Against Male Violence') (Süddeutsche Zeitung 270/97 p. 38 of 24.11.1997) when the coordinator of the campain, Anita Heiliger, replied to the question whether that meant that all men are potential rapists: "I'm not saying that all men are perpetrators, but that in our society male socialization includes elements that can make them become perpetrators under certain conditions. With women the opposite is the case [...]. There are lots of men who reject violence, that's not a new phenomenon. But these men are not regarded as those who determine the norm for masculinity."

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Besides the antisexist boys' work, in which femininity is regarded as superior to the tendentially aggressive masculinity, the 1980s also saw the development of the concept of boys-specific education work, which dissolves the pattern of dominator and dominated by addressing the "other boys not oriented along the male norm, as well as the powerful girls in youth work." (Adloff 1988: 376 f.). Approaches to conscious boys' work "prioritize boys as individuals and point to differences and disadvantaging structures among themselves as well." (Kunert-Zierl 2005: 61). The relationship of the genders to each other are observed more from the perspective of the adolescents themselves than from a social-political perspective.

In the 1990s, deconstructivism and Judith Butler's concepts presented above had an enormous impact on the gender debate. However, many feministically oriented youth workers involved with girls' work saw a threat to their subject in the understanding of sexes as results of construction processes and the deconstruction of the communal, joint collective subject of 'we-women'. For the boys' work of this decade it is significant, according to Kunert-Zierl, that besides the antisexist boys' work, popular-science publications like 'Kleine Helden in Not' ('little heroes in distress') (Schnack/Neutzling 1990) with a clear rejection of notions of a strong male gender received wide-spread attention. In 1989, Sielert designed the concept of a reflected boys' work for the scientific field, a work which ties in with the boys' strengths, hoping for acceptance on the part of the boys by creating in them a willingness to embrace hitherto potentially unfamiliar and also so-called atypical behaviors and to incorporate them in their own behavioral repertoire.

In the 'critical boys' work', Winter (Winter 1991, 1997) developed the notion of a diversity of maleness and, like Sielert (1989), favours approaches that clearly distance themselves from all essentialist notions of masculinity. The concept of emancipatory boys' work emphasizes that men themselves can be understood as "victims of a society structured along male rights" (Schenk 1991: 102), and that boys and men need support and guidance in order to be able to develop a male identity beyond traditional norms of maleness (Krüger 1993: 32 f). Within the approach of gender-specific boys' work the boys should, according to Spoden (1993), be offered gender-homogenous spaces for an independent and self-confident development of their own identity beyond the hegemonially operating norm of maleness. The focus is now on specific offers exclusively for boys, so that the approach can be regarded as a kind of counterpart to the girls' work of the late 1970s, since the gender-specific girls' work, particularly with view to ensuring the existence of spaces providing protection from dominant maleness, also established gender-homogenous groups. Kunert-Zierl also mentions the mythopoetical approach in her overview (Haindorff 1997), which wants

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to see the warrior and lover united in the 'wild man' and presumes biogenetic differences between the two genders. Drawing on Horx, the new, gentle, professionally uncompetitive man is frequently regarded as a 'softy', as "a grotesque bogeyman of emancipation culture." (Horx referenced by Haindorff 1997: 129).

In the girls' work of the incipient 21st century, deconstructivism in a way enters through the backdoor, when the concept of 'doing gender' (West/Zimmermann 1991) is considered in gender-reflecting pedagogical approaches (Voigt-Kehlenbeck 2001). An open pedagogical stance, an open mind for the construction processes of 'doing gender', a form of pedagogical support that is not geared towards stabilizing and achieving a completed gender identity, presupposes on the part of education professionals the acceptance of such a destabilization, also for one's own subjective gender identity. The debate triggered by Kuhlmann (2000) which implied that educators would then be unburdened from their model function regarding the demonstration of changed role behavior falls short of the mark here, since the model function in the pedagogical process – doubtlessly also mutual – remains intact, but with changed contents: what is exemplary then is admitting to oneself that gender can also be changeable in continuous construction processes. This can also point to new aspects for the interaction between education professionals and girls and boys regarding an intergenerational perspective. It is not automatically just the adults who 'possess' something that the adolescents yet have to achieve or stabilize, instead all actors involved can communicate with each other about the processes and results of the construction processes during different biographical phases, share and become more aware of the co-construction of identities. Other dimensions such as age, but also socio-economic status, cultural background etc. can play a role in this as well.

In the spirit of such a gender-reflecting pedagogy, spaces for girls are no longer seen as shelters against aggressive masculinity, but as areas of freedom that enable the making experiences that go beyond traditional attributions. This applies in equal measure to boys' spaces.

Rauw's concern (2001), in a mixed traditional-feminist and deconstructive approach to girls' work, is that "the girls experience a space in which they can show and live their strengths and weaknesses. They should learn that their opinion is appreciated without having to comply with a normality in order to be recognized." (Rauw referenced by Kunert-Zier 2005: 54). At this point one would however need to add that, as described above, recognition always operates in a normative context. For the girls' work, the objective should therefore be that recognition is not bound to complying with a hegemonially fixed, seemingly rigid norm and that the girls – and, in the sense of the gender perspective, also the boys as well as other genders – are accorded the necessary space to actively

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participate with their actions, feelings and thinking in the construction of what appears as gender normality. Drawing on the premises set up by Rauw (2001) we can establish the following:

1. Girls' and boys' work, or work with genders, presumes reflected gender images on the part of education professionals, so that clichés can be recognized as such and curiosity can grow for how girls, boys and others enact their gender; a projection of the views and assumptions of education professionals on the adolescents should be avoided.
2. The interest of the girls, boys and all other genders are the point of departure for educational work.
3. Greatest possible participation and empathy: girls, boys and all others are actively involved in shaping the pedagogical activities, with respect for the interests of the other, which includes a high degree of empathy.
4. Contact between the genders occurs mutually, across generation boundaries and in gender-homogenous as well as gender-heterogenous constellations.

In this way problems, conflicts, obstacles as well as conducive elements in the construction processes of 'doing gender' can be recognized, and at the same time space can be created for solutions and concretizations beyond any established or predetermined gender images.

We can identify a multiple 'as-well-as': gender work/doing gender should be something to be conceived of together; both gender-homogenous and -heterogenous aspects should be incorporated in the work; education professionals are both, model and learners, but in any case constructors; this applies both to the education professionals as well as to the adolescents. Here one should also point to the intersectionally embedded within the competency to deal with differences, in cases when it is necessary to not want to reconcile the described perspectives; they are thus frequently allowed to disappear, but this approach lets them exist beside and with each other and thus leaves sufficient space to the pedagogical support of construction processes not only of gender, but also of identities with regard to ethnic background, regional affiliation, age etc. However, the need for a specific consideration of trans and intersex children and adolescents is an issue that has yet to be addressed.

The lens counts – school as an example for the relevance of paradigms for day-to-day pedagogical work of gender constructions

What has become clear up to now is the far-reaching significance which the pedagogical attitude of educators holds in the process of pedagogical guidance.

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This is also explained in a differentiated manner in the work of Thomas Rhyner and Bea Zumwald (2008).

If the 'reading glasses' are a symbol for the explanations of socialization theory regarding the society-dependent shaping of gender, then binoculars stand for explanations from evolutionary biology which have been regaining importance in social and personality psychology (Webster 2007) after they had been denigrated as reactionary for decades, which in turn was due to the fact that the important concept that human beings can increase their chance of survival by adapting to surrounding conditions had been misrepresented and abusively implemented in racist, national-socialist and sexist notions. Even today such approaches still carry the risk of leading to a reinforcement of gender stereotypes.

'Diving goggles' symbolize psychoanalytical approaches, "opening the eyes for the depth of the soul and interpreting gender differences on the basis of psychoanalytical precepts." (Rhyner/Zumwald 2008: 22). Girls and boys are assumed to each have their own distinct spiritual life. C.G. Jung's archetypes such as Anima as the connecting and 'Animus' as the differentiating and recognizing element are used to explain the choice of girls to to concern themselves with care even while playing, and the interest of the boys in the 'wild man'; here we see a clear link to the mytho-poetical approach of Haindorff (1997) described above. The perspective of the 'diving goggles' can likewise lead to a reinforcement of stereotypical views of girls and boys. Furthermore, Rhyner and Zumwald emphasize that these goggles are probably less appropriate for use in a school environment, that they may constitute the basis for psychotherapeutical intervention and therapy, rather than be used in the context of school work with girls, boys and all others within class organizations, groups, and in the sense of mediation and appropriation of educational contents.

The 'safety glasses' stand for constructivist explanations which – as mentioned several times – regard genders as a result of social construction processes. Boys, girls, teaching staff and all others stage and construct gender. With his approach of 'doing gender' for schools, Güting (2004) has distinguished the following levels: institutional arrangements such as class lists which are organized by gender; gender as a criterion for apportioning and ordering: changing rooms in PE; gender-separated bathroom and shower facilities; optical stagings: hair, hair style, dress and related behavior, e.g. brushing your hair out of your face even though there is no hair in it; interactions, e.g. differently staged response behavior when insecure.

Gender stagings should be supported pedagogically and also remain subject to questioning. Girls, boys and all others should be accorded sufficient space to be able to transgress conventional role images in daily school life as well. In this context, it should again be pointed out how important aspects such as

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age, socio-economic status as well as cultural background are in the case of an intersectional approach, and which great significance they hold for the identity construction of girls, boys and all others.[8] According to Rhyner and Zumwald (2008), dealing with gender in daily school life involves three possible strategies: establishing equality, utilizing differences productively and enabling deconstruction. This shall, in conclusion, be illustrated with the following example:

It is clear that the teacher's own attitude regarding the explanation of gender also informs their professional conduct: if observable gender differences are understood as biologically based, then the teacher will try to give children the space to develop these innate female and male abilities and features. If the teacher assumes a construction of the genders then they will, for example, have to closely observe where the pupils' strengths and weaknesses lie beyond normed, traditional gender images.

Establishing equality then means not imposing a priori a stereotype on the girls, boys and all others, but trying to allow everyone involved to actively participate in classroom and break activities. Specific measures of encouragement could for instance mean that in particular situations, e.g. depending on the topic, differences play a role, by giving girls and boys a space of their own to enable the girls to engage in what so far has been regarded as atypical female behavior and, conversely the boys in what so far has been regarded as atypical male behavior.

In this way a deconstructivist approach can establish itself if the pupils can also move beyond the gender systems or attributions. Here an example regarding the use of the school yard: as a situation of departure, it was observed that boys tend to claim a lot of space in their playing, while girls tend to play in a calmer, less extrovert and more communication-oriented manner; boys threaten others and prominently mark their presence in the school yard.

Equality strategies may result in establishing an equal use of space for boys, girls and all others. Girls and boys should partly practice positive aspects of the playing behavior of the other gender group, and it should become normal for everyone that there are children who want to be neither girls nor boys, or who look like a boy but feel like a real girl and vice versa.

The implementation of the difference strategy would ensure that the boys' urge for movement is taken into account and that a further piece of playground equipment is constructed in the school yard, and that girls can find spaces with a cozy atmosphere for sharing and playing. In either case, both girls and boys should be involved in the shaping of the school yard and rules should be developed and established together.

8 | For the concept of intersectionality see Knapp (2005); Lutz/Wenning (2001); McCall (2005).

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The deconstruction strategy would attempt to dissolve typical female and typical male gender attributions and give all pupils the space to deliberate together who wants to do what. The educators also encourage children and adolescents to move within the *other* gender group. With this approach, one has to ensure the willingness in the girls' or boys' group to let the girls and boys attributed to the respectively *other* gender group participate as equal members in the playing activity of the other gender group. The perhaps gentler and more reserved boy and the perhaps stronger and wilder girl should be able to find their place both in the gender-homogeneous group as well as in the gender-heterogeneous group and not be excluded on the basis of their *being different/otherness*, at worst by both gender groups – as is still all too often the case in daily school life today. This also applies for the sexual orientation of girls and boys, and for children and adolescents who do not (want to) belong to any specific gender or want to change their gender.

The combination of the three strategies in pedagogical practice enables, drawing on Rhyner und Zumwald, a value-free development for girls, boys and – I would like to add – for all other genders, the full exploitation of individual potentials as well as identities that go beyond traditional gender images or appear in new connotations (Rhyner/Zumwald 2008: 38).[9]

What becomes clear here is the proximity to the notions of intersectional difference competency, which makes it possible to deal with differences and similarities regarding gender as well as cultural background, socio-economic status or age in the sense of a creative diversity.

Rose and Schulz also provide evidence for the necessity of breaking out of the constraining perspective of the feministically marked, often seemingly essentialist difference of the genders, and describe this using the example of a research project in Frankfurt youth centers. The traditional feminist discourse is constraining if gender pedagogy in youth centers is automatically equated with work in gender-homogeneous groups. According to Rose and Schulz, in the past decades a regular pattern has established itself which emphasizes girls' work but does not offer boys' work enough space, and too frequently discounts the gender stagings in the heterogeneous field. Such stagings in the youth center often comprise verbal sexisms and gestural allusions to sexual acts. (Rose/Schulz 2008: 73).

It is necessary to understand these stagings in the purpose which the adolescent introduces, and not to react with the apparent 'panacea' of gender-homogeneous group work in which different behavior is practiced and the behavior which the education professional has identified as sexist is discussed. Instead, according to Rose and Schulz, it is about being able to decipher and respond to

9 | For a further, discourse-theoretical discussion of the topic school and gender see Jäckle (2009): Schule M(m)acht Geschlechter.

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the verbal and habitual communications of the adolescents. Gender competency would mean not understanding every public remark on the topic of 'gender/sex' as referring to gender. Thus the overlying gender text could be accorded its underlying significance which is often not related to gender content. This de-gendering of situational meanings offers, according to Rose and Schulz, the chance to disengage oneself from gender-fixed interpretations of the stagings, and thus to minimize the risk of permanent misunderstandings between adolescents and teaching personnel and to expand restricting spheres of influence. "The interpretative performances of social messages have to be multi-perspectivistic in order to increase the likelihood that they are understood and answered correctly" (Rose/Schulz 2008: 74), very much in the sense of the intersectional difference competency which could enable such a decoding for the aspects of age, socio-economic status and cultural background, as briefly outlined for the degendering. For the area of gender applies: "If it says gender on the label, it does not always mean that there is gender inside." This notion also corresponds to that of the dedramatization of the gender aspect in pedagogical work as defined by Budde, Scholand and Faulstich-Wieland (2008).

Queer pedagogy

The works of Olaf Stuve (2001) and Jenny Howald (2001) will serve as an example to cast another glance at those approaches in pedagogical work with children and adolescents that derive explicitly from queer theory. Is it a coincidence or – despite queer theory's clear critique of heteronormativity – nonetheless a cementation of precisely this bipolar, binary gender order, if a man writes about pedagogical work with boys and a woman writes about pedagogical work with girls? Or should this be seen as an expression of the resistance of the gender order? Thus, following her observation that gender research is at the moment developing new concepts that no longer focus on debating the recognition of difference, but rather on issues that concern the dissolution of gender as a mandatory attribution, Helen Sporbert (2009) emphasizes:

"Until the deconstruction of gender has entered the awareness of human beings and a notion according e.g. to that of Judith Butler can become reality, a great deal of time will pass, provided this is at all realizable with the help of human mind and action and does not remain in the realm of theory. In practice, the gender binary will continue to endure, which leads to 'the initial, politically intended point of departure being maintained: it is still about the dismantling of hierarchies, about the realization of democracy' (Faulstich-Wieland 2003: 104). This also has to be seen as the current goal of a gender-appropriate school and gender-appropriate teaching, where the long-term goal has to

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be continuously at work, not by presuming a heterosexual gender binary and cementing it through manifold processes; rather, the focus should be on the development of a diverse gender culture and the individuality of every human being beyond a dual gender order." (Sporbert 2009: 16)

It is hardly possible to describe the current pedagogical dilemma more pointedly. How can a non-cementation of the old gender system be achieved if everyone is still using cement? Should girls and boys who become acquainted with a gender system be introduced to concepts from which they should, can, want to or also must later again dissociate themselves? How can a dedramatization of gender fixations occur without allowing too much space for binary systems? Or does pedagogy completely get ahead of itself and should we not ask whether, by remaining in binary gender systems, it does much more harm than supposedly good, when theoretical concepts about the dissolution or shifting of binary gender systems are said to not yet have found their way into society, or, as Sporbert seems to suggest, that the deconstruction of bipolar gender systems has not – yet – entered popular awareness. Could it not be that lived realities with their diversities are light years ahead of theory? Or have theories been developed in the meantime that can gradually uncover the discursive-performative and interactive construction processes of such things as gender, education, socialization and education? Franziska Hofmann remains, with her empirical work "Transsexualität und Sozialisation" (2009), within the binary gender system by postulating a third gender, but defining it as a combination of woman and man and concluding her study by explicitly supporting Magnus Hirschfeld's statement from the beginning of the 20th century, when he observed: "The human being is not man or woman, but man AND woman" (Hofmann 2009: 99; emphasis by Hofmann).

Regarding the issue discussed in this paper, i.e. the significance of pedagogy and education in the context of a presumed diversity of genders, the findings Franziska Hofmann presents in her study reveal an aspect, as such not examined by the author, which will be discussed briefly in the following. In the evaluation of the twelve interviews that Franziska Hofmann conducted with adult trans persons, she states in the tabular overview of the chronological biographies that three of the interviewees put their earliest memory of being transsexual or not corresponding to the assigned gender of female or male at four years of age, two at five, one at six and another one at eight years of age. In one case such a memory was first experienced at eleven, in two cases at twelve and in one further case at fourteen. One of the interviewees reported having such remembered feelings at fifty years of age, and this person is also the only one of the twelve interviewees who stated that they had been forty-nine when they first heard about transsex-

10 | See also Jäckle (2009): Schule M(m)acht Geschlechter.

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uality, one year before experiencing the remembered feeling of being different. Returning to the other eleven interviewees; regarding the ages for the first memory of being transsexual without even knowing this term, we can distinguish two groups: one group that situates this memory before entering puberty, and another group that situates it after entering puberty. Seven of the interviewees can be assigned to the pre-puberty group and four to the puberty group.

1. First TS memory	1. First contact with TS	Coming out	year difference between first memory and coming out
8	19	21	13
11	14	18	7
4	27	29	25
5	13	27	22
4	15	18	14
4	16	18	14
14	18	50	36
50	49	52	2
12	22	39	26
12	14	36	34
6	13	26	20
5	16	18	13
			226

Table 1: Excerpts from the table by Franziska Hofmann (2009:89) on the chronological biographies of those interviewed by her; own calculation.

With the exception of one person's life situation, we see that the coming-out occurs substantially later than the first remembered feeling of not corresponding to the assigned gender, and that these twelve people alone have lived a combined 226 years in a life situation that did not correspond to the way they felt about themselves.

What is remarkable here are the conclusions that Franziska Hofmann draws from her findings: "We can recognize that about half of the interviewees chose to suppress their feelings and comply with the expectations of society." (Hofmann 2009: 90). The author emphasizes the importance of the media as a socialization factor and attributes to them the function of "providing an anonymous platform for sharing ideas" (Hofmann 2009: 92). The interviewed trans persons are characterized by her as follows:

"We have thus on the one hand found people who have attempted to lead their lives in as normal and inconspicuous a way as possible until this situation was no longer bearable. On the other hand

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we have very young people who early on already recognized that they are transsexual and have gone their own way. This was facilitated by today's much more open information culture. However, they however have one thing in common: they have at some point in their lives rebelled against the norms and the value system of their childhood and created their own. It should be obvious to everyone that this is no easy path and that it is still often punished with exclusion and intolerance. It shows a great deal of courage and willpower." (Hofmann 2009: 93 f.).

How much could a pedagogy of diversity have contributed here, if children had been introduced by their parents, teachers and educators in families, kindergarten and school to the notion that a diversity of genders is something normal. This is not about denying one's own gender as a parent, an educator or a teacher, whether it is female, male or anything else. Instead, it is about allowing the normality of all genders to enter into familial contexts, child care facilities and schools – and not only in biology lessons. How much anguish, worry and anxieties people who do not correspond to a binary assignation of gender could be spared? How much energy could they have used for other things? At this point it becomes more than clear what kind of tasks pedagogy will have to deal with if it wishes to make an adequate contribution to gender plurality. Information and knowledge about more than two genders are necessary, terms for what is felt have to be provided, everyday life can no longer be limited to two gender forms, pedagogy no longer wants to drastically limit people's life situations.

Thus Olaf Stuve points to the practice of a non-identitary youth work (Stuve 2001: 288 ff.) and dissociates himself from such approaches to youth work which recognize in "irritated masculinity preferably a problem that needs to be brought back into balance" (Stuve 2001: 288 f). In contrast to 'Wild Men' who stage a primordial masculinity, 'Männerbüros' (help centers for boys and men) who base their youth work on the revitalization of male archetypes (see Haindorff 1997), "boys clubs that send boys with compass and knapsack into the field" (Stuve 2001: 288), Stuve defines non-identitary boys' work as a project that "refuses to organize perceptions and experiences by differentiations of male and female bodies" (Stuve 2001: 289).

As an example for a work with the body which is no longer attached to heteronormativity, Stuve mentions the 'body journey' which enables boys to have new experiences and to perceive their body not as an instrument of the mind in the traditional sense of the binary gender systems (Stuve 2001: 291), but as a place in which they can relax, feel comfortable and familiar. Such body journeys aim to give a voice back to 'the body's language' frequently 'silenced' (see Kamper referenced by Stuve 2001: 292) in many boys raised within traditional patterns. In her

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work on recognizing transsexuals regarding personal, political and medico-legal embodiment, Zowie Davy (2011) reviews the lived experiences of 24 trans persons, putting the focus on bodily aesthetics that allow us to understand the lived experiences of trans persons who have a "passing, non-passing, beautiful, ugly, normative and non-normative" body (see Davy 2011: 6).

Similar to Struve, Howald has attempted to develop a design for a form of feminist girls' work that can contribute to the deconstruction of traditional, essentialist notions of femininity. This includes role plays on the topic of homoerotic infatuations of girls, or of disputes with parents over diverging views on partnership, lifestyle and work (Howald 2001: 306), while the postcard game can be used for the theatrical representation of 101 types of women or the representation of the most diverse types of woman in the framework of a fashion show. In this game postcards are laid out and the girls are asked to choose one postcard with a female representation and explain how they came to make their choice. If historical women's portraits are displayed on the postcards, then the task could also be to research the history of those portrayed and present it to the group. It is worth remarking that Howald wants to use this to deconstruct the opposition between girls and lesbian girls by letting the lesbian girl be regarded as a normal girl as well. However, there is no mention in Howald's work of those girls who do not see themselves as girls, even though the article raises these expectations with its title 'Ein Mädchen ist ein Mädchen ist kein Mädchen?' ('A girl is a girl is not a girl?'). Where does that leave us for day-to-day pedagogical practice?

Gender-reflecting and gender-sensitive pedagogy

A gender-reflecting and gender-sensitive pedagogy recognizes factually existing differences between genders and provides opportunities for individual development beyond the established clichés. Gender-reflecting and gender-sensitive pedagogy thus encourages and demands diversity of life plans of young people no matter of what gender (see IEES 2000).

This concept is based on the following underlying assumptions:

- genders are results of processes of social construction and therefore modifiable (dynamic aspect);
- thus the relationships between the genders are also modifiable (dynamic aspect);
- genders and gender relationships develop in a historical, cultural and social context (contextual aspect);
- genders are still linked to stereotype notions (normative aspect);

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- genders are still linked to notions of a higher or lower value of one gender or specific gender/sex characteristics (normative aspect);
- genders are often regarded in the context of a dualistic gender binary (heterosexual aspect).

Gender-reflecting and gender-sensitive pedagogy

- contributes to gender losing its significance as a social criterion of differentiation;
- understands gender in the dimensions of corporal/physical, psychological, social and sexual gender;
- gender is regarded as situated on a continuum, as modifiable in space, time and in the course of a life's biography; and as embedded in a polypolar, plural and intersectional manner;
- addresses all genders equally in a specific way, depending on the situation;
- provides all genders in gender-homogenous and in mixed gender groups with opportunities for developing and realizing their own notion of gender;
- encourages the perception of gender differences and similarities;
- reflects heteronormative gender images and questions the self-evidence of the gender binary;
- consciously addresses stereotype gender images and questions them;
- frees homo-, bi- and other sexual orientations from taboos;
- refrains from assigning a homosexual orientation to trans and intersex persons;
- is sensitive to the factually existing gender relations and the prevailing forms of discrimination still associated with them;
- is sensitive to a utopia regarding gender relations and thus a new gender culture;
- recognizes the diversity of life situations and attitudes of children and adolescents, and reflects together with them on their ideas of their own personal path;
- offers individual opportunities for development beyond traditional roles;
- remains aware of how the gender relationship and the images of gender change in adolescents;
- advocates gender equality;
- subscribes to the equality of all human beings;
- can be applied in all areas of day-to-day pedagogical practice (see – network point for equality – Vernetzungsstelle für Gleichberechtigung).

This results in a number of requirements for education professionals who together assume the responsibility for a practice of reflected gender-sensitive approaches and make a conscious choice for the application of such an approach:

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- reflection of one's own notions and images of gender;
- reflection of one's own behavior as a person with a specific gender identity;
- reflection of one's pedagogical practice;
- participation in further gender-reflecting trainings.

Concluding Questions

- Which notions and practices of sexuality are virulent in private and professional day-to-day practice?
- Which cultural traditions do I have as an education professional? Which of them have become self-evident to me?
- Which norms and values are important to me as a person, but also for my professional work?
- Which norms and values are important in my professional area of activity?
- Which space do different cultural habits and traditions occupy in day-to-day pedagogical practice?
- Is there a prevalent cultural dominance discourse in day-to-day pedagogical practice?
- Which possibilities do addressees have to participate in day-to-day pedagogical practice with their cultural, ethnic, age-specific or also religious notions and habitual customs?
- Which religious holidays are observed? Which cultural customs play a role in day-to-day pedagogical practice? Are the places or regions of origin of all actors known? How does linguistic communication take place?
- Which role do parents, family and the social environment play in the framework of my pedagogical practice?
- What does strangeness, being different, difference mean to me?
- To which ethnic group do I feel connected? To which ethnic group do I belong or would I like to belong?
- How do I treat 'others'?
- What kind of behavior do I expect from *others*?
- What if the category of gender were to play a less important role in our lives?

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