

## **Feminist philosophy: Concepts, contexts, and critique**

**Nordic Summer University**

**Fårö, Sweden, 29 July – 5 August 2018**

**Scholarship deadline 2 April 2018**

**Regular application deadline 1 May 2018**

Scholars, students, artists and activists are invited to participate in the fourth conference of the network *Feminist Philosophy: Time, history and the transformation of thought* (2017-2019), to be held in the Swedish island of Fårö from 29 July to 5 August 2018. Guiding threads for the session are the conceptual triad of **concepts, contexts, and critique**. Feminist philosopher Andrea Nye once rightly noted: “thinking necessarily uses concepts with roots in the past” (2004: ix). This simple observation highlights the first two aspects, namely the connection between thinking and language and the importance of taking into consideration the historical context of both the production and the reception of thinking. Critique, finally, refers to feminist scholarship as a transformative practice aimed at change and emancipation. In bringing these notions together we want to create a space for dialogues on feminist practices of reading. Following a feminist tradition we consider reading a political act with close connections to feminist activism. What does it mean to read as a feminist today? Although the network is based primarily in the disciplines of philosophy and the history of ideas, we welcome contributions and participants from a wide range of disciplines, for example literature, art, gender studies, sociology and political science. We encourage both empirical studies of individual thinkers, concepts, or close readings of texts as well as more theoretically oriented efforts. Possible topics and questions include, but are not limited to:

What happens with classic philosophical concepts when appropriated by feminist thinkers and deployed in new contexts?

What are the limits, possibilities and scope of feminist re-contextualization of non-feminist or even anti-feminist philosophy?

How can context sensitive readings of feminist theory, both contemporary and historical, contribute to discussions in feminist theory today?

How can feminist practices of reading inform feminist political activism?

How do concepts travel in feminist theory and philosophy and what are the implications?

What role does suspicion, deconstruction, de-familiarization, destabilization, denaturalization, and anachronism have in feminist methods of reading?

What are the differences between approaches such as “history of women’s ideas”, “feminist intellectual history”, “feminist history of philosophy”, “history of feminist philosophy”, and “history of feminist theory”? What is their relevance today?

How can feminist methods of reading revitalize philosophy and interpretations of its history?

Each paper presentation will be allotted at least one hour, which allows for in depth discussions. The fact that we have a whole week at our disposal opens up for an intimate environment for learning and discussion between people from different countries, universities, disciplines and traditions. All participants are invited to organize workshops, film screenings or similar activities. PhD candidates receive 5 ECTS for the presentation of a paper and full participation during the week.

In addition, several text seminars will be conducted during the session in Fårö. One workshop will be devoted to feminist literature on what Rita Felski calls **the limits of critique**. In works such as Toril Moi's *Revolution of the Ordinary* (2017), Linda Zerilli's *A Democratic Theory of Judgment* (2017) and not least Felski's own *The Limits of Critique* (2015), the hermeneutics of suspicion is scrutinized, a part of a larger ongoing discussion in the humanities and the social sciences. In the seminar we will discuss extracts from said literature and investigate the implications of the "critique of critique" for feminist practices of reading. One evening is dedicated to a symposium ancient style (with wine, outdoors) where we read **Aristofanes' *Lysistrate*** together. The next day we follow up the theme with a seminar on feminist readings of the same play.

The keynotes for the summer session, invited after a democratic process in NSU, are:  
**Bojana Kunst**, philosopher, performance theoretician and a professor at the Institute for Applied Theatre Studies, Justus-Liebig University Giessen, Germany.  
**Jason de Léon**, Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Michigan.

### **About the network**

*Feminist philosophy: Time, history and the transformation of thought* is an international platform for inquiries at the intersection between philosophy, history of ideas, and feminist theory. The meeting in Fårö is the fourth conference out of a total of six conferences from 2017 to 2019. The network has previously collaborated with the Umeå University (SE), the University of Iceland (IS), and Oslo University (NO). Altogether the activities of the network have attracted more than 140 participants from Europe, Africa, and Asia, as well as North and South America. The network aims to transcend the hierarchies of academia and is open to senior scholars, PhD-candidates, and master students.

### **Practical information**

The summer session takes place in the Swedish island Fårö, situated in the Baltic sea north of the major island Gotland, 29 July to 5 August 2018. It is organized together with the other seven thematic networks of the Nordic Summer University (see below). The total number of participants is expected to be around 150. Feminist philosophy will have its own separate program, but as a participant you will have the opportunity to visit and partake in the work of the other networks. There will also be a cultural program in the evenings and a chance to go on excursions in the surroundings of Fårö and Gotland. There will be a children's circle during the academic work sessions, which allows for parents to bring their children with them.

The total price per adult person ranges from 2100 SEK - 7000 SEK depending on what kind of accommodation you choose. Full board is included in all prices. Further information about accommodation and prices, as well as the location, excursions and cultural program, can be found via the website [www.nordic.university](http://www.nordic.university).

### **Participation – deadline 1 May**

Anyone interested in presenting a paper or organizing a workshop is invited to submit an abstract of approximately 300 words and a short bio to [feministphilosophy@nsuweb.org](mailto:feministphilosophy@nsuweb.org) no later than **1 May 2018**. If you wish to participate without presenting a paper, please write 50-100 words about yourself and submit by the same date. Decisions will be communicated in

the beginning of May, together with further information on how to register. We might be able to accept late applications; contact us if deadline has passed.

### **Scholarships – deadline 2 April**

NSU offers a scholarship program to support PhD and MA students or people with low income or special needs. In return scholarship recipients are asked to help the Arrangement committee for a few hours during the week. Tasks may include taking care of some light practical work or contributing to a blog about the overall experience of the week.

Scholarship recipients will pay 400 SEK + travelling expenses; grant holders will pay 600 SEK + travelling expenses. Full board is included. The arrangement committee also offers extra travel funding for three participating students from Greenland (1 student), Faroe Islands (1 student) and any Baltic state (1 student) to cover their travel expenses to and from Latvia.

The application for scholarships and extra travel funding should be submitted to [feministphilosophy@nsuweb.org](mailto:feministphilosophy@nsuweb.org) and to the leader of the Arrangement committee: [arrkom@nsuweb.org](mailto:arrkom@nsuweb.org) by **2 April 2018**.

### **About the Nordic Summer University**

Founded in 1950, the Nordic Summer University is an independent, non-profit academic institution that fosters intellectual and cultural exchange between the Nordic and the Baltic countries. Committed to egalitarian and interdisciplinary modes of learning, the NSU is open for senior scholars, doctoral and master students as well as artists and professionals with relevant backgrounds. The NSU is funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers. Read more about the Nordic Summer University on the website <http://nordic.university>

### **Coordinators**

The coordinators of Feminist Philosophy are **Synne Myrebøe**, Department of historical, philosophical and religious studies Umeå University and Historical and Contemporary Studies, Södertörn University, Sweden, **Valgerður Pálmadóttir**, Department of historical, philosophical and religious studies at Umeå University, Sweden, and **Johanna Sjöstedt**, Department of literature, history of ideas and religious studies, University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Contact the coordinators at [feministphilosophy@nsuweb.org](mailto:feministphilosophy@nsuweb.org) and join our Facebook group Feminist philosophy (NSU).