

Göra pappa med barn.

Den svenska pappapolitiken 1960-1995

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AKADEMISK AVHANDLING

Som för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen vid Linköpings universitet
kommer att offentligt försvaras i Wallenbergssalen, Östergötlands länsmuseum,

Linköping, fredagen den 29 november 2002, kl. 13.15.

This study gives a historical perspective on the Swedish parental leave and the political vision of equal parenthood. The aim is to point out the specific conditions for male citizenship. By studying the political processes and power relations which gave rise to the parental leave of 1974 and has continued to influence its content, the study tries to explore the implicit and explicit demands and expectations which the state has placed on men. The concept of hegemony is used as an overarching framework for interpreting gender political processes. The analysis is based mainly on material from the political decision making processes, but also party-political and debate material is used.

The starting point is taken in the debate on equal opportunities and gender roles, which began in the 1960s. The new ways of interpreting gender and family relationships that were formed in this debate soon came to affect the political decision making processes. The analyses of the parental insurance reform (1974) emphasize the reform as a compromise between conflicting political interests. By making parental insurance a free choice both right wing and socialist principles could be adhered to. In this way neither the family's freedom of choice nor the aim of evening out differences between the social classes were threatened. Equal parenting remained a private matter, which every family should be able to decide on for itself. In this way a political point could be made — fathers have

the same responsibility for childcare as mothers — without involving any far-reaching complications for other societal interests.

The consensus, which had been established as to how male emancipation could be achieved politically, soon began to creak at the joints. In the middle of the 1970s demands for a compulsory division of parental leave coloured the debate. Demands for quotas gave rise to a new equal rights policy crisis, and once again male emancipation's conditions were brought to the fore. By focusing on the question of what instruments the state should use in order to make men participate in the parental leave, the study tries to explain the specific logic of the male citizenship.

The study of the political processes in the period 1974–1995 shows that the ambition to increase men's use of parental insurance never received superior status in relation to other important political goals. As a rule, the family's freedom of choice, state and family economics, parent's conditions on the labour market etc. were prioritised. In the complicated political decision making processes that formed the outlines of the parental insurance a clear distinction between men and women was made. Men's participation were defined as a voluntary commitment — something they could do if they wanted or considered possible due to their labour market conditions, — while women's participation was described in terms of necessity.

Title in translation: Making Daddy Pregnant: The Swedish Papa Politics 1960–1995

Keywords: Gender, parenthood, masculinity, history of fatherhood, family politics, equal status politics.

Language: Swedish (with a summary in English).

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Linköping 2002

Utgiven av Boreä Bokförlag, Umeå.

ISBN 91-89140-25-7 • ISSN 0282-9800