

SYMPAB - (16311) - BIOLOGY IDENTITIES VERSUS NOTHINGNESS BUT BECOMING A RESEARCHER

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Short Abstract

Biology is one of only few natural science disciplines that are numerically female biased on undergraduate level in for example Sweden and the US. But does that mean that gendered processes are absent? And what does it mean to study biology in terms of identity? While studies on science identity have especially increased during the last decade in male biased subjects such as physics, biology identities are still understudied. This paper therefore explores two studies on students' and teachers' identity work in a Swedish Higher Education context, grounded theoretically in the concept of Figured Worlds. The aim is to map out students' and teachers' imaginaries of a Figured World of Higher Education Biology and discuss how these imaginaries speak to each other from a science literacy and feminist critical perspective. Firstly, we could identify hegemonic masculine ideas about science and thereby show that gendered processes are, indeed, not absent from Higher Education Biology. Secondly, we found alternative imaginaries challenging what it means to do biology and do science. Thirdly, we identified that especially alternative, non-hegemonic and research related visions of scientific literacy are rare, almost absent, from teachers' teaching philosophy texts and that scientific literacy is figured in terms of hegemonic forms of "scientific" knowledge. Results emphasize the importance to include gender perspectives in Higher Education Biology and furthermore mark a point of departure for discussions on what counts as scientific literacy in the World of Higher Education Biology.