

Questions... On Aesthetic Practices and Processes of Subjectivation in Art, Craft and Design Studies [Formgivingsfag]

Anna Svingen-Austestad
University of Agder, Norway

Abstract

The PhD dissertation Questions ... Concerning the Production of Subjectivity – On Aesthetic Practices in Art, Craft and Design Studies [Formgivingsfag] explores aesthetic practices and complex processes of subjectivation in upper secondary school in Norway. The presentation will focus on key findings related to the doubleness in the thesis title, i.e. question how school policy in the era of goal management frames experiences, while highlighting the possibilities of letting the question itself become a leitmotif for art education. The dissertation explores four aesthetic practices, assembled through ethnographic methods. Two are led by teachers and competence goals from the formal National curriculum, two based on a collaborative art project together with artists from R a k e t a and Lofoten International Art Festival (LIAF). Between this empirical material and theory, the dissertation develops didactical conceptual tools from late Michel Foucault and Félix Guattari to explore how aesthetic practices form part of processes of subjectivation. The analysis shows how the management principles put forth by the educational authorities

of the nineties gives rise to a practice of 'useful' formalism and 'gridded mode of subjectivation'. However, the practices also harbour events that shift focus from the visual and material object alone to moments of co-creation. Here the analysis brings forth the significance of the 'question-as-practice' – how haptic, poetic and experimental practices can potentially open for one's own active subjectivation and the opportunity for both making oneself and society – although this might be something "one does not see ... yet".

Keywords

Aesthetic practice, Subjectivation.