

Good to Be Different? On Cosmopolitanism, Pluralism and ‘the Good Child’ in Swedish Educational Policy

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Being a part of a larger project on subject positions of the child in policy documents and teaching materials, this article focuses on the role of undecidables in the fabrication of the so-called good child in the Swedish curriculum for the compulsory school. Within a framework of governmentality, the curriculum represents technologies of government, providing an undecidable terrain open for interpretation and decisions by subjects. Through the lens of education for sustainable development, I have selected five school subjects of particular interest for analysis: biology, civics, geography, home and consumer studies, and physical education and health. By focusing on the undecidable *olika*, meaning ‘different’, in the five syllabi, a pattern of features designating the good child emerges: (1) science-based categorization, (2) the lifelong learner, (3) the informed consumer, and (4) celebration of diversity. These four features represent a political rationale characterised by a contradictory amalgamation of cosmopolitanism and value pluralism. In combination with an increased emphasis on measurement and assessment in Swedish education, this reinforces abjection processes in school, separating ‘the good child’ and ‘the child left behind’.

Keywords: cosmopolitanism, difference, education for sustainable development, the good child, undecidables

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Introduction – conceptual framework

This contribution elaborates on the role that educational policy texts have in designing ‘the good child’ (Popkewitz, 2009). The study is part of a more comprehensive project¹ focusing on subject positions in educational materi-

¹ This study is a part of a research project, “The eco-certified child. Subject constructions in education for sustainable development” 2012-2015 (Malin Ideland, Claes Malmberg and Per Hillbur), financed by the

als on education for sustainable development. As a part of this, I have made an in-depth study of the current Swedish national curriculum for the compulsory school (Skolverket, 2011) and, in this article, I summarise and discuss some of the results that pinpoint the fabrication of the good child as a competent, cosmopolitan humankind and the possible consequences of that for practical teaching². The analysis focuses on cosmopolitanism and pluralism in the fabrication of 'the good child', while the theme of 'education for sustainable development' is here primarily as a methodological tool to select relevant texts. The selected syllabi and the analysis of the curriculum is also part of a more general analysis of governmentality in policy documents in the research project.

The cosmopolitan child

Cosmopolitanism is a widely used tool for delineating the universal role of science and the consequences for human behavior and modes of living. Although ever-present in educational policy historically, cosmopolitanism has been employed in recent years as a lens through which the educational system and its role in the society can be understood (see *e.g.* Hargreaves, 2003; Popkewitz *et al.* 2006; Popkewitz, 2009). Popkewitz *et al.* (2006:432) makes a characterisation of the Learning Society, a society that is underpinned by a compassion for change and innovation, and

where all children and adults are cosmopolitan in outlook through a continual process of learning made possible through the computer and Internet (*ibid.*).

Furthermore, the cosmopolitan identity of the child

shows tolerance of race and gender differences, genuine curiosity toward and willingness to learn from other cultures, and responsibility toward excluded groups within and beyond one's society (Hargreaves, 2003:4-5).

Problem solving has a particular role when constructing the cosmopolitan child. Popkewitz (2009) argues that problem-solving provides 'salvation' and that behavioural principles governed by problem-solving appear almost as moral principles. This is a way of capturing and governing the child's soul

Swedish Research Council. The project focuses on understanding how political reforms and pedagogical models allow (or reject) different subject positions in education for sustainable development.

² The discourse analysis is conducted with the Swedish text as a basis. References and direct citations in this article relate to the Swedish version. All translations of the original text into English are, however, taken from the English version: Curriculum for the compulsory school, preschool class and the leisure-time centre, Skolverket 2011.

(*ibid*:204-205). As will be explored through the analysis of the Swedish national curriculum, it is interesting to see whether problem-solving as formation of the cosmopolitan child takes place more in the form of pedagogical practices aiming at developing generic competencies/skills, or if this is also a part of disciplinary training in the respective subjects. The case described below provides an analysis of the syllabi of five subjects, each with some distinct elements of education for sustainable development.

Pluralism in education

A further challenge is to capture the role of pluralism in the fabrication of 'the good child'. In an educational setting, pluralism would imply that individual differences are respected and acknowledged, and that they enrich educational situations. At a more general philosophical level, pluralism of values means that several values may be correct and fundamental for understanding, although in conflict with each other. In this case, the use of the undecidable 'difference/different' will be explored in further detail.

Pluralism in education is explored here as a discourse analysis of policy documents, using the discourse of 'education for all' (UNESCO, 2000) and the fabrication of 'the good child' (Popkewitz, 2009) as contrasting, but also overlapping, categories in the deconstruction of concepts and textual interpretations. This may also have implications for the discussion on current trends of assessment, measurements and detailed governance of knowledge/skills in an international arena. Does 'education for all' mean mainstreaming towards particular skills and knowledge, or is it good to be different?

Governmentality and the power of texts

The theoretical approach of the study rests on an interpretation of Foucault's (1991) concept of governmentality and the related processes of governance in the field of education. Rose and Miller (2010) elaborate on governmentality by referring to three different, though intertwined, levels: (1) political rationalities, (2) programmes of government and (3) technologies of government. I will here see the policy documents that are used as empirical material in the study as 'technologies of government', launched as a part of a programme of government (school reforms) in line with certain political rationalities to change/adapt the educational system—including all children/citizens—to a (learning) society characterised by globalisation, competitiveness and scientific progress.

Education for sustainable development is a field that is closely linked to a political rationality of education based on individual responsibility and action, including moral responsibilities for social and intergenerational justice. The intrinsic assumptions about the society in the future do also imply a risk

of being trapped in a complex epistemology, expressed by its own idiom (Rose and Miller 2010). This idiom (language) is a mix of rational scientific statements, moral judgments and vague predictions about a 'common future'. I will use the term *undecidability* (Norval, 2004) to explore the policy documents from the perspective of deconstruction of texts and their meaning.

Governmentality and undecidability

Undecidability should be understood in its development in relation to deconstruction; the latter sometimes seen as a condition for democracy and, as such, is used widely for political/ideological analysis. In this paper, I will not go into the details of the ideological implications of deconstruction, but refer to it as a way to do morphological analysis of policy documents. In this context, undecidability should be understood in relation to responsibility and 'democracy-to-come' (Norval 2004), a theme that is useful for the fabrication of the good, cosmopolitan child.

Therefore, undecidability is not mere indecision, but rather the possibility of acting and deciding between two determined poles. Seen as governance, a decision is not merely an action of calculability, but something that has passed through 'the ordeal of undecidability' (Derrida, 1988), a continuously on-going process³. This undecidability reinforces governmentality as an invisible, although ever-present, trait in educational policy.

The role of undecidables

Educational policy may be an example of an arena which has previously been seen as governed by structural determination, but which is now permeated by undecidables and, hence, open to interpretation.

Undecidability provides the infrastructure needed for this opened-up terrain, and in the following, I will use undecidables as a way to elucidate how texts are built up of words and concepts of unsettled meaning. This kind of text is not necessarily consciously created to be misleading or to impose power relations, but it is the power of the text itself and different interpretations of the text that is powerful and potentially hegemonic (*cf* Foucault, 1991).

The use of *undecidables*, for example, words/concepts with a double (or unsettled) meaning, is an important tool for the analysis of policy documents in relation to the discourse surrounding 'education for all' and the fabrication of 'the good child'. The discourse displays hegemonic concepts such as

³ In practice, an intervention by a subject is needed to close the distance between the undecidable structure and the decision (Norval, 2004, p. 142). For a general overview of the relation between hegemony, the decision and the subject, see Laclau and Mouffe (2001)

cosmopolitanism and pluralism which, in turn, relate to recent years' focus on measurement and assessment as a taken-for-granted part of 'good education' (for further reference, see e.g. Biesta 2010).

In this brief study, I have decided to take a closer look at the Swedish word *olika*, which is by far the most common undecidable in the text⁴. In English, it has several parallels; as an adjective, *olika* translates into a range of meanings 'different', 'various', 'several', 'diverse', 'unequal', 'variant', 'dissimilar' or 'uneven'; and, as an adverb: 'differently'. The related noun, *skillnad* ('difference') is, however, not included in the analysis.

Aim and research questions

The aim of the study is to analyse the role of undecidables in the fabrication of 'the good child' in the Swedish curriculum for the compulsory school. The study object is the use of the undecidable *olika* ('different') in the syllabi of five different subjects. This leads to the following research questions:

- In what ways are the hegemonic concepts of cosmopolitanism and pluralism discernible in particular technologies of government, in this case, the Swedish curriculum for the compulsory school?
- How can the use of undecidables provide an infrastructure for governing and the fabrication of 'the good child'?
- Where are the various representations of the undecidable *olika* in the Swedish curriculum? To what extent are the various representations supported by the texts on knowledge requirements and assessment of schoolchildren?

Methodological approach

The study is a discourse analysis of the Swedish national curriculum for the compulsory school, which represents a technology of government. I employ the concepts of cosmopolitanism and pluralism in the analysis to highlight aspects and representations of the discourse of 'education for all' and the fabrication of 'the good child'. The extraction of examples is based on the deconstruction of 'difference', which is represented in this document by the undecidable *olika*. The occurrence and meanings of *olika* in different parts of the curriculum are the basis for the analysis of how 'the good child' is fabricated. It should be understood that this approach is not a complete analysis of this discourse in the curriculum, but is singled out to explore subject con-

⁴ Some other potential undecidables in the text, although much less prominent, are: "effect/affect – *påverka/inverka*", "communicate/communication – *kommunicera/kommunikation*" and "change – *förändra/förändring*".

structions of the child. In addition, the focus on ‘difference’ provides perspectives on barriers and opportunities for interpretation of the curriculum by teachers. In this respect, the syllabi are divided into two major categories: core content and knowledge requirements. To simplify, these two entities can be said to represent ‘what is taught/learned’ and ‘what is assessed’, respectively.

The notion of ‘difference’ in the Swedish curriculum

Outline of empirical study

The material used for the analysis is the main text for the current Swedish curriculum for the compulsory school (Skolverket, 2011). A particular emphasis is placed on the syllabi of five subjects that, in various ways, address education for sustainable development: biology, geography, home and consumer studies, physical education and health, and civics. The body of text comprises the full syllabi, covering the aim, core content and knowledge requirements of each of the five subjects. In the following text, page references relate to the syllabi in the Swedish version.



Figure 1. Word cloud representing the occurrence of the most common words in the national Swedish curriculum. The word 'olika' (different) is the second most common word, used 1277 times. The most common – 'Elev/en/eleven' – denotes (T)he pupil. (Skolverket, 2011 and Wordle, 2013)

Biology

The national syllabus in biology (Skolverket, 201, pp. 111-126) is open to a range of interpretations of the undecidable *olika*. As may be expected, a scientific subject such as biology employs separation into distinct categories, as in the core content in years 1-3:

Different phases of the moon – *Månenas olika faser*

different seasons of the year – *olika tider på året*

or

Various forms of water: solids, liquids and gases – *Vattnets olika former: fast, flytande och gas*

An even more common use of *olika* is to denote a number of possible features. This is primarily used to invite the student to develop certain skills, such as to use

different sources of information – *olika informationskällor*

different senses – *olika sinnen*

and

various forms of aesthetic expressions – *olika estetiska uttryck*

This meaning is also used in the knowledge requirements:

Pupils describe the materials used in manufacturing some different objects and how they can be classified – *Eleven beskriver vad några olika föremål är tillverkade av för material och hur de kan sorteras*

In this case, it is not defined how many objects or which objects are important to know, although the skill of classifying is considered important. In the same way, the student is repeatedly instructed to use ‘different sources – *olika källor*’ although it is not clear whether the various sources should provide different information. According to the knowledge requirements at the end of year six, pupils should however

apply simple/developed/well developed reasoning to the usefulness of the information and sources

Another interesting feature in the analysis of the biology text is the occurrence of *olika* in another context. Already during the first three years of compulsory school (ages 7–9), the children are taught

the attempt of different cultures to understand and explain phenomena in nature – *olika kulturers strävan att förstå och förklara fenomen i naturen*

as a part of science studies core content on 'Narratives about nature and science'. Later, during the years 4–6, the teaching, as part of the core content 'Biology and world views' focuses on

Different cultures – their descriptions and explanations of nature in fiction, myths and art, and in earlier science – 'Olika kulturers beskrivningar och förklaringar av naturen i skönlitteratur, myter och konst och äldre tiders naturvetenskap'

It is easy to recognize the ambition of teaching the history of science to young students, but the interpretation of what 'different cultures' would be in a multi-cultural classroom goes beyond most biology teachers' training, as well as their teaching methods. In this case, I argue that '*olika kulturer*' may reflect a hidden pluralistic agenda in the text - a true 'undecidable'. Furthermore, it is not clear whether the teaching should list, not only a number of cultures, but state that these cultures may also think differently about nature and science.

This example shows a few of the challenges that teachers face. To draw a parallel to what 'good education' would be in this case, a conclusion is that the knowledge, or thinking, of different cultures is not a part of the assessment. The children should have a cosmopolitan orientation, but the knowledge that counts is defined through the lens of the Western science culture. Whether worldviews and culture should be part of biology teaching is however a topic for another article.

Physical education and health

The science-based method of describing difference is also apparent in the syllabus for physical education and health (Skolverket, 2011, pp. 51-61). The separation into distinct categories is prominent, especially when denoting specific activities, such as

Different ways of swimming – *Olika simsätt*

different types of training – *några olika träningsformer*

and

Different definitions of health – *Olika definitioner av hälsa*

all of them denoting a particular set of activities.

As physical education in Sweden has a long-standing tradition of *friluftsliv* and outdoor education, a recurrent theme in the text is activities at

different seasons of the year – *olika årstider*

and

in different settings – *i olika miljöer*.

The pluralistic meaning of *olika* is widespread, and the effect on the curriculum is an orgy of expressions: ‘a range of different activities’, ‘different physical contexts’, ‘different conditions and environments’ and even in talking about the experiences of different physical activities. The exploration of trying several different things is also reflected in the requirements for higher grades. There is a particular stress on the skills to adapt to various conditions and environments.

Physical education and health has, as the name implies, a particular focus on health issues and the introduction to the subject states that

Physical activities and a healthy lifestyle are fundamental for people’s well-being

As a healthy lifestyle is an important goal for all human beings, the study content should therefore include

different views of health, movement and lifestyle – *olika synsätt på hälsa, rörelse och livsstil*

This is an important part of the fabrication of ‘the good child’, a child that is competent and gradually capable of solving her own problems. The connection to sustainable development is not explicit here, although the importance of ‘natural and outdoor environments’ and ‘a healthy lifestyle’ is certainly a hint on how to prepare for a successful life.

Home and consumer studies

The syllabus for home and consumer studies (Skolverket, 2011, pp. 42-50) is an interesting object of study, as it prepares the child for life after school in a particular way:

Knowledge of consumer issues and work in the home gives people important tools for creating a functioning daily reality, and the ability to make conscious choices as consumers with reference to health, finance and the environment.

Much of the study content in home economics is focused on the 'conscious choices' that signify a competent consumer. The approach of the text is largely scientific, using the terms "different methods" and "different tools". Although there is room for interpretation of the use of *olika*, it is more difficult to see a range of options in

Comparisons of products based on a number of different aspects, such as price and quality

or

how meals can be composed to satisfy different needs.

Nevertheless, the pupils should:

develop knowledge of cultural variations and traditions in different households

as well as knowledge and skills to

plan and prepare food and meals for different situations and contexts.

Home and consumer studies is certainly a subject where the potential of the multi-cultural classroom can be explored, and the study content supports that in several ways.

When it comes to assessment and the formal requirements, there is less room for differences in perspectives. A recurrent theme is for the critical consumer to know

differences between advertising and consumer information

and to have

skills to make informed choices: ability to make comparisons between different consumption alternatives

and to apply

informed reasoning to the consequences of different consumer choices and actions in the home with regard to aspects concerning sustainable social, economic and ecological development.

These are but a few examples of how children are governed towards an ideal, where the individual child assumes to be responsible not only for her actions, but also for the future of the planet.

Geography

The conditions for life on Earth are unique, changeable and vulnerable. It is thus the responsibility of all people to use the Earth's resources to support sustainable development. Interaction between people and their surroundings has given rise to many different living environments. Geography gives us knowledge of these environments, and can contribute to an understanding of people's living conditions.

(Skolverket, 2011, p. 159)

The geography syllabus (Skolverket, 2011, pp. 159-171) provides several opportunities to discuss the fabrication of the cosmopolitan child, and the role of sustainable development in 'good education'. As shown above, geography is also concerned with differences in physical and human environments and the relations between the two. Consequently, this interaction

has given rise to many different living environments

but also—which is of particular interest here—the knowledge of these environments can

contribute to an understanding of people's living conditions

The studies in geography may thus provide important knowledge about 'differences' in general, both concerning the physical landscape and socio-cultural conditions.

The social science subjects presented in this article, for example, geography and civics, share general paragraphs on the core content and requirements for the years 1-3. These parts of the texts are therefore common for all

of the four social science subjects (including history and religion)⁵. The expression *olika* is found in the geography text no less than 53 times. In some cases it is a straightforward separation into categories, such as in

different products and services – *olika varor och tjänster*

different scales – *olika skalar*

or

different thematic maps – *olika tematiska kartor*

In several other cases, the interpretation of the meaning of *olika* is not as easy. There is certainly a focus on 'difference' in that, for example, the pupils shall

be able to make comparisons between different places, regions and living conditions – *kunna göra jämförelser mellan [...] olika platser, regioner och levnadsvillkor.*

To make distinctions and separations into categories is important, as shown above, and this obviously applies to the humansphere as well. A popular expression in social science, and geography in particular (ten times), is

in different parts of the world – *i olika delar av världen*

It is not clear whether it is important that the pupils get a broad overview of varying conditions—a possible pluralistic interpretation—or if the teaching is directed towards comparative studies, where differences between environments and between people are in focus. One of the most difficult challenges in geography has traditionally been to strike the balance between environmental determinism and comparative studies, and this geography syllabus gives no clear answer to how teachers are to handle that challenge. On the contrary, the opening paragraph (above) is open to all kinds of interpretations on how people are formed by the physical environment.

Another interesting detail is the translation of the knowledge requirements about the use of sources in different subjects. In geography, the expression 'different sources' is not used. Instead, pupils are to apply

reasoning about the usability of **their** sources (Skolverket, 2011, pp. 164-165, year 6, my emphasis)

⁵ The same principle applies to the three science subjects: biology, physics and chemistry

as well as

informed reasoning about the credibility and relevance of **their** sources (*ibid*, pp. 166-167, year 9, my emphasis).

To some extent, this feature occurs in the other social sciences and in the science subjects as well, but is notable in geography. Here, a possible interpretation would be that the pupils should develop skills in arguing for their choice of source in addition to the mere collection of information from a number of sources.

Civics

Although the word *olika* is the second most popular word in the Swedish curriculum document (see Figure 1), the use of it in the civics syllabus (Skolverket, 2011, pp. 199-212), is conspicuous (78 recordings). There seems to be no end to how the teaching could reflect different perspectives, different standpoints, different interests or different actors and in what ways these are represented in different media or from different sources. In the knowledge requirements, pupils

assess and express different viewpoints in societal issues related to them

search for information about society and use different sources,

and have

basic/good/very good knowledge of different societal structures,

already at the end of year 6.

Civics is certainly oriented toward societal functions and, in particular, the basic elements of a democratic society and its principles. Several passages focus on the critical examination of information, media and other sources, as well as the preparation of young people to take active part in the society by learning about

[W]ork of different organisations in promoting human rights,
knowing “[W]here different decisions are made”,

as well as

the advantages and disadvantages of different forms of joint decision-making

The civics syllabus is definitely filled with notions of an exemplary life in a pluralistic, just and democratic society.

Summing up: The fabrication of 'the good child'

While reading the curriculum from this 'different perspective, a pattern emerges in the fabrication of 'the good child'. The first feature is that of the scientific method. There is a strong emphasis on particular scientific skills that relate to sorting into categories, differentiation and distinction. This is particularly evident in biology and home and consumer studies, where the latter builds on the tradition of the scientific method where the 'recipe' rather than a creative process seems to be the way to higher levels of understanding. There are right and wrong ways of doing things. Even the social sciences (geography and civics) follow these scientific routines of classification and categorisation to a great extent, which is interesting as it relates to humans and societal structures.

A second, striking feature is that of the lifelong learner, focusing on the skills to search, use and analyse information. This was particularly represented in our sample in biology, geography and civics.

The third feature of the pattern leading to the fabrication of 'the good child' is the celebration of diversity, which is apparent in physical education and health (diversity of activities) and in home and consumer studies, where the core content supports variation in cultures and traditions. The concern the biology syllabus raises about attempts to understand different cultures is, however, more complex and a challenge to teachers. None of the syllabi analysed show particular interest in the acknowledgement and respect for individual differences, for example, the ethical dimension of pluralism.

A fourth feature—the informed consumer—is apparent in home and consumer studies which, to some extent, is supported by the social sciences early on (years 1-3) with knowledge about

different payment methods and what ordinary goods and services can cost (Skolverket, 2011, p. 163).

The informed consumer perspective is, however, absent from the knowledge requirements.

Finally, a reflection on the wealth of pluralism and cosmopolitanism in the social sciences: As described above, geography and civics provide a mix of all the above fabrications of 'the good child'—the scientific perspective, the lifelong learner, the informed consumer and the readiness to deal with cultural and social differences. What differs is that in the

social sciences, these fabrications are followed up in the assessment of the child through knowledge requirements. The undecidable terrain of these subjects, where classification and degrees of performance are critical for assessment, calls for further investigation, with the relation between the undecidable structure, the subject (teacher) and the decision being of particular interest.

Good to be different? Concluding remarks

The fabrication of the good child is a result of governing through technologies of government. These technologies are created within a framework of political programmes (school reform) which, in turn, are set into action to support a particular political rationality. Cosmopolitanism and pluralism are central hegemonic concepts in the formation of the current political rationality to induce change in Swedish schools.

The Swedish curriculum for the compulsory school of 2011 is also part of a shift of paradigm in education, namely the increased emphasis on performance, measurement and assessment of the individual from the early years and onwards.

In this particular study, I have consciously selected a closely-defined path in my analysis of the curriculum by narrowing down the scope with which to study the terrain of undecidability and the use of undecidables. Furthermore, I have decided to focus on five syllabi, which represent the curriculum's ambitions concerning education for sustainable development. This approach has obvious limitations, which also apply to the overarching aim to explore the fabrication of the good child. A major shortcoming is that the general texts about the "Fundamental values and tasks of the school" (Skolverket, 2011, pp. 7-11), as well as the "Overall goals and guidelines" (*ibid*, pp. 12-19), which cover essential parts on norms and values in the educational system, are not included in this article. The rationale for this was to take a closer look at how 'the good child' is fabricated in the syllabi texts.

A general objection to this approach may be that little has been said about problem solving, and its essential role in constructing the cosmopolitan identity. Still, there is evidence that strongly supports the scientific method and science-based perspectives, of which problem-solving is a crucial part. There is probably a need for a closer look at particular subjects, but also, a more general analysis of the knowledge requirements at different ages may be instrumental in deciding the role of problem-solving for the fabrication of 'the good child'.

So, what can be concluded from the analysis of undecidables? The main discourses related to in this article—'education for all' and the fabrication of

'the good child'—prove, at least to some extent, to be two sides of the same coin. The inclusion of different perspectives and different groups is also a process of sorting and defining categories which, in turn, leads to the exclusion of some of these perspectives and people. This is what Popkewitz (2009, 64f) means by abjection, the design of a 'good child' that, in turn, creates 'the child left behind'.

When turning to the syllabi, there is a deep gorge between core content and knowledge requirements which applies to all the studied subjects. Some of the subjects simply do not have the ambition to measure or assess the content that is to be taught, while others (like the social science subjects), in trying to be consistent, run the risk of using a quantifying language about qualitative performances and skills. It could be argued that this method of governing through measurement and categorisation is at the heart of cosmopolitanism. Hargreaves (2003) is particularly concerned with this development:

Yet instead of fostering creativity and ingenuity, more and more school systems have become obsessed with imposing and micromanaging curricular uniformity. In place of ambitious missions of compassion and community, schools and teachers have been squeezed into the tunnel vision of test scores, achievement targets, and league tables of accountability" (*ibid*, p. 1)

What is intriguing in the Swedish curriculum is the contradictory, side-by-side existence of cosmopolitan values and the celebration of diversity in its aims and core content. In discussing assessment and the knowledge requirements of the child, celebration of diversity is no longer a mainstream pluralist feature, but still calls for a deeper concern for management of conflicts (Dryzek and Niemayer, 2006, p. 635). The obvious conflict is for the subject (teacher) in this landscape of undecidability to come up with the 'right' decision about the interpretation of 'difference'. Is it even possible to imagine pupils displaying different knowledge within a particular field? Are there different ways to succeed in the Swedish school system?

After this thorough reading of the current curriculum, it seems the Swedish teachers have less room to manoeuvre within the current paradigm. Unless measures are taken to reinstall creativity and to recognise individual differences as the indispensable resource it is in education, only time will tell how far the abjection processes will take the divide in schools and, thus, in the society as a whole.

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