Conditions of a Feminine Man: Rumors of a “Hermaphrodite” Pastrycook in Nineteenth-Century Sweden

Men and Masculinities

2021, Vol. 24(2) 258-277

© The Author(s) 2019

Article reuse guidelines:

sagepub.com/journals-permissions

DOI: 10.1177/1097184X19857179

journals.sagepub.com/home/jmm **Sam Holmqvist¹****Abstract**

The pastrycook Aron Forss was a well-known person in his hometown Uppsala in the 1840's and 1850's, famous both for his popular café and for his femininity. This article analyses the rumors that surrounded his person, using paintings, newspaper clippings, and memoirs written by his former customers. Through his business, Forss could lay claim on normative masculinity through the rousing bourgeois ideals of financial success and craftsmanship. Being a successful businessman was a way of securing social acceptance and respectability. However, it was apparently not enough. In order to sustain his business, Forss was forced to put up with harassments. Some of his costumers treated him much like other women in public places were treated—as objects of sexual advance. Several of Forss's contemporaries describe him with particular fascination. By describing Forss as a spectacle, he is made an exception to the rules of social appropriateness.

Keywords

transfemininity, hermaphroditism, nineteenth century, male femininity, sexual harassment, normative masculinity, spectacle, conditional normativity, feminine men, two-sexed

¹ Department of Culture and Media Studies, Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden

Corresponding Author:

Sam Holmqvist, Department of Culture and Media Studies, Umeå University, SE-901 87, Umeå, Sweden.
Email: samholmqvist@gmail.com

I first read the name Aron Forss (1807–1854) in a late nineteenth-century newspaper.¹ An anonymous writer relates an encounter with a celebrity, the Danish writer Herman Bang. As he describes with disgust the effeminate manners of Bang, he also writes, in passing, that the sight of Bang “inevitably” brought to his mind another man, Aron Forss: “that notorious hermaphrodite-pastrycook in Uppsala during the 1850s” (“Här och der i Skåne,” 1885).²

How does someone become a “hermaphrodite-pastrycook,” “notorious” enough to “inevitably” be brought to a person’s mind some thirty years later? Sure enough, Aron Forss was not notorious enough to be remembered today, but during his life and the following decades, he was something of a celebrity. There appears to have been two reasons for this fame: (1) his skills as a pastrycook and (2) the rumors of his femininity and the so-called hermaphroditism.

Aron Forss owned and ran a small café in Uppsala, Sweden, where he also lived his whole life. According to the official state documents (*Död-och begravningsbok* 1836–1861; *Födelse-och dopbok* 1766–1812), he was born a boy and died a man—at least no other records exist that dispute these details. According to the rumor, however, he was both man and woman. Contemporaries speak of “the notorious, half male pastrycook Aron Forss” (Nyblom 1908, 88–89); the “renowned” person that “one did not quite know, what sex he belonged to” (Ödmann 1898, 66). Forss is described as having a high-pitched voice, hair set in curls, and half-male half-female dress, an exaggeratedly feminine dipsomaniac who regularly locked himself up and got drunk on eau de cologne. But he is also described as a respectable businessman. Forss appears to have been an accepted but eccentric member of society; in some ways a laughing stock but in others a respected citizen. What circumstances account for the contradictory position that Forss occupied and what conditions were required of him to keep in this place? I ask, more specifically: in what ways was Forss’s life regarded as both congruent and inconsistent with normative gender sex?³ This article is the first comprehensive work studying about Forss. Previous research is limited to a brief summary of his life (Holmqvist 2016, 41–43) and a popular essay in a student’s magazine (Ronne and Ronne 2001). By looking into the ways in which Forss was talked about and remembered, this article will investigate the conditions of a man’s femininity in nineteenth-century Sweden.

I will not attempt to discuss Forss’s own emotions or opinions. We know nothing of how he saw, thought, or spoke of himself, since he left no such traces behind.⁴ This said, he does not appear to ever have presented himself as a woman, and for this reason, I have chosen to use male pronouns. My overall impression is that Forss presented himself as a feminine man. For example, Cromwell’s (1999; see also Beemyn 2014, 501) criteria for identifying trans persons in history do not apply to Forss. I am inspired by the *trans-ing* methodology suggested by Sears (2015) as well as several attempts of writing trans* history as experiences of moving away from an assigned sex (Beemyn 2013; Rand 2005 esp. 80–92), building the definitions of trans as a movement (Enke 2012; Stryker 2008). This enables research on

different ways of transgressing gendersex and contains a multitude of experiences, some of which would not be defined as trans today.⁵

A substantial proportion of the material used in the following study may be described as anecdotal and idle gossip. While holding no particular truth surrounding Forss's *actual* life, they illuminate how he was regarded by others. For the most part, the material is gathered from individual memoirs by former Uppsala students.⁶ Five of them include comprehensive descriptions (one page or more) of Forss (Bergsten n.d.; Hagberg n.d.; Hjärne 1879; Hägg 1883; Ödmann 1898).⁷ Another four mention Forss, but without offering greater detail (Boström 1901; Hellberg 1870; Nyblom 1908; Wadström 1897). Aside from the memoirs, my material also consists of archival material, illustrations, and newspaper clippings.⁸ The collected material is in no way exhaustive, and I am treating it through what Halberstam (1998, 13) has called a scavenger methodology: "different methods to collect and produce information in subjects that have been deliberately or accidentally excluded from traditional studies of human behavior." Despite the notable differences across my data corpus, I have chosen to analyze my material as a whole rather than as individual testimonies. This holds difficulties in terms of historical context, due to the wide time range in which the material was produced. This is particularly true when it comes to the memoirs—those that appeared in print were published from sixteen years after Forss's death up to several decades later. However, a more nuanced discussion of their relation to the historical context holds other difficulties. Two of the extensive descriptions of Forss appear in unpublished, undated memoirs. Some other parts of my material have also been impossible to date more precisely. To discuss how they relate to temporal contextual differences would thus be necessarily speculative. My choice to address the material as a whole should also be understood as an attempt to gather various sources that speak of the ways in which Forss's gendersex position were formulated, negotiated, and nuanced. We know very little of the day-to-day lives of those persons who transgressed normative gendersex in nineteenth-century Sweden, with our limited information cobbled together through court records and public scandals. As a rule, the cases we know of are those who had run-ins with the law (e.g., Rydström 2003, 9). Owing to this fact, there may very well have been much more gender variance at the time than we will ever hear about—people who are regarded as more or less normal seldom leave any trace (Skidmore 2017, 76–77). Forss thus makes for a particularly interesting case. That the memories of him are preserved at all is much due to him living in Uppsala, which was then one of Sweden's two university centers. Uppsala students of the nineteenth century belonged to a social class keen on telling their life stories.⁹ Had Forss lived somewhere else, the rumors about him might just as well have slipped through the cracks of public memory and been lost forever.

The Successful Businessman—Adhering to Bourgeois Masculinity

A recurring representation of Forss in my material is that of a qualified pastrycook, a thriving occupation during his life. Although, during Forss's lifetime, Uppsala was a rural town, the presence of students ensured that it was a lively place. By the beginning of the century, cafés (*schweizerier*) had superseded the coffeehouses (*kaffehus*), as part of the embourgeoisement of the rural lifestyle prevalent in Sweden at the time.¹⁰ Sweets were the new fashion—colonial trade had made sugar cheaper and more easily accessible—and the new cafés served pastries, ice cream, coffee, lemonades, and (normally, though not in Forss's case) alcohol (Tellström and Jönsson 2018, 132–35). Uppsala was filled with small taverns and cafés and running a popular establishment put Forss at the center of a thriving business.

Forss's professional skills were for some just as interesting as his femininity, with several of Forss's contemporaries referring to him as a well-known person, almost a celebrity. One of the most comprehensive descriptions of Forss was composed by the writer Rudolf Hjärne (1815–1884). No less than three pages are dedicated to Forss in Hjärne's memoirs. Hjärne (1879, 100; also Hägg 1883) claims that “travellers from afar,” even “sometimes foreigners” came to “inspect” Forss, including a Russian minister “and other distinguished strangers.” Publicist and politician Samuel Ödmann (1822–1899) devotes one page of his memoirs to Forss. According to Ödmann (1898, 66), Forss deliberately used the rumor “that he was two-sexed” to enhance his business “and played his role in order to gain even more customers.”

Although it is impossible to say if it is true that Forss used such rumors as a sort of publicity magnet, we do know that he actively promoted his café. From 1846 until his death, eight years later, Forss (like many others) advertised regularly in the local newspaper *Upsala*, promoting his café and imports of European sweets. Such advertisements display Forss as a pastrycook and café owner, ensuring a narrative of Forss's professional skills rather than his femininity. As insignificant as these advertisements may seem, they nonetheless constituted a public presentation of Forss as a professional.

In a satirical article written in *Upsala* (“Bref till landsorten,” 1847), Forss is also mentioned as one of the businessmen able and willing to exploit the desire for ever new confectionary products. The article sarcastically asks whether the local pastrycooks will soon copy the latest fashion in sweets, considering Forss as a likely candidate to do so:

Those sweets [...] I would like to remind the city's pastrycooks to imitate;—'fruditor', as the peasant said, will most likely provide it for his customers, as soon as his recently launched and patented “Lemon-drops” have become old fashioned; which would be rather meritorious of Mr Forss.¹¹

The joke is difficult to translate, but it builds on notions of both femininity and business sense. “Fruditor”—a nickname I have been unable to find anywhere else—

is a fusion of Swedish words for wife/mrs (*fru*) and pastrycook (*konditor*). It is placed within quotation marks and is immediately followed by a Wellerism, in Swedish *som bo“n sa*”, literally meaning “as the peasant said” but in transcribed spoken language. The word “fruditorn,” then, is to be understood as a somewhat vulgar, or at least common, term—something a peasant would say. Most pastry cooks were men in Sweden during this period and the occupation did not carry feminine connotations, so the “fru” within the joke emanates from Forss personally. This joke is made in passing, a throwaway remark that is used to identify Forss. The subject of the article is the exaggerated desire for the latest fashion of sweet treats and “fruditorn” Forss only an example from this sector. Forss’s role in the article relates to the increasing prevalent bourgeoisie in Sweden and its ideal masculinities. Tjeder (2003) has analyzed middle-class masculinity ideals of late nineteenth-century Sweden, specifically describing the new masculinities during the latter part of that century. Forss lived during a time in which the Swedish bourgeoisie acquired greater stability as a class, and consistent with new bourgeois ideals, business became a much more important part of masculinity. From being a sign of egoism and pride, a man’s financial success became all the more associated with positive values: “Men’s masculinity became tied to their individual successfulness in the world, especially the world of business” (Tjeder 2003, 200). Following bourgeois standards of productivity could presumably be a way for a gender variant person to create a position within society (a logic which has been elaborated upon within a US context by Skidmore 2017). Owing to his skillful craftsmanship and his ownership of a successful business, Forss could adhere to the standards of normative, bourgeois masculinity.

Forss’s business also had a very concrete impact on his posthumous reputation. Since he had no children, his “not insignificant” capital according to newspaper in *Upsala* (1854) was bequeathed to the town’s hospital. Forss died of cholera during an outbreak that was, prior to his death, already being reported in newspapers nationwide. His name appears in lists of the recently deceased in Uppsala’s cholera outbreak, sometimes without any additional information (e.g., *Norrköpings Tidningar* 1854), sometimes he is called “the known” pastrycook (*Göteborgs Handels-och Sjöfartstidning* 1854) or “one of the town’s eccentrics” (*Östgöta Correspondenten* 1854). On further occasions, this is detailed as the death of a man who “as rumour had it” was “neither man nor woman, or perhaps rather both at once” (*Folkets röst* 1854). As so often, Forss is sometimes mentioned as a regular citizen, on other times as a celebrity, and from time to time as a person of nonnormative gendersex. Irrespective of how he is presented by the press, all eight newspapers that report Forss’s death announce that he has left a large sum to charity. The donation thus shaped the public image of Forss after he had died. Tjeder (2003, 211–13) points out that although individual success became a part of ideal Swedish masculinity, the successful businessman was never an unquestioned role model. A good man did not only make money but also disciplined his will to riches through concern for the common good. The reports on Forss’s will creates a posthumous reputation within

the boundaries of normative masculinity—presenting Forss as a tradesman who used his fortune from his trade to serve the common good. Not only was he a successful businessman, but a responsible citizen too. The donation thus shaped his public image and further enhanced Forss’s position as an appreciated member of society.

Femininity in Public—Accepting Harassment

While Forss in some ways followed the norms of bourgeois masculinity, due to his femininity, he did not pass as an ordinary man. Being a successful businessman was not necessarily in conflict with being a woman; already before the trade regulations were abolished in 1846, a substantial part—in Stockholm 25 percent—of the Swedish pastrycook guild were women (Cassén 1936; Söderberg 1955, 4). But the discourse surrounding business women was one of emancipation and female masculinity; they were also the frequent subject of jokes, not least at the students’ feasts in Uppsala (Sjöberg 1999, 81–84). On top of that a café is a semipublic setting, where the mostly female staff was regularly subjected to sexual harassment. The majority of the customers at Forss’s café would have been men—bourgeois women sometimes visited cafés, but much less frequently—and for the most part students (Tellström and Jönsson 2018, 134). Students taking liberties with waitresses and other “public women” (Svanström 2000) were not only common but considered natural (an attempt made at that time to problematize this practice with respect to the student culture in Uppsala can be found in Sundblad 1884, 373–86). Forss not only owned the café but also worked and waited there. This subjected him to harassments, some of which can be compared with those of other feminine persons of his social class in a similarly public place. This is not to say that Forss was treated as a woman or that the harassment he was subjected to had precisely the same significance for him as it had for cis women working in cafés. Forss’s femininity puts him in a position of having to deal with norms of both male *and* female, cis *and* trans. By his contemporaries, he seems to have been recognized for the most part as a feminine man but also as a “hermaphrodite” or occasionally as a cis woman in (semi-)male clothing (evident in the statement that according to the gossip, “he *is* a woman, not a man,” Wadström 1897, 468). The presumed cis/trans binary has been subjected to much critique within transgender studies research (Currah 2016; Enke [2012] 2013). It has also been noted that this binary is impossible to uphold when it comes to historical studies and that “trans” may rather be used as a way of understanding certain actions and events (Cleves 2018; Sears 2015). In nineteenth-century Sweden, the “hermaphrodite” category was considered part of a continuum that today we would call intersex, trans, and homosexuality—thus in itself problematizing the cis/trans binary (Holmqvist, forthcoming). Forss’s life clearly intersects with categories of cis- and transfemininity.¹² The conflation of cis/trans is evident in Bergsten’s (n.d., 301) account of how students sometimes used to “pat Forss about and feel his breast/s [Swedish *bröst*].” The Swedish word *bröst*, which is the same in singular and plural, can mean both female breasts and a male chest. Bergsten (1828–

1905), doctor of medicine, includes three handwritten pages on Forss in his unpublished memoirs, kept at the city archive in Norrköping. It is unclear what sort of breast/s Bergsten means; he only adds that he doubts the students “found anything enticing in terms of desire” (Bergsten n.d., 301–02). No matter in what terms we translate this desire, the description takes its departure in Forss’s femininity and takes for granted that femininity equals harassment: if Forss is not a woman, then at least he is almost a woman, *in a woman’s place*—and therefore, available for sexual advances.

All of the extensive memoir depictions of Forss contain descriptions of sexual harassment. There is no doubt that it is Forss’s femininity that makes him the object of such invasive behavior. Rudolf Hjärne (1879, 100) describes what he calls an occasional “jest”: where a drunk student rushed in, took Forss in his arms and “put him on his lap, taking both his arms and wrapped them around his neck,” then jokingly recited a love poem.¹³ Added to the sexual insult here is a jocular tone that is possibly partly traceable to cultural traditions. Carnavalesque traditions of trans-femininity have been well established in Sweden, just as in the rest of Europe (Liliequist 2002, 81–82), establishing views of transfemininity as a “joke” in majoritarian culture. Originating from *commedia dell’arte*, burlesque shows in the pantomime that transfemininity has often been part of the comedic tradition (Davis 2014, 218–30; Radcliffe 2011; Richards 2015, 29–34). The “joke” builds on shifts in status due to the hierarchies of gendersex. In Forss’s case, it has to do with a dual position of being both feminine and gender variant, which here seems to make him an object of both sexual harassment and ridicule. This is stated as a matter of course: “That the students during such circumstances [as those of the rumors of Forss’ gendersex] would have much to do with him, was obvious” (Ödmann 1898, 66).

The ease with which the harassments are described is due to discourses of women in public as well as transfemininity but also to a prevalent view of students as carefree. Although the 1840s have been described as a period when Swedish students viewed themselves as “guardians of the light,” the prevalent student ideal was still that of the happily irresponsible youngster (Johannisson and Lundgren 1989; Skoglund 1991, 66–91). Summed up by the Latin phrase *gaudeamus igitur, juvenes dum sumus* (let us rejoice, therefore, while we are young), the years spent at university for middle- and upper-class men were often viewed as a sort of last orgiastic feast preceding adult life (Skoglund 1991, 38). Tjeder (2003, 97–128) points out that the prevalent masculine ideal of controlling one’s passion paradoxically also contained a period of young recklessness, of “having one’s fling.” Student culture constituted a sort of society within a society in nineteenth-century Sweden—where young men were *supposed* to lose control and loosen the reigns of adult life.

The translator and linguist Theodor Hagberg (1825–1893) writes at length about the harassments of Forss. The handwritten manuscript of his memoirs is kept at the university library at Uppsala University. It is not known exactly when the manuscript was written, but it contains detailed descriptions of student life during the mid-nineteenth century, including an eight-page, contemptuous section on Forss, entitled “Dance entertainment at Aron Fors’.” The title itself may be interpreted as an ironic

twist, along with the events themselves as a sort of carnivalesque, sadistic take on the dances that were an important part of social life within the bourgeoisie and the upper classes. After a detailed description of both the café and Forss's looks, Hagberg (n.d., p. 254) devotes a major part of his text to how "this peculiar pastrycook" was "a much longed-for object of his honoured costumers' incessant larks or so-called pranks" and describes in detail Forss's reactions to occasions where "the customers, i.e., principally the students, became too intrusive." Hagberg's detailed description is a painful read. What seems to have been brutally violent is described as the "most comic" of events, and it is difficult to follow Hagberg's (n.d., p. 255) amusement when he recounts how "several pairs of strong fists took hold" of Forss, so as to "dance around him in a closely packed ring of students." He describes how Forss repeatedly tried to break free but failed to do so and how he "used to want to scamper in and hide in his private rooms" after finally being allowed to leave (Hagberg, n.d., p. 256).

Although he considers the harassments harmless, Hagberg (n.d., p. 256) also describes Forss's acceptance of them as "something particularly odd." His explanation is simple: Forss tolerated it so that the students would come back, thereby ensuring that his business stays afloat. What I have earlier described as adherence to normative masculinity—a thriving business and financial security—is by Hagberg used to excuse the harassments. Accordingly, Hagberg describes the harassments as a major source of the café's popularity. The supply of cake and pastries, and so on, was "nothing in comparison with the host himself" (Hagberg, n.d., p. 251).

What does a person accept in order to be accepted? Forss's agency was limited by the fact that his incomes were dependent on the students visiting his café. The financial situation that I described in the previous section was likely built on his popularity within the student group. Keeping on good terms with students includes accepting their actions, and being feminine in a semipublic place means putting up with harassment. One of the conditions of Forss's normative masculinity—his business—is in other words also turned against him.

A Spectacularized Presence—Remaining in One's Place

Many seem to have been deeply fascinated by Forss's presence. He appears to have stirred complex feelings of both ridicule and enchantment, being called "a wonder of nature, neither man nor woman, but a so-called hermaphrodite" (Hagberg n.d., p. 254). How are we to understand such statements? How does a wonder of nature fit in with his society? In our age of presumed certainties of sex and gender, it may seem strange to assert that someone has been neither man nor woman, "or perhaps rather both at once," as the newspaper *Folkets röst* (1854) expressed it when reporting on Forss's death. But there are several similar assertions in my material. Contemporaries of Forss frequently describe him as "two-sexed" (Ödmann 1898, 66) or "hermaphrodite" (Bergsten n.d., 301). Some such statements appear derogatory, others merely seem to state a matter of fact. As several researchers (Dreger 1998;

Mak 2012; in a Swedish context Bondestam 2010) have pointed out, different models of understanding nonnormative gendersex competed throughout the nineteenth century. For a long time, the categories of man and woman were complemented by the category of “hermaphrodites.” The term was used about persons who were considered to transgress the boundaries of male or female—physically, emotionally, or socially. Although Swedish medical science renounced the possibility of the so-called real hermaphrodites, far into the nineteenth century, it was an unusual, but nonetheless existing category—possibly particularly perceptible in Sweden when compared to the rest of Europe (Bondestam 2010, 22). This may be illustrated by the case of Andreas Bruce (1808–1885), who was assigned female sex at birth but went to a doctor and obtained a certificate of “hermaphroditism,” which allowed him to change his first name and find employment as a man. Although what he himself referred to as his “redressing” gained public attention, his masculinity seems to have been to a large degree accepted (Holmqvist Forthcoming, 2016, 39–41; Littberger Caisou-Rousseau 2013a, 2013b). It is difficult to know exactly how the “hermaphrodite” category was perceived among the general public. Earlier research (Bondestam 2010; Holmqvist 2016; Liliequist 2000, 2002) points to flexible perceptions in terms of people who traversed and transgressed expectations of normative gendersex in Sweden before the twentieth century. Views on nonnormative gendersex seem to have varied; indeed, there are examples of how the same person may in one setting have been accepted as changing gendersex, while not in others. In the late eighteenth century, Anders Magnus/Anna Maria Åhrman (born 1777, date of death unknown) changed from a female to a male first name and was registered as able to marry “both as a man and as a woman” (quoted from Bondestam 2010, 98). A few years later, however, this was questioned and withdrawn, as a local court decided that Åhrman was female and that his marriage (to a woman) was a fraud. Testimonies from the courtroom indicate several different views on Åhrman’s gendersex. One employer had fired him after finding out that he had been assigned female sex at birth. Another had written a certificate saying that although he had first hired Åhrman as a woman, he was later assured that Åhrman was a man and had then simply given him a new, male, job. One of Åhrman’s relatives explained that although she was aware Åhrman had been assigned female sex at birth, she had seen no reason to doubt that he was male since he had sometimes dressed as a man (Bondestam 2010, 98–108; Holmqvist 2016, 35–37; Strand 2016, 135–80). The reason Åhrman gained attention from the legal system was because his wife wanted to annul their marriage and therefore took him to court—had it not been for that, he would probably have remained unnoticed by the authorities. Unlike the policies of containment and secrecy that Mak (2012, esp. 19–42) has pointed out, Åhrman does not seem to have hidden or been ashamed of his gendersex. Neither did Andreas Bruce—he even wrote a memoir about it (published in Littberger 2013b). Instead, both Åhrman and Bruce initiated medical examinations themselves, in order to have a nonnormative gendersex recognized.¹⁴ This can be described as a strategical use of the hermaphrodite category, using it to be recognized as something other than their assigned

gendersex (Holmqvist Forthcoming).¹⁵ Bruce's and Åhrman's cases indicate that nonnormative gendersex in Sweden was not *necessarily* prosecuted or investigated, something which is in line with the fact that—at least as far as we know—this never happened to Forss. In Forss's case, there are no indications that he sought recognition of nonnormative gendersex. Also, no one else seems to have investigated his gendersex or required him to prove it. People were obviously talking and spreading rumors about Forss, but I have found no indication of legal or other authorities interfering with his life.

The possibility of understanding Forss as a “hermaphrodite” does not mean that it was considered a normal category. Forss is repeatedly spectacularized in my material. This is most evident from the fascinated descriptions of his looks and clothing. In some of the student memoirs, Forss's physical appearance is described in detail. Rudolf Hjärne (1879, 99–100), for example, writes that Forss's “chest was unusually high for a man and appeared to be parted in two halves. The arms, sometimes bare to the elbow, were white, round, and full.” Hjärne devotes about a quarter of his section on Forss to a detailed description of his looks and clothing: the “white pants, socks and shoes, a dark velvet jacket or blouse with a belt around the waist,” and the embroidered collar which continued down the breast, “for the cardigan was cut low.” Forss's hair is described as black, parted and with curls, and “on top of that,” according to Hjärne, Forss wore golden earrings, several golden rings, and a wide gold chain around his neck. This description is repeated in Sven Anders Hägg (1883), whose collection of miniature biographies of burghers in Uppsala includes a section on Forss that is to a large extent copied from Hjärne. Some writers simply describe that Forss was dressed “half as a woman” (Ödmann 1898, 66) or his clothes as “a division of male and female, however with predominance of the latter” (Wadström 1897, 468). Others follow Hjärne in detailed descriptions. Bergsten (n.d., 300) depicts “old man Forss” as “an odd character with his into ringlets set curls” and a light blue checker blouse, white pants, and a long silver chain. Theodor Hagberg (n.d., 253) portrays Forss largely in line with the others but adds a racialized orientalist stereotype by describing “a sort of short night gown made of a flower printed fabric with loud, mostly relish colours,” which he sums up as reminiscent of “an oriental harem woman.” Some of the descriptions about Forss's appearances are strikingly similar to pictures of Forss and may very well have contributed to them. I have found four portraits of Forss, all of which appear to stem from the same source. The seemingly oldest version is a miniature oil painting by artist Julius Alexis Wetterbergh (n.d.) The painting portrays Aron Forss's profile in full figure carrying a tray, dressed—as Hjärne and others describe—in black blouse, white collar, and trousers. There are at least three variations of Wetterbergh's portrait. The university library in Uppsala holds two of them, both of which are copies of Wetterbergh's (*Aron Forss* n.d.a, n.d.b; see Figure 1). A final version is a drawing from Bergsten's memoirs (n.d., 301, see Figure 2), which serves as a supplement to his written depiction of Forss. The clothing on Bergsten's drawing is somewhat different, showing a younger Forss with a more decidedly feminine appearance, emphasizing both

Figure 1. Aron Forss (n.d.b).

Figure 2. Bergsten (n.d., p. 301), courtesy of Norrköping City Archives.

the waistline and breasts. The portraits in themselves speak of the interest directed toward Forss's appearance. While all the portraits show Forss at work there is no café in the background, the empty settings underscore Forss as the point of interest.

Although the portraits and the written descriptions of Forss pay significant attention to his looks and clothing, Forss's manners also seem important. Forss is supposed to have acted "as a woman" (Ödmann 1898, 66), having the "voice,

posture, and gestures” as “completely those of a woman” (Wadström 1897, 468) and as making a “particular impression through his affected manner, through his costume and the delicate squeaky voice” (Bergsten n.d., 301). Rudolf Hjärne (1879, 99–100) writes that when Forss greeted someone, he would make a small curtsy and “sometimes” a bow, “but the former seemed to work out better.” That there is more to Forss’s femininity than his clothes become all the clearer in two descriptions of how Forss for once dresses in all male clothing. Hjärne (1879, 99) describes how Forss is seen leaving his café on the way to a funeral:

He was then fully dressed in men’s clothing with a hat, but thereon looking as ludicrous that one could not help but notice that everything was not as it should be. In addition, he came tripping like a woman, very embarrassed, as close to the houses as possible, evidently anxious to quickly get away from the peeping eyes of spectators.

In another similar description, Forss leaves the café in order to appear at a witness hearing and is thus compelled to “shoulder a completely male guise.” Wearing a blue cloak and a cylindrical hat, Forss is said to attract general attention on the streets, “followed of course by a crowd of curious street urchins” (Ödman 1898, 66–67). According to these writers, Forss is bound to leave his feminine clothing as he leaves the enclosed quarters of his café to partake in a more public setting. What would appear to be a more masculine and thus normative form of clothing however does not make Forss seem any less strange or eccentric—quite the opposite. As Forss dresses in male clothing, his femininity becomes even more visible. By stripping Forss of his outer feminine appearance—the clothes—his inward femininity instead comes to show itself. The curious descriptions of Forss’s clothing and appearance are thus rendered somehow unimportant or rather as a sign and/or consequence of Forss’s gendersex that remains *under* the clothes.

These understandings of Forss’s gendersex can be enlightened by the three logics by which Mak (2012) claims that nonnormative gendersex was understood during the nineteenth century. The complex feelings that Forss’s femininity stirred can be understood as a failure by Forss to live up to the standards of *sex as inscription*—the ability to fit in with one’s (gendered) place in community. The gendersex that seems to shine through his male clothing in the above descriptions also reflects what Mak calls the logics of *sex as body* as well as *sex as self*—physical characteristics and inner feelings, respectively, as evidence of gendersex. The *sex as self* logic, however, was according to Mak not established until the fin-de-siècle, but as other research on nonnormative gendersex in Sweden during the nineteenth century has also implied, this dating may need to be revised (Holmqvist Forthcoming). Forss’s contemporaries seem to assume a sort of feminine, inner self in Forss.

It may be tempting to relate Forss’s clothing and feminine manner to subcultures of male same-sex sexuality that were long since established in other parts of Europe—and that often included cross-dressings and transfemininities (e.g., Bray [1982] 1988; Rey 1992; Sibalis 2002). Also, several researchers have pointed out

that what Foucault (1976) labeled the birth of modern homosexuality was just as much the birth of what we would today call trans identities (Hekma 1994; Prosser 1998). Notions of “third sex,” “inversion,” and “contrary sexual feelings” became the center of much attention around the fin-de-siècle (e.g., Dreger 1998; Oosterhuis 2000, 277–310; in Sweden Bondestam 2010, 199–231; Johannisson 1994; Laskar 2005). But during Forss’s life, Sweden was still a rural country, only on the verge of modernity. This has had a significant impact on the Swedish story of nonnormative gendersex, not least because of the late public attention of male same-sex sexuality. Not that male same-sex desire was an unknown phenomenon—Mattsson (2010, 135–42) for example has demonstrated the allegations of same-sex activity at Gustav III’s court in late eighteenth century—but did not receive widespread public attention. According to Liliequist (1998, 34), early modern Sweden lacked an articulated discourse of male same-sex practice, as well as any “stereotypic notion of a sexually submissive man who lets himself be penetrated by another man.” Same-sex activity was explicitly prohibited in Swedish law 1608–1734, and then again 1864–1945, but it was not until several decades after Forss’s death that majority of Sweden took much notice of such practices. Rydström (2003, 89–89) describes the first decade of the twentieth century as a turning point—it was not until then that the police started to press numerous criminal charges against male same-sex offenses. This might explain why Forss’s sexuality does not seem to be an issue in my material. Apart from a short note in Bergsten (n.d., 302) that Forss’s desires were “not for flirtations, no they were for the bottle,” I have found no references to Forss’s presumed sexual preferences. Although his femininity is very often at stake, his sexuality seldom seems to be. Nevertheless, as I stated in the beginning, some of the memoirs describing Forss were written up to almost fifty years after his death. It is difficult to say how much these recollections should be understood as illustrations of Forss’s *own* time or whether they should rather be attributed to the period in which they were published. We may understand them as representing both the time they were written and the time in which Forss lived. Notwithstanding the uncertainties as to the dates of some of my sources—foremost the fact that it is not known when two of the memoirs were composed—it may very well be that the memories of Forss’s were sparked by the new interest for nonnormative gendersex. Such interest may have made Forss appear in retrospect all the more interesting. Furthermore, dead since 1852, Forss was already a representative of a time passed: strange, but sufficiently far away not to be considered an actual threat.

What renders Forss’s gendersex all the more harmless is the way he is made into a spectacle; he is described as strange, eccentric, and exceptional, “a very strange phenomenon” (Wadström 1897, 468). Just as Forss is represented as singular and strange, his café is depicted as isolated: small, dark, and shut away from the rest of the world. Although located in the middle of Uppsala (at the corner of Drottninggatan and Trädgårdsgatan), historical descriptions give the impression of an almost secluded establishment. Hjärne (1879, 99; also Hägg 1883) describes the café as “three small rooms with low ceilings” and goes on to say that these rooms

constituted Forss's whole world, claiming that "on the outside we never saw him more than once." This alleged reluctance to leave the café does not strike one as particularly odd, given the fascination of his contemporaries and the stories of harassment. But the placing of Forss inside the café also functions as a way of keeping him—or rather his femininity—in place. In the descriptions of the café as enclosed quarters, Forss's appearance within the café—and thus the café itself—become an exception. If the inside of the café is limited, strange, and peculiar, then the outside may stay normal. In other words, Forss's nonnormative gendersex paradoxically becomes a sign of (others') normativity, in what Halberstam (2005, 54–55) has called the project of stabilization in trans narratives.

The portraits of Forss—in both pictures and texts—contribute to this spectacularization. All these descriptions underscore Forss's femininity as something other than normal, incomparable, and hence, inoffensive. By making Forss into a spectacle, he becomes not a threat to the order of things but rather the opposite. Normative gendersex stays the same not *in spite* of his presence, but *because* of it. Making Forss into a spectacle makes him an exception, and to every exception there is a rule.

Conclusion

What does it take to be a member of society as a feminine man? My reading of the rumors surrounding Aron Forss's life has pointed out several areas in which his feminine position had to be negotiated. The café enabled an understanding of Forss as a businessman, laying claim to a normative masculinity through the rousing bourgeois ideals of financial success and craftsmanship. Forss's femininity is sometimes described as a part of his business sense, through claims that he deliberately presented himself in a feminine manner in order to attract more customers. Forss's financial success provided him with a sort of alibi—being a successful businessman was a way of securing social acceptance and respectability. Forss's success in business also helped to build the public discourse of which he was a part. Advertisements in the local newspaper, for example, presented him as (nothing but) a skilled pastrycook, and a donation to the hospital shaped his posthumous reputation. In order to sustain this financial success, Forss was required to put up with harassments from his costumers. As a consequence of his femininity, Forss was harassed when working at the café, something which is portrayed in a joking manner. Although Forss is described as frightened and resentful of such events, we are also told that he was accepting of them—something which is explicitly connected to his business sense. Being a businessman was apparently not enough to remain within the bounds of normative masculinity. I have also pointed out the detailed portrayals of Forss's feminine appearance. The fascination with Forss speaks of a spectacularized interest toward him, which seems to include both outer appearance and inner self. This is mirrored by descriptions of how dressed in male clothing Forss appears to be even more feminine, as well as a description of how Forss only reluctantly leaves the safety of his own quarters. Making Forss appear out of place when he is outside of

his café presents his existence as somehow an exception to the rules of social appropriateness.

There are ways in which Forss adheres to normativity, and others where he does not. That Forss appears in several memoirs by Uppsala students does not mean that he was remembered by everybody. Some mention him without speaking of his femininity, others didn't remember, care, or find him interesting enough to describe. Apparently, there were people who did not find Forss's femininity worthy of description or perhaps did not remember it at all. Forss was something of a spectacle—but at the same time, he was not.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Notes

1. Forss's name is sometimes spelled only with one "s"; I've chosen the spelling that Forss himself adopts in advertisements for his café. I have chosen to use male pronouns about Forss due to my understanding that he never presented as a woman—I will return to this later on in the article.
2. All translations are by the author.
3. I am borrowing the term "gendersex" from Holm (2017, 75–76). It is meant to conflate the often binary understandings of (biological and physical) sex and (experienced) gender. Holm (2017, 75) defines this term as "consisting of an entanglement of concepts and materialities that co-construct each other in phenomena," something which is particularly relevant when discussing the nineteenth century due to the continuum of sex and gender during that period.
4. Forss was never married and had no known children; apart from a donation to the hospital, his estate went to his mother's niece, and his private belongings appear to have been auctioned ("Kungörelser," 1854).
5. Although my arguments in this article are largely drawn from transgender studies, I am in other words not arguing that Forss should necessarily be understood in terms of a transgender identity. I will return to the cis/trans binary later in the article.
6. Published memoirs were found through a search in the Swedish national library catalogue, LIBRIS; unpublished memoirs have been gathered from Uppsala University library Carolina Rediviva, and the Swedish National Archive Database (NAD).
7. Hägg's account is, however, to a large extent a copy of Hjärke's.
8. Again, NAD has been used to identify this material. Newspaper clippings have been identified through the digital press archive at the Swedish Royal Library.

9. This may be compared with Boag's (2011, 52) remark on the relation of class to memoirs and the knowledge of gender variance in history.
10. The most common term used to describe Forss's establishment is *schweizeri*; on other occasions, *kafé* (café) or *konditori* (pastry-shop) serves the same purpose. Forss himself is referred to as both *sockerbagare* and *konditor* (both of which are equivalent to pastrycook). The latter term has been in use since the late seventeenth century in Sweden but became more common by the latter half of the nineteenth century (Cassén 1936, 3; Nyström, Björnstad, and Bursell 1996, 387).
11. The "patented 'Lemon-drops'" seems to have been another of Forss imports, which he advertised in Upsala (1847) as well-liked in London "for their pleasant taste, as well as beneficial for the health."
12. I use the term *transfemininity* in order to emphasize differences between for example Forss's femininity and what could be called *cis gender femininity*. As stated in the beginning, I am not proposing that Forss was what we would today call *transgender*, nor do I mean to enhance the *trans/cis* binary. Rather, I am using "*transfemininity*" as a wide term encompassing elements of femininity by persons assigned male sex—not necessarily *transgender* women.
13. The student is quoting "Frithiof and Ingeborg" from Frithiof's saga (Tegnér 1825) by Esaias Tegnér, apparently placing Forss and his "white little arms" in the part of the young girl in the poem.
14. In Åhrman's case, this was followed by two more—nonvoluntary—medical examinations. First, when he wanted to marry (and sent his future brother-in-law in his place) and then during the trial.
15. This is not to say that they wanted to be recognized as of a nonnormative gendersex—in Bruce's case, there is no doubt that he saw himself as a man—but that it was a way of being recognized as not female.

References

- Aron Forss. n.d.a. [Litography]. Uppsala University Library, Waller Ms se-03717.
- Aron Forss. *kaféidkare i Uppsala, Drottningg. 7*. n.d.b. [Litography]. Uppsala University Library, 13427.
- Beemyn, G. 2013. "A Presence in the Past: A Transgender Historiography." *Journal of Women's History* 25:113–21.
- Beemyn, G. 2014. "Transgender History." In *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves: A Resource for the Transgender Community*, edited by L. Erickson-Schroth, 1–49. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Bergsten, W. n.d. *Mina minnen: Del 2, Studenttiden*. Dagboksanteckningar 1853–1859. Norrköping City Archive.
- Boag, P. 2011. *Re-dressing America's Frontier Past*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bondestam, M. 2010. *Tvåkönad: Studier i den svenska hermafroditens historia*. Nora, Sweden: Nya Doxa.
- Boström, C. J. 1901. *Skrifter. D. 3*. Edited by H. Edfeldt and G. J. Keijser. Upsala.

- Bray, A. (1982) 1988. *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*. Boston, MA: Gay Men's Press.
- Bref till landsorten. 1847, May 11. *Upsala*.
- Cassén, N. 1936. *Sockerbagare i Stockholm under 1600–1700-talen*. Stockholm, Sweden: Sveriges konditorförening.
- Cleves, R. H. 2018. "Six Ways of Looking at a Trans Man? The Life of Frank Shimer (1826–1901)." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 27: 32–62.
- Cromwell, J. 1999. "Passing Women and Female-bodied Men: (Re)claiming FTM History." In *Reclaiming Genders: Transsexual Grammars at the Fin de Siècle*, edited by K. More and S. Whittle, 3461. London, UK: Cassell.
- Currah, P. 2016. "General Editor's Introduction." *Transgender Studies Quarterly* 3: 1–4.
- Davis, J. 2014. "'Slap On! Slap Ever!' Victorian Pantomime, Gender Variance, and Cross-dressing." *New Theatre Quarterly* 30: 218–30.
- Död-och begravningsbok*. 1836–1861. Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling, 88/92, no 325.
- Dreger, A. D. 1998. *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Enke, A. F. 2012. "Introduction." In *Transfeminist Perspectives in and Beyond Transgender and Gender Studies*, edited by [Finn] Enke, A. 120. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Enke, A. F. (2012) 2013. "The Education of Little Cis: Cisgender and the Discipline of Opposing Bodies." In *The Transgender Studies Reader 2*, edited by S. Stryker and A. Z. Aizura, 234–47. New York: Routledge.
- Födelse-och dopbok*. 1766–1812. Uppsala domkyrkoförsamling, 255/bild 262.
- Folkets röst*. 1854, November 8. [Newspaper announcement].
- Foucault, M. 1976. *Histoire de la sexualité. 1, La volonté de savoir*. Paris, France: Gallimard.
- Göteborgs Handels-och Sjöfartstidning. 1854, November 11. [Newspaper announcement].
- Hagberg, T. n.d. Hågkomster ur studentlivet i Upsala och Södermanlands-Nerikesnation på 1830- och 40-talet [Manuscript]. Uppsala University Library, U 1093:a.
- Hägg, S. A. 1883. *Historik öfver borgerskapet i Upsala 1751–1881* [Manuscript]. Uppsala University Library, X 268e:3.
- Halberstam, J. [Jack]. 1998. *Female Masculinity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Halberstam, J. [Jack]. 2005. In *a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*. New York: New York University Press.
- Här och der i Skåne. 1885, October 13. *Svenska Dagbladet*. [Newspaper announcement].
- Hekma, G. 1994. "'A Female Soul in a Male Body': Sexual Inversion as Gender Inversion in Nineteenth-century Sexology." In *Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History*, edited by G. Herdt, 213–39. New York: Zone Books.
- Hellberg, J. C. 1870. *Ur minnet och dagboken om mina samtida: Personer och händelser efter 1815 inom och utom fäderneslandet af Posthumus. Del 1, Från Napoleon I:s fall till Carl Johans död*. Stockholm, Sweden.
- Hjärne, R. 1879. *Från det förflutna och det närvarande: Minnen och tankar*. Westeraås.

- Holm, M.-L. 2017. *Fleshing Out the Self: Reimagining Intersexed and Trans Embodied Lives Through (Auto)biographical Accounts of the Past*. Linköping: Tema Genus, Linköpings universitet.
- Holmqvist, S. Forthcoming. "A Man and a Perpetuum Mobile? Assigned Hermaphrodite Andreas Bruce's Memoirs." Manuscript accepted for publication with minor revisions, *Gender & History*.
- Holmqvist, S. 2016. "Att skriva transhistoria: Cisnormativitet och historiens könsöverskridare." *Tidskrift för Genusvetenskap* 2016:4.
- Johannisson, K. 1994. *Den mörka kontinenten: Kvinnan, medicinen och fin-de-siècle*. Stockholm, Sweden: Norstedts.
- Johannisson, K., and A. Lundgren. 1989. *Levande lärdom: Uppsala universitet under fem sekler*. Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University Press.
- Kungörelser. 1854, December 12. *Upsala*. [Newspaper announcement].
- Laskar, P. 2005. *Ett bidrag till heterosexuallitetens historia: Kön, sexualitet och njutningsnormer i sexhandböcker 1800–1920*. Stockholm, Sweden: Modernista.
- Liliequist, J. 1998. "State Policy, Popular Discourse, and the Silence on Homosexual Acts in Early Modern Sweden." In *Scandinavian Homosexualities*, edited by J. Löfström, 15–52. New York: Haworth Press.
- Liliequist, J. 2000. "Cross-dressing and the Perception of Female Same-sex Desire in Early Modern Sweden." In *Sex, State and Society: Comparative Perspectives on the History of Sexuality*, edited by L.-G. Tedebrand, 337–352. Umeå, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell.
- Liliequist, J. 2002. "Kvinnor i manskläder och åtrå mellan kvinnor: Kulturella förväntningar och kvinnliga strategier i det tidigmoderna Sverige och Finland." In *Makalösa kvinnor: Könsöverskridare i myt och verklighet*, edited by E. Borgström, 63–123. Stockholm, Sweden: Alfabet/Anamma.
- Littberger Caisou-Rousseau, I. 2013a. "'Om jag ej får gå med byxsor kan jag inte leva': Therese Andreas Bruce och kampen för en manlig identitet i 1800-talets Sverige." *Tidskrift för Litteraturvetenskap* 3/4: 17–28.
- Littberger Caisou-Rousseau, I. 2013b. *Therese Andreas Bruce: En sällsam historia från 1800-talet: Levnadsberättelse, brev och verser med inledning och kommentarer*. Stockholm, Sweden: Makadam.
- Mak, G. 2012. *Doubting Sex: Inscriptions, Bodies, and Selves in Nineteenth-Century Hermaphrodite Case Histories*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- Mattsson, A. 2010. *Komediant och riksförrädare: Handskriftcirkulerade smådeskifter mot Gustaf III*. Uppsala, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.
- Norrköpings Tidningar. 1854, November 11. [Newspaper announcement].
- Nyblom, C. R. 1908. *En sjuttioårigs minnen: Anteckningar*. Stockholm, Sweden.
- Nystrom, B., A. Biörnstad, and B. Bursell. 1996. *Hantverk i Sverige: Om bagare, kopparslagare, vagnmakare och 286 andra hantverksyrken*. Stockholm, Sweden: LT i samarbete med Nordiska museet.
- Ödmann, S. 1898. *Minnen och anteckningar från flydda dagar*. Stockholm, Sweden: Bonniers.

- Oosterhuis, H. 2000. *Stepchildren of Nature: Krafft-Ebing, Psychiatry and the Making of Sexual Identity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Östgöta Correspondenten. 1854, November 15. [Newspaper announcement].
- Prosser, J. 1998. *Second Skins: The Body Narratives of Transsexuality*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Radcliffe, C. 2011. "Dan Leno: Dame of Drury Lane." In *Victorian Pantomime: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by J. Davis, 118–134. Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Rand, E. 2005. *The Ellis Island Snow Globe*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Rey, M. 1992. "Parisian Homosexuals Create a Lifestyle, 1700–1750: The Police Archives." In *History of Homosexuality in Europe and America*, edited by S. Donaldson and W. Dynes, 273–286. New York: Garland.
- Richards, J. 2015. *The Golden Age of Pantomime: Slapstick, Spectacle and Subversion in Victorian England*. London, UK: I. B. Tauris.
- Ronne, M., and E. Ronne. 2001. "En queer krögare." *Ergo* 7. Accessed June 7, 2019. <http://ergo.ronne.se/E2001N7.html>.
- Rydström, J. 2003. *Sinners and Citizens: Bestiality and Homosexuality in Sweden, 1880–1950*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Sears, C. 2015. *Arresting Dress: Cross-dressing, Law, and Fascination in Nineteenth-century San Francisco*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Sibalis, M. 2002. "The Palais-royal and the Homosexual Subculture of Nineteenth-century Paris." *Journal of Homosexuality* 41: 117–29. doi: 10.1300/J082v41n03_09.
- Sjöberg, J. 1999. "En tagg bland blommor: 1840-talets studentkarnevaler i Uppsala." In *När studenten blev modern*, edited by H. Ågren, 67–92. Uppsala, Sweden: Historiska institutionen, Uppsala universitet.
- Skidmore, E. 2017. *True Sex: The Lives of Trans Men at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*. New York: New York University Press.
- Skoglund, C. 1991. *Vita mössor under röda fanor: Vänsterstudenter, kulturradikalism och bildningsideal i Sverige 1880–1940*. Stockholm, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell.
- Strand, K. 2016. *Brott, tiggeri och brännvinets fördärv: Studier i socialt orienterade visor i skillingtryck*. Möklinta, Sweden: Gidlunds.
- Stryker, S. 2008. *Transgender History*. Berkeley, CA: Seal Press.
- Sundblad, J. 1884. *Upsalalif: Kulturteckningar*. Stockholm, Sweden: Fahlerantz.
- Svanström, Y. 2000. *Policing Public Women: The Regulation of Prostitution in Stockholm 1812–1880*. Stockholm, Sweden: Atlas.
- Söderberg, T. 1955. *Hantverkarna i brytningstid: 1820–1870*. Stockholm, Sweden: Sveriges hantverks- och småindustriorganisation.
- Tegnér, E. 1825. *Frithiofs saga*. Stockholm: H.A. Nordström.
- Tellström, R., and H. Jönsson. 2018. *Från krog till krog: Svenskt uteätande under 700 år*. Stockholm, Sweden: Natur & kultur.
- Tjeder, D. 2003. *The Power of Character: Middle-class Masculinities, 1800–1900*. Stockholm, Sweden: Department of History, Stockholm University.
- Upsala. 1847, April 16. [Newspaper announcement].
- Upsala. 1854, November 3. [Newspaper announcement].

- Wadström, B. 1897. *Ur minnet och dagboken: Anteckningar från åren 1848–1897*. Stockholm, Sweden: Fosterlandsstiftelsen.
- Wetterbergh, Julius Alexis. n.d. *Sockerbagare Aron Fors* [Oil painting]. Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala Art Museum.

Author Biography

Sam Holmqvist is a post doctor in Comparative Literature and Gender Studies at Umeå University and has a PhD in Comparative Literature at Uppsala University, Sweden. Holmqvist's publications include Swedish doctoral thesis *Transformationer* (2017): on nineteenth century trans* literary traditions, "Cross-Dressing Mysteries and Monsters: Nineteenth- and Twenty-First-Century Cross-Dressers in Swedish Suspense Fiction" (*Rethinking National Literatures in Scandinavia*, 2015), and "Trans Readings: A Legacy from Myself to Myself" (*lambda nordica*, 2018).