

Forum för mångvetenskaplig forskning om rasism:
Rasismforskningens utmaningar

The forum for multidisciplinary racism research: challenges of
researching racism

23-24 November 2016 Uppsala University

Racism and racialization in health and welfare research

Welfare and Lifecourse Research Group, Sociology Department
<http://www.soc.uu.se/research/research-groups/Welfare/>
<http://www.soc.uu.se/forskning/forskargrupper/valfard/>

Hannah Bradby hannah.bradby@soc.uu.se

What has racism to do with health and welfare across the lifecourse in European settings? Race has not been a legal or administrative category in modern times in Europe: health and welfare professionals should treat each patient or client on the basis of their own need, while policy should seek to ensure equality of access to good quality care with a regulatory framework for when this fails.

And yet research shows racialized patterns at population level as well at the micro-level of interpersonal communication. In terms of health status of the recipients of health and welfare, the employment patterns of health and welfare professionals and the expectations and interactions of professionals and recipients, repeated racialized patterns are discernible. Even where racism is not a category that is being mobilized politically, its influence may be detectable in coded patterns that can be shown to be historically related to racist categories or practices.

There is all too much evidence that racism and racialization are processes with ongoing relevance to healthcare and welfare provision in 21st century Europe. Overt racism is illegal in healthcare and welfare settings with the direct expression of discriminatory views largely unacceptable in public. At the same time, the with-holding of health services and welfare from undeserving categories of immigrants - so-called 'welfarism' has been closely allied to the rise of populist xenophobic political parties across Europe.

The coded, occluded, muted and indirect ways in which both everyday, scientific and structural racism play out have implications for theorizing, methodology and interpretation of research. What are the implications for the ways that we conceptualise and pursue our research into health and welfare? Are some questions too sensitive to address? What theories and methods do we need to be able to address racism at time when its expression is unacceptable to some and inflammatory to others?

Presentation of research by Hannah Bradby, Sarah Hamed, Magdalena Vieira, Beth Maina Ahlberg, Mai Lundmark