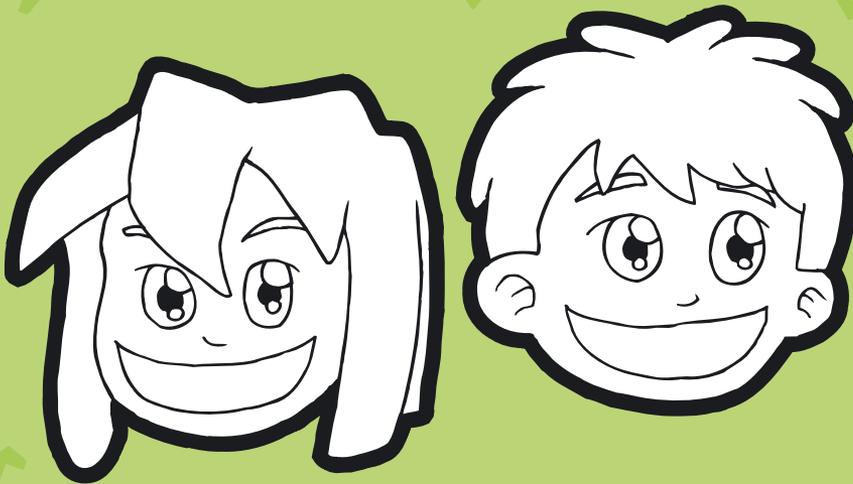
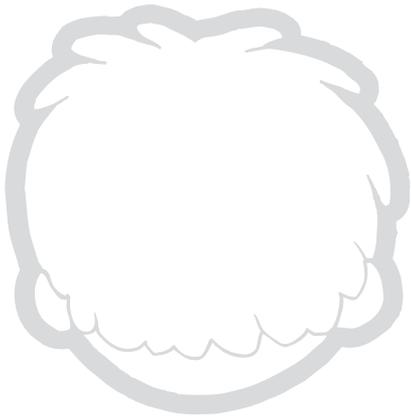


HIM 'N HER

A HANDBOOK ON SCOUTING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
FOR BOYS AND GIRLS



The Swedish Guide and Scout Association



HIM'N'HER

A HANDBOOK ON SCOUTING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

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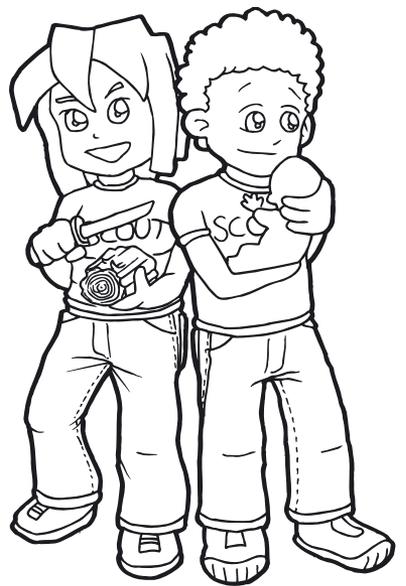
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Preface

The Scouting movement was established 100 years ago - for boys only. One of the main objectives was to make boys into men. Quite soon afterwards, however, the Girl Guides organization was introduced. Today, many countries have Scout activities for boys and girls together. But the question is – are these activities gender balanced? Is there really equality between boys and girls in Scouting? This book is written with the firm conviction that Scouting has not yet come that far down the road towards gender equality. But the fact that you are about to read it is a step towards this goal. You will probably not be able to cope with everything in this book, but read it anyway. And take a good look at your own opinions and prejudices. Discuss it with others in Scouting. Together we can make a difference!

Him 'n Her is written on behalf of The Swedish Guide and Scout Association. It is written for Scouts in Sweden and should be seen in the context of the Swedish society. In Sweden we have coeducational groups in Scouting, with both girls and boys in the same groups. The girls and women are members of WAGGGS and the boys and men of WOSM. The Swedish word for our activities is Scouting. The meaning of the word Scouting in Sweden is therefore both Guiding and Scouting. Him 'n Her is written both for Guides and Scouts although we only use the word Scouts. We hope the book will be of use to you in your context.



Introduction

The right to equality

“Research shows that differences within a particular gender are in many ways greater than differences between the genders themselves.”¹⁾ But our society, at least on a subconscious level, is still built upon values giving men a position of greater worth and importance than women. We must concentrate our efforts upon the elimination of these values of inequality. In order to see and understand patterns of behaviour, it is often necessary to make generalizations. Human beings are unique individuals characterized by various experiences, but in order to perceive reality we must discover common denominators. Awareness derived from this way of reasoning, and knowledge in the area of equality issues, help us to direct our attention upon girls’ and boys’ conditions within the Scout movement and relations between men and women in our society as a whole. Scouting should definitely deal with the right to be treated equally and the right to be different. This involves respect both for an individual’s gender as well as his or her manner of giving expression for sex and sexuality. But before we can get anywhere in this question of equality of the sexes, we must all begin with ourselves – come to grips with our own attitudes and prejudices. It is a hard balancing act trying to be both a fair and impartial Scout leader. It is important to see that girls and boys may at times have differing experiences and needs. But at

1 From the handbook “Gender makes a difference! Equality in practice?”

the same time, it is essential not to generalize or reinforce traditional gender roles.

Aren't we on equal footing?

Gender equality implies that women and men benefit from the same rights, opportunities and responsibilities in society. And many of us – both women and men – feel that girls and boys do have equal conditions, influence and possibilities today. But hard facts give us another picture.²⁾ Women are in the minority in all decision-making bodies. Women's wages are lower than men's. Women spend more time on household work. Recreational activities for girls receive fewer subsidies than those for boys. Women and girls get less attention and have less influence in coeducational groups. Classroom studies have shown that boys speak twice as much as girls do. If teachers give girls a chance to speak out on an equal basis as boys, then both girls and boys feel that the girls have dominated the discussions.³⁾ The same thing has been noticed in adult groups. One third of speaking time for women seems to be the generally accepted norm. This phenomenon has even received a special name: the 30% rule!⁴⁾

The superior man

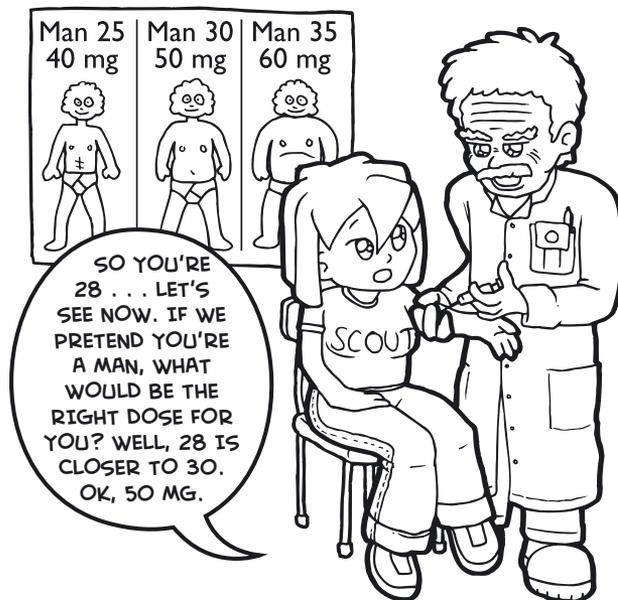
Even in our modern societies, there is a tacit agreement that places men in a superior position over women. History professor Yvonne Hirdman calls this phenomenon the “gender contract”.⁵⁾ This contract is built upon the idea that masculine and feminine matters should be kept separate and that the societal norm is masculine. Though this agreement is in effect all over the world, in Scandinavia, where we have stipulated that masculinity should not be considered superior to femininity, the contract has been altered somewhat. And here we meet another problem. Hanne Havind, one of many experts in the field of gender research, speaks of “relative subordination”, in which women place themselves in an inferior position of their



And the winner of
"Speaker of the Year" is
...MEN!

- 2 From Here to Equality, Swedish Association of Local Authorities, (1998)
- 3 Fredelius, (2000)
- 4 Fredelius, (2000)
- 5 Hirdman, Yvonne, (2001)

own free will.⁶ Boys talk more and receive more attention in school. Men are in the majority when it comes to leadership at work and in various organizations. And in politics, you will definitely find mostly men in leading positions.⁷ Activities which most everyone consider to be neutral in regards to gender (recreational centres, youth group activities) are in fact often planned with needs and interests most common for boys in mind. Girls are forced to adapt or find some other kind of activity.⁸ Another example, given attention recently, of the fact that men are the societal norm can be found within medical care. It is the male body that is the model for diagnosis and treatment of illnesses, medicinal doses, etc. This in turn has negative consequences for female patients.



6 Fredelius,

7 "Facts on youth, gender and equality", Swedish National Youth Board

8 "From here to Equality"

9 Government bill on equality, 1990/91:13 2.

Strategies for survival

The notion at the present time that equality between men and women already has been achieved is in fact one of the major obstacles to further development in the direction of equality.⁹ Even at the tender age of 5-7 years, children realize on a subconscious level that it is better to be a boy

and man than to be a girl and woman, since boys take up more space in the children's world, have more power and importance than girls.¹⁰⁾ consciously or not, girls seek an explanation and a survival strategy for the situation they subconsciously have already understood. Later on, these strategies differ in various situations and phases of life depending upon how they are treated in their social surroundings. The strategies of a young girl may take the form of denial, acceptance or rebellion.¹¹⁾

Denial

A girl may deny the facts of her situation and consider that she is good enough and not repressed. She believes the image of girls having the same opportunities as boys.

Acceptance

A girl may accept the notion that "she isn't good enough". She sees that boys dominate but feels that that's the way things should be.

Rebellion

A girl may rebel against these standards. She understands that she is good enough and that boys dominate. She believes this to be wrong.

Discussion

Think about these three strategies for coping with inequality. Do you recognize them? What advantages or disadvantages do these different attitudes show? How do you behave as a man/woman in such situations?

Programme ideas

Take a moment at a Scout meeting or a gathering of adult men and women and quietly observe behaviour. Do women and men, girls and boys, take up an equal amount of time and space in the discussions?

¹⁰ "Facts on youth, gender and equality",

¹¹ Marklund, Liza & Snickare, Lotta (2005), Fredelius, et. al.

Alike, different and equal?

Men cannot give birth to children. It is very seldom that you see a woman with hair on her chest. There is no question about the fact that there are physical differences between the sexes. But experience has also taught us that women and men often behave differently, react differently and have different interests and areas of competence. Why should things be this way? It is here that opinions among researchers diverge. Some of them, the essentialists, claim that these variations have their explanations in biological differences. According to this theory, there is a natural feminine and natural masculine manner of being and acting, and that men and women are, by nature, suited for different tasks and responsibilities. Their slogan is “different but equal”. This type of biological reasoning has become more and more popular the past few years. But many researchers and debaters have pointed out the risks of this sort of rationalization. They can easily be used to legitimize arguments for keeping women out of positions of power in the society (*“that they have not been created for”*) and keeping men away from responsibility for home and children (*“for which their biological prerequisites are less suited”*).

Culturally created gender

Another way of looking at behavioural differences between males and females is taken up by what are known

as constructivists, or gender researchers. Their way of looking at differences in male and female conduct to a great extent is dependent upon the fact that girls and boys have been treated differently throughout their entire lives. Constructivists speak of a socially and culturally created gender that develops alongside biological masculinity and femininity. According to them, there is nothing that necessarily binds men and women to the roles they play today. One of the things that constructivists support their ideas upon is the fact that things that were perceived to be natural for males and females have varied in different societies and historical periods. In certain times, crying was considered a masculine trait while in others it was not thought of as unfeminine for a woman to give her newborn child to another person to nurse and care for. The notion of gender behaviour being created socially or culturally is also based upon the insight that there are always individuals who deviate from the “natural” male and female behaviour. In many cases, constructivists point to studies that describe how those adults who are closest to children subconsciously treat them differently dependent upon their sex. Simply by listening to parents voices, it is possible to determine if they are talking to their son or their daughter (*see page 20*).

Gender roles and gender identity

Sex is a biological fact and gender is the logical result of being born with a certain biological sex in a certain culture. There are both social and psychological aspects of gender. The social component, which we might call our gender role, has to do with what responsibilities we as men and women are given and assume and how our surroundings behave towards us in regard to our sex. The psychological side, gender identity, has to do with the traces left on our inner selves from the social experiences of being thought of as a man or a woman; how we look upon ourselves, how we think and feel and what we strive for. It is sometimes

put in another way: men and women learn to want what is expected of them. Both individual gender identity and societal gender roles change over time, but gender identity lies deeper and is slower in changing.



Programme ideas

Male/female

Divide up the participants into smaller groups, men in one group and women in the other. Ask them to write down, in one minute, as much as they can in answering the following questions.

What do you consider masculine (how a man should be)?

What do you consider feminine (how a woman should be)?

Write down the groups' various answers on a flipchart under the headings "Male" and "Female". Then discuss the question why we consider certain qualities as being more masculine or more feminine. Do the men and women in the group recognize themselves in the way their gender is described? If we let the headings "Male" and "Female" change places, what happens then?

A word exercise

Put two marks on the floor, one for “Female” and one for “Male”. Read aloud a list of words and for each word, the participants should place themselves on or near the mark on the floor (gender), which they first of all associate with that word? Does everybody go to the same spot? Do any in the group place themselves apart from the majority? Why do they make these associations?

Suggestion: have the words written out on post-it notes and put them on the flipchart under the headings “Male” and “Female” according to what the majority chose. Then take a look to see if a pattern becomes evident. Where are the most positive words and where are the most negative ones?

Suggested words: scatterbrained, rowdy, strong, competitive, rational, intelligent, afraid, sentimental, active, passive, impulsive, angry, funny, sensitive, competent, fanatical, hysterical, self-confident, worrying, virile, high achiever, nervous, sexy, definite, nagging, cocky, indecisive, cute, affectionate, evil, pathetic, beautiful, innocent, malicious, dependable, cunning, violent, handsome.

If you like, you can add words to the list that are in some way associated with the Scout Law.

An invisible network

The gender system is a concept coined by historian Yvonne Hirdman. It may be a useful term when discussing relationships between women as a group and men as a group. The gender system is an invisible network that arranges men and women into different roles. According to Hirdman, the system is built upon two main principles. One is separation – women and men should be kept apart and masculine and feminine things should not be mixed together. The other is evaluation – the ways of doing things that men have learned, generally speaking, have higher status than the things women have learned to do. This gender system is something we all grow up with and acquire through our culture and society.¹²⁾ Women



¹² "Shortcuts to equality", National Youth Board (003) and Hirdman, Yvonne

as well as men support and maintain the gender system. Separation is a set of expectations and ideas concerning the notion that men and women should attend to different things and behave in different ways. All through our lives, we are subject to various influences from our parents and friends, from advertisements, school and work. From all directions we are encouraged to be and do that which is expected of our sex. Here are some examples of what our contemporary gender system expects of us¹³⁾:

Women:

- Interested in relations
- Judged by appearance
- Primarily occupied with the home/ the intimate sphere
- Emotional by nature
- Good at taking care of people and things
- Passive

Men:

- Interested in things
- Judged by achievements
- Primarily occupied with public life and career
- Aggressive by nature
- Good at rational thought
- Active

Separation

The dividing line between masculine and feminine is particularly evident when looking at choices of career and recreational activities. Men are clearly overrepresented in technical fields and in manufacturing industries. Women are overrepresented in health care and education.¹⁴⁾ In Sweden, free time activities among children and young people are quite rigidly separated. It is nearly exclusively boys who play ice hockey and girls who are interested in horses and theatre. This division is also found within Scouting. Leaders for young Scouts are almost exclusively

¹³ Wahlström, Kajsa (2003)

¹⁴ "Speaking of women and men." Statistics concerning gender and work. Statistics Sweden

women while the number of male leaders increases the older the Scouts become. For the older Scouts, male leaders are in the clear majority. More men are chairmen and more women are secretaries of Scout organizations. Is it possible that this division of work between male and female leaders and Scouts is even obvious when Scouts get together? Who puts up the tents? Who prepares meals, fetches wood, lights fires, washes up after meetings?

Women have lower status

Evaluation — the second principle of the gender system — is somewhat more of a problem than separation. Can it really be true that women's and girls' tasks and interests are valued lower than those of men? There are, in fact, plenty of statistics that show in very practical economic terms something we would really like to avoid seeing. In those occupations where women are in the majority, salaries are lower than in typical male occupations. Moreover, a woman will most often receive a lower salary for doing the same work as a man. The lower status of women's work can also be seen in the fact that a great deal of women's work is non-salaried and is in fact not counted as work. Likewise, women's expertise is not considered knowledge ("any woman can bake bread or sew clothes, can't they?"). When it comes to leisure activities, this principle of evaluation is clearly noticed in the fact that girls' interests receive fewer resources and are at a lower priority level than those of boys. Sports centres and ice-hockey rinks are, for the most part, sponsored by public funding, whereas the users, mostly girls, pay for most riding schools and dance and theatre activities. Researchers have pointed out that even in other types of association and club activities, more energy and money is invested in pastimes that are of interest to boys.¹⁵ One example of this is that girls more often have learned to place great value on social contacts and choose activities that focus on dialogue and discussion. This type of activity is hard to see, generates

15 Fredelius, et al. and
"From Here to Equality"

no financial support, has low status and enjoys a very small share of most organizations' budget. Both women and men put higher value on men's achievements than on women's. In a number of studies where the same text was signed with a boy's or a girl's name, the alternative with the boy's name at the bottom was judged in a more positive manner than the girl's.

Even boys suffer

The lower status that women's activities have can even be a problem for men. The man or boy who acts in a way that is associated with femininity (*devotes a lot of time to discussion, cares a lot about his appearance, exhibits his emotions*) can get into difficulty. However, it is less of a problem for girls and women to take up an interest in, or know a lot about, things that men and boys often do. "Feminine qualities" can lower the status of a man while a woman (*within certain limits*) can actually improve her standing by stepping into male territory.¹⁶⁾ At the beginning of the 20th century, when Robert Baden-Powell (*BP*) started the Scout movement, a psychologist by the name of Stanley Hall claimed that joint instruction for both girls and boys would make women masculine and men feminine. This would have serious consequences for boys insomuch as they would have to "lower themselves to the level which was consciously established for girls". Attitudes from that period are still with us, though they have become more subconscious today.

Hidden attitudes

If someone were to ask us who — women or men — are of the greatest worth, it is most certain that we would not answer that women are inferior by nature to men. But if we lift the lid a bit, we will certainly discover attitudes within ourselves that we hardly knew existed. Think about this: A little boy has a blue romper suit and a girl has a pink one. If the girl gets her playsuit dirty, she can borrow the boy's.

MY HUSBAND,
BLESS HIS
SOUL, WAS A
REAL MAN. NOT
LIKE THESE SISSIES
NOWADAYS, JUST
STANDING AROUND
PLUCKING
THEIR
EYEBROWS!





But can a boy borrow a pink one? You can sometimes hear women and girls say: I wasn't especially girlish when I was little. I was sort of a tomboy. What does this come from? Why don't we even have a word for the opposite case? A tomgirl? Why is it silly and childish to jump rope when you become a teenager when it is clearly acceptable to play basketball or soccer when you are an adult? What lies behind the fact that we always laugh more at a man dressed up like a woman than a woman playing the part of a man?

Programme ideas

Roles in advertising

Look for some of the various male and female roles that appear in magazine advertising. Examples: a career woman, a career man, father, mother, the jerk, the self-confident person, the natural type, nature lover, sex object, etc. Write these on separate sheets of paper and cut and paste suitable pictures. Are there roles that are common for both sexes? Are they identical or can you find differences? Talk about these roles. For example, think about what would happen if you changed the person in an ad to one of the opposite sex? Would the message be the same? Is it more OK to show men as jerks than women? Is the innate message the same if you show scantily clad men or scantily clad women? Why/why not?

Things to talk about

Do scouts accept and encourage all sides of every person in their group?

Do we give girls and boys the opportunity to venture outside set patterns and develop their entire personality?

How do we do this?

In what way do we give support to boys who don't want to be like other boys?

*Try this***What does this film tell us?**

Watch a good film together. Analyse the roles and behaviour of the men and women in the film. What information do we get about the personal qualities of the men and women? What function do men and women have in the story of the film? Who is the hero?

We are treated differently

In the minutes following childbirth, midwives listening to how parents use baby talk with their newborn child can most often tell what sex the child has. Adults speak in different ways with girls and boys. The first things one says to a girl is often something like: “but little darling... are you unhappy?” Boys are more often welcomed to the world with exclamations like: “well you sure are a noisy little rascal!”¹⁷⁾ A little boy who’s crying looks angry while a girl who’s crying looks unhappy or frightened. We have ideas about how girls and boys are and from these notions we understand and respond to their behaviour. Studies have been made which show that newborn girls who fall asleep on their mother’s stomach are, as a rule, left alone while boys often get a little slap on the bottom as encouragement to continue looking for his mother’s breast.¹⁸⁾ At home, at day-care, at school — and in Scouting — this different way



17 Gens, Ingemar

18 Gens, Ingemar

of being treated follows children all through the years they are growing up. One example of this is to be seen in the fact that adults often have more indulgence with disturbing and irritating behaviour if it “is consistent” with the child’s gender.¹⁹⁾ In some cases, something that adults appreciate and encourage in one sex is regarded as annoying in the other. Researchers²⁰⁾ have observed that boys who are really considerate of and sensitive to others’ needs are often regarded as lacking self-reliance and girlish (*this is more forbidden that it is for girls to be boyish*). Parents are immediately worried about their son being teased at school and attempt to tone down his behaviour. (*This behaviour would most likely have been met with total appreciation if it had been shown by a girl.*) A number of test persons were given the opportunity to watch a video film of a one-year-old playing with a jack-in-the-box. The doll figure jumps out and the child begins to cry. Some of the people in the test group were told that the child’s name was Tommy — they perceived the boy as being angry when the doll jumped out. Others were told that the child’s name was Anna. They regarded her as being frightened and upset.

Programme ideas

Many studies have shown that teachers and youth leaders have more difficulty in remembering girls than boys. Similarly, boys are often regarded as individuals to a greater extent than girls (*girls are often spoken of as “that blond girl” or “one of those in the girls’ gang”*). Ask each one in your team of leaders to reflect upon the Scouts they have in their group and to write down their names on a paper along with a few words that might describe their personality or way of acting. Then ask them how they described girls and boys. Which name did they write down first (easiest to remember)? Which Scouts were the easiest to describe? Discuss what the reasons might be.

19 Gens, Ingemar
20 Fredelius et. al.

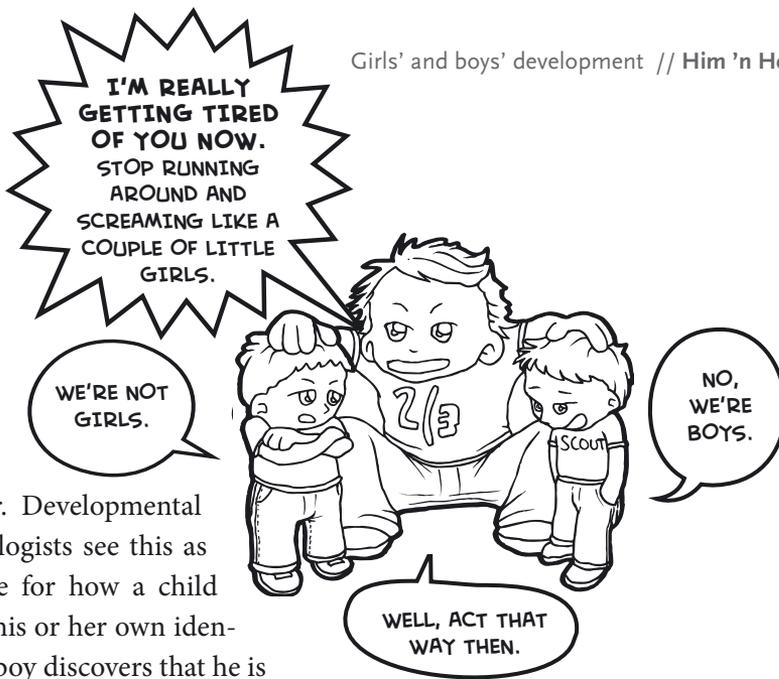
Girls' and boys' development

Every person is unique. But there are phases of development which most of us go through on the way from childhood to adulthood. For the most part, these developmental stages are the same for girls as for boys. But if you take notice of how most girls and most boys handle their situation at different ages, you can see some normal differences. And there is not much agreement as to what these differences are dependent upon. Some people speak of differences in the brain. Others emphasize such arguments as that boys' physiological development comes at a later age than girls', that girls and boys are encouraged to do different things or that the experiences of being a boy or a girl in our culture differ so greatly that our psyche and identity develop in different ways. Whichever way of explaining things you believe in, it is important to pay attention to differences when they manifest themselves. As a Scout leader we can't take it for granted that a presentation that is popular with boys will be accepted by girls, and vice versa. And there is every reason to be extra responsive to the needs and experiences of girls. Many established pedagogical and psychological truths are based upon the typical development of boys.²¹⁾

Closeness and independence

The person who is closest to a child during its first few years, in our society, is most often a woman — the child's

²¹ Fredelius, et.al.



mother. Developmental psychologists see this as decisive for how a child forms his or her own identity. A boy discovers that he is not like his mother and begins to disassociate himself from her. In a sense he is forced into this break, since independence is regarded as a masculine attribute in our culture. Early on he receives encouragement and acknowledgement for what he does and accomplishes. A girl, on the other hand, realizes that she is very much alike the most secure and important person in the whole world, she identifies with her and contact between mother and daughter usually remains strong and affectionate for many years. It is not uncommon that mothers, even though unconsciously, bind their daughters more closely to themselves than they do with sons. This is presumed to be the explanation as to why girls and boys often seek confirmation in different ways. Girls through resemblance, harmony and intimacy. Boys through difference, independence and accomplishment. These patterns are strengthened all through childhood and adolescence by the expectations of the child's surroundings concerning what is typically boy's or girl's behaviour. In this way, girls get a head start in the area of social relations, but at the price of a weaker sense of independence. Boys get a head start when it comes to taking one's place in the surrounding world, but here the price is shown in the difficulty of developing relationships.²²⁾

22 Gens, Ingemar and Fredelius, et. al.

Different ways of playing

Around the age of six, boys and girls begin to show psychological differences in the way they do things together. They often choose to play with members of their own sex. Girls tend to form a close relationship with a best friend, where secrets and trust work to hold things together. Boys get together more often in larger groups, where fellowship is centred on what they do together. Girls' play usually begins with a relation; they first decide whom they will play with, and then decide what they are going to do and how. When boys play, it is more frequently an activity that is the most important thing. One or two boys decide maybe to play football and what the rules will be — then anybody that's interested can join in and play with them. Boys' play is often connected with some sort of competition; the objective of the game is to win. For girls, playing has seldom any obvious objective. Playing for them can just as well include long conversations between various role figures and reflect social relations of different kinds.²³⁾



²³ Bjerrum Nielsen.
Harriet (1989)

Interplay and power struggle

At the age of seven or eight, many children make their first contact with Scouting. At this age, most girls are clearly focused on having a best friend whom they can mirror themselves in and try to imitate. This relation is very important for young girls' identity. By this age, most boys have already had a long period of training in being independent individualists. The games and activities girls take part in from the age of seven to twelve, just like when they were younger, revolve around relationships and the ability to understand and interact with others. Even when it comes to sports and physical games, many girls find the greatest pleasure in the contact they have with other girls. If one's best friend quits, it's not much fun any more. Boys' games at this period of life often show a character of power struggle. Achieving and preserving one's status is a significant driving force for a lot of what they do. It is important to distinguish oneself in the male group by being strong, throwing things a long way or by receiving lots of badges. One common interest among boys is to learn so many facts as possible about something peculiar or extreme (*Guinness Book of Records is popular in this respect*).²⁴

Different cultures

It is quite realistic to speak of two different cultures that boys and girls live in, and are characterized by, during a good part of their childhood. One of the ways these cultures are manifested is in how boys' and girls' companion groups are organized. Girls often get together in pairs within loosely connected groups in which there usually are a few dominant girls, but seldom one specifically clear leader. In young female groups, fairness and agreement are valuable features and it is quite usual with long discussions about what should be done and how. In many cases, girls' groups are closed units and other girls are not allowed to join straight off. In boys' groups however, anybody who wants to can take part – they take their place in the hier-

24 Bjerrum Nielsen, Harriet

archy according what they can accomplish (*for example, how well they can play football*). As opposed to many girls, boys seek contact with other boys on an individual basis. And in these groups, there is usually one leader and a clear positioning system. While girls often try to persuade one another, you hear boys giving each other orders. Typical boy and girl groups offer different experiences as well as skills in different fields.

The female group trains its members in developing personal relationships, in discussing and in how to reach agreement. Typical girls' games, like jump rope and hopscotch, offer practice in co-operation and in waiting one's turn. The male group trains boys to handle hierarchies and maintain contacts of a rather impersonal nature. Normal activities for boys, such a team sports, train skills in accepting rules and procedures as well as in competing with others.²⁵⁾

Discussion

According to the theories of developmental psychology that have been described in this text, the fact that mothers are closest to children in their earliest years plays an important role in how girls and boys build up their gender identity. Do you think that girls' and boys' attitudes and behaviour might be changed if a greater number of fathers were at home more?

Programme ideas

Take a close look at Scouts in your group. Is there a difference in how girls and boys play?

When everything changes

At the age of eleven or twelve, childhood goes into a new phase. Many girls enter puberty at this age while for boys it comes a little later on. This is a stage in life when both boys and girls become more active and intensive than previously. A 12-year-old girl is often extremely visible and audible! It is not unusual that she is seen as being somewhat rude and overbearing. She upholds the view of the world that she has formed with the help of her mother and her girl friends. Loudly and actively, she defends children and animals and objects when humanitarian values are offered for rigid rules and hierarchy. The typical 12-year-old boy can be described as a “big talker” but a “do-little”. For many boys, this increased pubertal activity is manifested in other ways than it is for girls. Adults often see him as being aggressive, noisy and boisterous. It is not uncommon that he voices a rather hostile attitude towards girls — at least when he is together with other boys. One explanation can be that girls are usually about a head taller than boys of the same age and in general more mature both intellectually and psychologically. Bragging and teasing might just be a strategy for the defence of the boy’s awakening, though tender, masculinity.²⁶⁾

When girls fall silent

The classical picture of the problematic teenager is an unruly boy who, in a cocky and noisy way, defies the rules



and standards of the adult world. But girls often behave in another manner. Somewhere around the age of thirteen, many girls grow quiet. The voice that recently resounded so loudly and clearly is stifled to a mere whisper. The open and spontaneous style is replaced by reticence, and commitment is transformed into a preoccupation with physical appearance. What has happened? One answer to this question is that it has become obvious for the girl that her understanding of the world (*the things she has trained and developed all her life*) is not what counts in real life. Not at school, not in club activities, not in the mass media. Generally speaking, it is universally the male version of reality and male understanding that makes a difference. Competition offers more advantages than teamwork, independence gives greater status than closeness, physical activity is seen as more interesting than sentiments and football is more easily marketed than jump rope! This creates an elusive feeling of isolation and uncertainty for many teenage girls.²⁷⁾

In the eyes of the public

By the age of thirteen, a girl has her eye on adult life. Her views have widened and the message she gets of femininity is not always easy to accept. That it is men, not women, who rule the world, is quite clear. Women are seen more seldom than men in the mass media, and when they do appear in newspapers or on TV, it is often as a victim of violence or as an object of beauty. (*Practically all surveys made about how often women appear in the mass media show a figure of 25-30 per cent.*) It would seem that female adulthood is attained by concealing one's real self, altering one's appearance and being noticed by men.

Young people's liberation

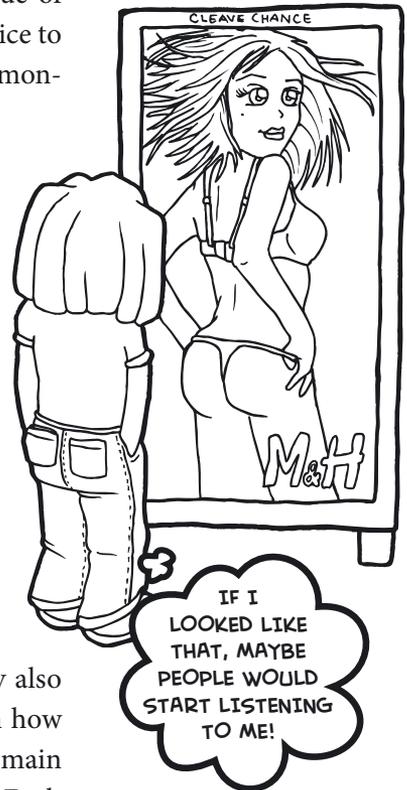
Boys and girls often have quite different starting points when it comes to freeing themselves from parents and the world of adults during this teenage period in their lives.

27 Andersson, Christina
(1994)

It is first now that many girls begin cutting the close ties they have had with their mother while boys have gone through that separation when they were very small (see page 22). And it's often said that the inclination girls have towards building relationships makes this pubertal confrontation even more upsetting. Conflicts become more personal and offensive for all concerned, something that even Scout leaders may have experienced. Many teenage girls are extremely preoccupied with boys and it is not unusual for them to allow liberation from their parents to go via a love affair. Neither is it unusual for young girls to take on a rather subservient position in a relationship with an older boy. If you see this from the girl's point of view, it isn't a threat to her own liberation — but rather proof of her independence from her parents. But it is extremely exasperating for youth leaders interested in the issue of equal opportunity for men and women. A bit of advice to adults working in the vicinity of these girls: try to demonstrate and encourage alternative ways to independence and confirmation. But avoid condemning and offending comments.²⁸⁾

A new body

Both boys and girls are very much concentrated on their bodies during this teenage period of their lives. Many are concerned about not being normal or not fitting in. Very few teenagers can avoid comparing themselves with the slender, shapely bodies of today's advertising world. Boys may be worried about not being sufficiently well-trained, but the strain on girls is even greater. Partly because their bodies go through a greater transformation, a change which also begins much earlier. But partly also because nearly all media messages to girls tell them how important their appearance is and that their body's main function is to appeal to the tastes of boys and men. Each and every teenage girl must also find a way of relating to



the contempt for the female body that is obvious in our culture. It shouts out at her from the covers of the porno magazines at the newspaper stand. And she is reminded of this disdain in reports of sexual violence and well-intentioned warnings for evening walks alone in the park. She learns to understand that her body is something more than just her own. It is a symbol and a target for forces she has no control over.²⁹⁾

Discussion

Teenage girls who go on diets, who mostly sit and whisper to each other or who enter into relationships where they subordinate themselves to boys — how can we meet them within Scouting? What roles do understanding, tolerance, influence, dialogue and good examples play when we talk with girls and boys in Scouting?

How do teenage boys and girls react when they are unhappy with their situation? How can we help them in Scouting? Do we see the quiet boys? How do we help girls not to fall silent?

Are there only a few girls who use make-up at Scout meetings? Why is that? Is nail polish permitted at camp? Can you have a Scout meeting with make-up on the agenda? Is this Scouting?

Programme ideas

The ideal body

Watch a film, even an animated cartoon, and analyse the ideal picture that is shown for male and female bodies. How do women look and how do they move their bodies? And how do men look and move around? Another alternative is to cut out pictures from magazines and paste them up on large pieces of paper.

Scouting for whom?

To what degree are Scout activities suited to the different ways girls and boys develop? By looking at young people's development and experiences as described by researchers, we can make comparisons to Scouting.

Activities and relations

In a gender study carried out by WOSM (*World Organization of the Scout Movement*)³⁰, it was shown that girls and boys in Europe join the Scouts for basically the same reasons: freedom, friends, adventure and because it's fun. When Scouts in the study were asked what they liked about Scouting, they all answered: outdoor life, learning new things and making new friends. Fitting Scouting more to the needs of girls has nothing to do with changing our activities, but rather changing our attitudes towards those activities and the culture around them. According to the Norwegian author, gender expert and professor Harriet Bjerrum Nielsen, we have to pay more attention to the division between activities and relations, to the hierarchy regarding activities and relations as well as to the underestimation of girls' competence in these activities.

Division between activities and relations

Boys prefer activities which offer them what they call an "adrenalin kick", things like sports, games and competitions. Girls emphasize that they would rather be outdoors,



³⁰ WONDER-forum's Background paper: Scouting, education and gender (2002)

active with canoeing, camping, hiking and travelling. While boys find it quite sufficient with activities and the sense of belonging to a group, most girls express a desire to develop relationships and communication within the group — not as a replacement for activities, but rather as a supplement to them.

The hierarchy between activities and relations

However, the problem is not just that girls have another approach to Scouting (*in which relations are more important than activities*), but rather that this strategy is seen as being dull and boring, not real Scouting. A Danish boy expressed this sentiment in the report in the following way: “If you don’t do big stuff, wild activities, well then it’s just not Scouting. Then there’s nothing else to do but sit indoors and tie knots. When you get right down to it, the only thing that really counts in Scouting is being strong, reckless, bold and concentrated on competition.” This order of preference for boys’ and girls’ interests could even be seen among Scout leaders. Their interests were always right in line with what boys liked, never did they coincide with what girls were attracted by. When analysing material from what groups of Scouts expected from boys or girls, it was found that successful masculine attributes were associated with being strong, tough and heroic. Successful feminine characteristics had to do with being modest and caring as well as staying in the background.

Underestimating girls’ competence in activities

It became obvious in this study that girls needed to prove themselves worthy of being Scouts. Boys fit in simply by being boys. Even if a girl is capable of participating in the same activities as boys, she has got to prove it. And when it has been established that she can too, it is rather looked upon as an exception that makes the girl “into a boy”. Girls

also felt that they didn't even get a chance to show that they were just as capable as boys, simply because of their gender. They get the easier jobs, even if they are bigger and stronger than the boys in the same Scout group.

Rivalry and hierarchic systems

Another element in Scout activities that is worth noting is competition between different groups. It fits in perfectly with boys' typical concentration on competition, achievement and status — but far from the female world of closeness and co-operation. One observation that has been made concerning many youth activities is that girls are most often less interested than boys in measuring and comparing achievements. Competitiveness in itself is not enough to create interest for girls — on the contrary; it can cause sentiments of tediousness and aversion if it is given too prominent a role. Even badges and the hierarchic division of Scout groups (*group leader, assistant group leader, secretary, etc.*) — something that young people can see as expressions of status, formality and procedure — appeal primarily to boys.

Girls preserve the pattern themselves

By interpreting the message a girl receives from the community around her, she has difficulty in believing that she can be as good as boys. A girl residing in Portugal by the name of Fatima is quoted in Harriet Bjerrum Nielsen's report: "Girls can do the same things as boys, can't they? Maybe not as good, but they certainly can do them." The girls in this study admit that they probably would have a harder time being Scout leaders. Not simply because they have less authority, but also because they feel that their choice of activities would be too "girlish". They don't make a fuss either about typical things that have to be done, like doing the dishes. Nobody likes this job, so why not do it myself? Scouts are helpful and do things for others, don't they? So why do we make such a to-do about a little thing like washing dishes?

There are several reasons. By dividing up work that needs to be done, boys can still be seen as being tough and strong simply because of the chores they do. But what does a girl demonstrate by doing the washing up? The chores are not given the same value and girls find themselves doing tasks of low status that only are noticed when they do not get done! She places herself in a lower position in relation to boys and maintains the image of girls being boring and inferior to men.

A method for measuring gender equality

The first thing you need to do in order to understand that gender division not only is out there, but even in your own mind (*it's a question of your own mental image*) is to look at the picture you have within two different areas: What do you think is normal and natural when it comes questions of gender? What do you consider to be desirable talents in the young people of your Scout group? In order to measure this, you can use a model in which you first write down the activities of the group and then judge each activity according to:

- 1 what your own preferences are,
- 2 how often you carry out the activities,
- 3 what girls in your group like or don't like,
- 4 what importance the activities have in your Scout group and
- 5 if these activities are associated culturally with one specific gender.

Look at your list. How many activities are associated with girls and how many with boys? How common are they? What status do they enjoy? Are your appraisals more in line with what girls or what boys think? Do girls or do boys fit in best in your group?

Relations and recruiting

Worth reflecting over as well is the fact that we present Scouts as an activity in which relationships are a positive by-product. In other words, it's quite the opposite of how girls get together normally, which we could see in the chapter on how children play. Generally speaking, all planned recreational activities are organized in accordance with a culture of how boys get together — with an activity as the starting point and relationships coming as a sort of spin-off. When recruiting new members, it might be important to take this into consideration.

Several Swedish youth organizations have presented suggestions as to how other methods can be used taking into consideration girls' social interaction. Go out and try to find girls where they get together and try to establish a personal contact — posters, letters and general invitations to activities and events attract primarily boys. Direct your efforts to entire groups of girls. Offer girls a chance to take part in a few group meetings so that they can get to know the others without immediately having to commit themselves and pay their membership fee. These approaches can of course be used even when recruiting boys but the important thing is not to forget that posters just may not be enough to attract as many girls as boys to a first meeting. There just may be other tactics and methods for helping young people to grow in Scouting without first presenting an activity.

When girls quit

In the Swedish Guide and Scout Association, many girls leave Scouting when they come up in their early teens. And the same pattern can be observed in most other club activities. Why is this? One theory, according to sociologist Anita Dahlgren³¹), is that identity development in girls at this particular period in life is poorly suited to the formality of club structures. To subject oneself to a set of rules and regulation and accept ready-made roles

31 Dahlgren, Anita & Dahlgren, Rune (1990)

— these are things that seldom are attractive to girls in their teenage years. Boys, on the other hand, get on well in these situations. For Scouting, we might even suspect that the great number of male leaders among older Scouts can play a role in girls' decision to leave the organisation. During this period of life, when issues of gender identity and physical development are at their peak and the need for good and sound role figures is greatest, there really aren't many female Scout leaders around.

Discussion

Do you agree that many of the aspects of Scouting that are taken up in this chapter (*badges, competition, titles/roles*) are closer to the world of boys than the world of girls? Which type of activity would you say is more characteristic of Scouting — co-operation or competition between groups?

How can the way girls have of concentrating on relations be considered a resource in Scouting activities? Have you ever experienced a conflict of interest between cultivating a good atmosphere in your Scout group and carrying out programme activities? Give some examples. What is given priority?

Of what importance is the gender of Scout leaders? Does it make any difference to Scouts if their leader is of the same or opposite sex?

Does recruitment of girls to Scouting place different demands on you than recruiting boys? Has your Scout group tried any of those methods for recruiting girls mentioned in this chapter? Do you have any other suggestions?

How do we provide for the interests of both boys and girls in our Scout programme? How can we build our operations so that they are aimed at relations rather than activities?

Programme ideas

A really great Scout

Let your Scouts work individually or divide them up in small groups. Give them a little time (*maybe one minute*) to write down all the characteristics and words they can think of to describe a “really great Scout”. (*It’s the spontaneous associations that are important here!*) Write down all the words from the various groups on a flipchart. If you previously have associated around the terms masculine/feminine (*see page 12*) — compare the results. Does the “really great Scout” remind you of any one particular sex?

Other people’s image of a Scout

Assign the following task: let your colleagues, classmates, friends who aren’t Scouts or a man on the street associate around the idea of what a Scout is and describe a Scout (*maybe by drawing a picture of a Scout!*). Is the Scout given a particular sex? What qualities are put forth in describing Scouts? Are they more masculine or feminine?

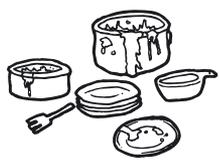
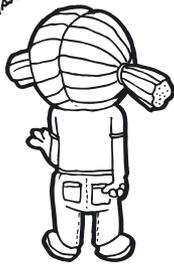
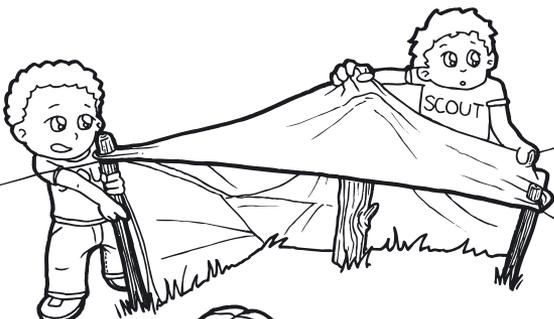
Planning the programme

Divide the group into male and female groups of four to five persons. Let them plan a program for group meetings. Assemble the large group again and compare the results; what kind of activities did the women plan? What activities did the men present? Can you see any differences? Do the activities take into account girls’ interests as well as boys’ interests?



YOU GUYS
NEED SOME
HELP?

SURE,
YOU CAN
WASH THE
DISHES.



Keep them apart?

Recreational activities with coeducational groups give rise to the following common patterns:³²⁾

Girls receive a smaller share of attention and time from their leaders. *(That's just the way things happen since they cause less disturbances and seem to get along better by themselves than boys do.)* Nice, quiet girls are often given the role of a sort of shock absorber meant to calm down the most difficult boys. *(But how does one best encourage quiet girls in their development? Who pays attention to their needs?)* The needs and interests that girls stand for are often marginalized. The ways that girls have learned to get together in companionship are often frustrated by the ways boys are. *(Girls have often learned to wait for their turn to speak, to be sensitive to the needs and wishes of others, to work towards co-operation and agreement. This is not particularly effective in meetings with boys who are used to interrupting, competing and striving for domination, status and attention.)* In the last few years, efforts have been made in various youth organizations to organize activities for boys and girls separately, primarily with the needs of girls in mind. Some groups have separate activities for their entire operations, others for only a part of them. This way of working has been tried in schools, at youth centres and in various different recreational organizations. A few Scout groups within the Swedish Guide and Scout Association

32 Wahlström, Kajsa, Fredelius, et.al. and Bjerrum Nielsen, Harriet

have also adopted this method. The question is what this approach is all about. Is it a step backwards to the time prior to the 70's when most of Girl Scout and Boy Scout activities were merged together in the name of equality? No, this is not the idea, in any case.

A means — not an end

When "single gender" groups are used in work for equality of opportunity today, the purposes and points of departure are quite different. Previously, the question dealt, at least to a certain degree, with bringing up "real women" and "real men". Today it is a question of finding practical ways of changing deep-rooted gender roles and the uneven balance of power between girls and boys. This division is consequently a means to an end, not an end in itself. The goal is to make it possible for boys and girls to be able to meet as equals when they eventually meet. The primary objective is to give girls the same possibilities as boys to develop and be noticed. The idea behind this step is the harsh reality of coeducational groups: boys almost entirely dominate such groups at the expense of female members. Establishing groups just for girls might just be a way of supporting and confirming them. In this kind of group, you can bring things to the foreground that girls often are good at and make room for things girls often are interested in. In addition, girls can, in a more relaxed setting, try new things that boys are usually more trained in doing: making room for themselves, speaking in front of others, or chopping wood. Is it even possible that single gender groups for boys can be an advantage in working for equality of opportunity? Maybe so, but not for the same reason — boys normally don't have any difficulty in asserting themselves in the presence of girls. Here we need to concentrate on things that boys often "are deprived of" and receive far too little training in today: giving words to feelings, creating relationships, seeing the needs of others, carrying on conversations, using physical contact as a means of com-

munication. These are talents that can help them to grow to be complete individuals, dare to venture outside of the typical male role and grow to be adults on an equal footing with other adults of the opposite sex. It can be good for boys to try doing typical “girls stuff” without having girls around to watch and make fun of their clumsiness.

Understanding gives strength

In groups of girls, it is also possible to work with boosting young women’s insight into their own situation; that they really are treated unjustly in school, in Scouting and in society at large. Awareness of this fact can give strength and self-esteem. It is first when they have reached this understanding that they can demand justice. And it is first then that they can see that failures and uncertainty are not necessarily dependent upon personal peculiarities and shortcomings. Moreover, they can begin to understand the fact that boys’ positions at the different levels of Scouting are not necessarily due to their superior capacity. They have simply been given other advantages. When Scouts reach the age of 13-15 years, it can be well justified to consider separate activities for boys and girls. At this period in their lives, there are often great differences in the stage of development reached by girls and boys and it can be difficult to generate interest in the same things. This is also a stage when both girls and boys take on somewhat unnatural roles when meeting members of the opposite sex. Being around members of only the same sex can give a little breathing space. Those who recommend this method point out that, on the whole, working with “single gender” groups demands a conscious and well thought-out approach. Otherwise it is easy to reinforce gender roles instead of changing them, strengthen the view that girls are one way and boys another. In other words, it is necessary to know what you want to attain and in which direction you want to guide girls and boys. However, overcoming injustices that girls experience by working



with special female activities also has its risks. It is easy to be regarded as something we do on the side (*as if girls represented a special interest and not half of all children and young people*) and not as an equal and normal part of ordinary operations.

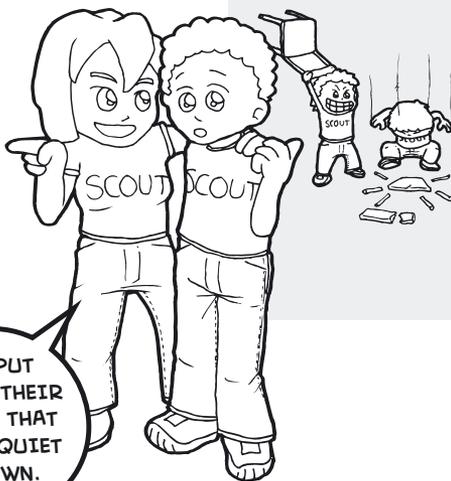
Discussion

Do you think it is a good idea to divide Scouts up in "single gender" groups? What advantages and disadvantages can you see? In coeducational groups, it is often boys you hear most – their usual ways of communicating and behaving dominate the group entirely. What consequences can this have when Scouts themselves, in compliance with our Scout programme, are supposed to have an influence over the program for the year?

How can Scout leaders prevent the programme from being mainly adapted to the needs and wishes of the boys in the group?

Sometimes quiet girls are placed next to unruly boys in order to try to quiet them down. What do you think girls get out of this?

WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO WITH BILLY AND JOE?



LET'S PUT JUDY IN THEIR PATROL. THAT SHOULD QUIET 'EM DOWN.

Programme ideas

Try to analyze what goes on during a Scout meeting (*without telling anyone what you are doing!*). How much of the leader's time and attention is spent on boys? How much on girls?

Few women in male structures

What's the situation like for older girls and women in Scouts? Why are they fewer than boys and men? And why are there especially few in decision-making positions? The pattern is the same in all club and association work, as it is in trade unions, in politics and in trade and industry.³³ Nowhere can you find a stated policy declaring that men should have greater influence. That's just the way things are. Many experts speak about invisible obstacles that hold women back, a phenomenon sometimes called Methods of Domination (*see page 46*).

Hard to find women

The fact that women and girls seldom wind up in positions of responsibility could be because nominating committees have excessively narrow contact networks and just don't see women. The ones they ask are the ones they hear and see — and that is most often men. A common comment is even that it is hard to find women who are willing to stand for election and accept a position of responsibility. The ones they ask always decline. Are women less interested in exercising their influence than men? Hardly! Could it be because men, who most often sit on election committees, misunderstand women's ways of expressing themselves? Do they see women as being doubtful when in reality they are attempting to open a dialogue? Many women concentrate on what they don't know, but think they need to

³³ Swedish Association of Local Authorities, 1998

know, in order to tackle a job successfully. Therefore they put off taking such a responsibility, while men more often reason: "that's something I can learn if I get a little time."³⁴ And it can also be important how the question is posed to a woman. Is the question put "Would you like to be a member of the board?" or rather "We want you on our board because you are competent for the job and we need you"? Girls take it seldom for granted that they are seen as being competent and good for the job.

In some cases, women's hesitancy when faced with formal leadership and positions of trust is connected to one of the negative sides of equality and egalitarianism of female culture. Eva Sternberg, a gender consultant, has pointed to this problem and calls it the "cheese-slicer principle" — that all women should be at the same level always: to rise above the others is taboo! If someone does, the others are there in an instant and start "slicing" until balance is restored. Many women and girls are therefore very careful not to find themselves in a situation in which their friends might see them as being vain or "superior" to the others.

Male patterns

But this does not explain everything. There might be something in the function itself, for example on the district board, that alienates many girls. The prevalent form of democracy within associations is without a doubt a traditionally male structure. It has been established by and for men, and many women have difficulties making themselves comfortable within its boundaries. Hierarchy, procedures and formal impersonal contacts distinguish themselves radically from the way girls and women have been brought up with co-operation and agreement as guide-words. Expected behaviour at traditional board meetings is also farther from girls' ways of doing things than it is from boys' ways. Here you must make room for yourself, assert your own opinions and expect that others will listen

³⁴ Dahlgren, Anita & Dahlgren, Rune

to you. Behaving as many women do —playing down their own personal qualities, seeking mutual understanding and aiming at good atmosphere in the group — is not as “marketable”. A person trained in a typical female culture can of course learn to handle hierarchies and formal meetings, but the adjustment is greater than for a person formed in a male culture.

Quotas

Allocation of quotas according to sex is a controversial method for establishing a more equal distribution in committees and decision-making positions. Quota-based admission is applied in other situations; allocations are made to persons according to age, region, country, etc. Why not for women?

Common arguments against quotas:

It should be competence, not gender, that determines who is to be chosen to a particular position. If quota-based admission is applied, women in positions of responsibility will be mistrusted — they will be seen as having obtained their position through positive discrimination.

Common arguments for quotas:

Even without a quota system, a method of selection prevails in which consideration is taken to (male) gender and not only to competence. This is a concealed system and is of great damage to democracy. A quota system, at least for a transitional period, is a way of taking control of the situation and breaking old patterns.

Methods of domination

Why is it that girls speak out to a lesser degree than boys at meetings and that women have less formal influence than men? What keeps girls from taking what they need in these situations? A Norwegian politician and gender researcher, Berit Ås,³⁵⁾ has made some of the obstacles

35 Swedish National Youth Board, “Short cuts to equality” and Växjö Kommun, Two films, “Methods of Domination” and “Who do you think you are?”

visible simply by giving them names. She speaks of methods of domination which, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously, are used to make other people “toe the line”. In many cases, but not necessarily always, these methods are used by men against women.

1. Making you invisible — When no one takes your opinions and contributions into consideration. When what you say is not written down in the minutes of the meeting and no one seems to listen to you. Maybe the others flip through their papers while you are speaking, or sit and whisper to each other. Making someone invisible is a way of reducing that person’s influence or shutting him/her out. It is often difficult to recognize this act of making someone invisible since it often takes place via body language.

2. Making fun of you — When your efforts, your anger or your commitment are derided and degraded, or when others make fun at your expense. The person exploiting this technique gets those who are laughing over on his side. The person who is being made the subject of this ridicule, or even someone who reacts in his/her defence, is regarded as being boring, lacking humour. One example of this is when women discussing an issue are “jokingly” compared to squawking hens. Or when someone makes fun of women’s struggle for equality.

3. Withholding information — When someone “forgets” to provide you with the information necessary to deal correctly with an issue or follow a discussion. Meeting procedures can be a way of withholding information. The meeting can be arranged so that you don’t dare ask questions. Expressing the idea that it is unimportant to measure equality can also be an illustration of withholding of information concerning the different situations of girls and boys. Another example can be seen when men make decisions in the sauna!

4. Dual punishment — No matter what you do, it's wrong. If you go to meetings, you're a bad parent who doesn't help the kids with homework. If you stay at home you are uninterested and disloyal. Being subject to this kind of harassment makes you quite powerless, since whatever you do will be wrong. We tell girls to speak up and make themselves visible and at the same time admonish them not to be too talkative or to take up too much space.

5. Creating shame and guilt — This is often an effect of a person being systematically subjected to the other controlling techniques. You can, for example, be accused of buttering up to somebody simply because you are interested or be compared to a screeching hen when you want to express your opinion.

The best way to protect yourself from methods of domination is, according to Berit Ås, to recognize them and equip yourself with knowledge about power and gender. You can then meet them and avoid feeling that faults lie within you. If several others in a group are familiar with these methods, you can help one another detect when they are being used. One finger up when method number one is used, two fingers for number two, etc.

Discussion

Do you recognize the five methods of domination? Can you remember any situation in which you have been subjected to any of them? Or subjected someone else to them?

What do you think we can do to get more women into decision-making bodies?

Is admission by quota a good way of increasing equality? What advantages and risks can you see? Why does a quota system based on gender arouse more indignant feelings than a quota system based on geography or age?

Circles, networks and triangles

There is nothing at all that says that the traditional male way of organising a club or an association is the only way, or the best way. There are different types of organisational models and some of them resemble women's typical feeling of solidarity more than others. Two examples of these are the circle and the network, which distinguish themselves from the hierarchical triangle. In the circle, all people involved are on the same level, like Knights seated at the Round Table. Nobody can sit on the seat of honour on the short side of the table. The organization as a whole is a network of relations and the bigger it gets — the more circles there are — all the more the organization grows together. In the circle organization, contacts between individuals are strengthened, and one often says that the way in which things are done is valued equally as much as the final result. Leadership in a network or circle organisation is found in the middle of the organization, not on top. Leadership power is rooted in relations between individuals round about, not in the distance to them. In contrast to the circle organization, relationships between people involved in the hierarchical triangle organization are characterized by differences of power. This organizational form exhibits more of traditional male patterns. Information



flows upwards through established channels. The leader sits at the top and it is through access to information that others have cultivated that he or she establishes his/her power. An advantage of the circle model is that it gives strength in times of innovation and change. The triangle model has its advantage when it comes to quick decisions. In both models, however, individuals can end up on the outside. In the circle one can land on the periphery and in the triangle at the bottom. The two models can also be employed both for democratic decisions and for control. The important thing is to see when one of the models is best for a particular situation.

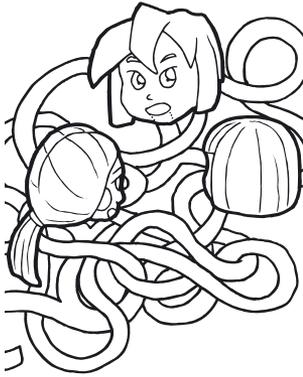
Let more people speak out!

There may not be any organizational forms for meetings that are specifically suited to women or to men. But there are different ways of speaking, and these can be more or less consistent with the ways women and men are brought up. A number of clubs and associations have pointed out that traditional meetings in which members assemble in a large group and each individual asks permission to speak is a form that puts women at a disadvantage. They are pressed out of discussions by men and in general speak considerably less. Other forms have proved to be more advantageous for both women and men who wish to express themselves on their own terms. By using different forms for meetings, more individuals can speak out and express themselves. A few such meeting forms have been suggested by the National Council of Swedish Youth (LSU): discussions and work in small groups; round-table talks where each and every person in the group can say what they want without being interrupted; coffee breaks. Many people have less difficulty saying what they have on their mind in more informal situations, often outside of the real meeting. Therefore it might be wise to make decisions first after a coffee break, or maybe take up some issues after coffee break even if the agenda has been exta-

blished in advance. A coffee break in itself can be a meeting. Something that we in the Swedish Guide and Scout Association have used at our annual meetings for the past few years is what we call Forum for Influence. This is a method that benefits women (*and even young and inexperienced speakers as well*).

Different ways of discussing

Discussion is an absolute necessity in a democratic organization. But various discussions look different have different objectives. Women and girls have often learned other ways of discussing than what you can hear in the (*male dominated*) public debate. Women's manner of arguing a point has lower status than the traditional male way. But both have their advantages. If both are respected as being equal in importance, there will be more room for all and more people can feel at home, and stay on in democratic associations. The dominating style of discussion, practiced by many men, is characterized by a clear structure. One thing is dealt with at a time. This type of discussion can easily become a display in rationality and eloquence and often the idea is to give prominence to one person's opinion at the expense of another. The whole point with discussing an issue is the result: to come to a decision. The idea behind women's and girls' discussions, on the other hand, is to paint so complete a picture as possible of a problem. Personal experiences, sentiments and side issues may be weaved into the discussion. They explore, make reflections and test various points of view in an attempt to understand each other's arguments. This type of discussion has seldom to do with who is right or wrong — rather with arriving at some sort of agreement. Sometimes the discussion can take a number of turns before it touches down and the same issues may be taken up several times. For someone used to the traditional male way of discussing, this can appear ineffective, irrational and confusing. But then, they miss the fact that in this way of arguing, it



is the process itself that is important. The objective is to investigate the issue from all sides, test all possible viewpoints and see to it that all involved get a chance to try to find one's bearings. Which in turn can form the basis of a deeply rooted decision.

Roads to decisions

Even decision-making can take on different forms. The traditional method is a majority decision. Someone presents a motion and if the majority supports it, for example in an open or closed voting, it will be accepted. Then it has to be taken back to receive support on the grass-roots level. But if a large number of people feel that their views have been disregarded, the decision may be difficult to carry out. Another way of reaching a decision is to try to reach a consensus first and then make the decision. In many cases, girls and women feel more at home with this way of coming to agreement; it has often been used among girls' groups of friends. First finding out what the others want, then trying to come to an agreement, and finally making a decision — all this can make the road to a decision a long one. But when you get there at last, many feel that they have taken part in the decision-making and it will be easier to implement.

Discussion

What happens when women's and men's different ways of discussing issues "meet"? A hierarchical triangle or network/circle — which of these organizational types do we have in Scouting? What does it look like in your district and in your group?

Has your district or your group tried any alternative forms for meetings? Why or why not? What have you done? How did it work?

Can you think of other forms for meetings that can strengthen democracy and increase involvement?

Different kinds of leadership

Why are there no books written about male leadership? Maybe it is because the leader, through patterns that have been around for a long time, is naturally a man. Role models for what we, in everyday speech, mean by leadership and leadership qualities are most often male dominated areas such as the military, politics and sports. The approaches and qualities that women traditionally have developed are seldom mentioned in terms of leadership. The experience obtained, for example, from leading and organizing work in a family and taking the main responsibility for child rearing is not necessarily seen as representative of leadership competence. Many women and girls have the know-how and a way of thinking that could serve as a real asset in the leadership of others (for example, in their Scout group or Scout district). And neither they, nor the world around them, have ever given this a second thought!

Women and girls are often accustomed to:

- Directing their work according to their own needs
- Concentrating on relations instead of achievements
- Working with a large number of interlacing tasks
- Taking responsibility for a totality and not just a part of an issue

Men and boys, however, are most often used to:

- Adapting their needs to their work
- Concentrating on achievement rather than on relations
- Working with one task at a time
- Taking responsibility for a part of a question

Women and girls with leadership duties do not necessarily have to handle them differently than men. Even a woman can be a leader who follows common or traditional male norms, and even a man can break with these norms. But women's experiences are different from men's, and researchers and organizational consultants have observed that female leadership — more often and to a greater degree than men's — is characterized by:

Caring leadership: A principle for caring about others and placing the individual at the centre of attention.

Personality: Willingness to share a part of oneself and one's experiences with others.

Flexibility: Adapting work to the situation at hand as well as to individuals' needs and outlook.

Inquisitiveness: Being unafraid of asking questions and seeking new knowledge (which is sometimes interpreted as uncertainty).

Empathy and understanding: The ability to become involved in another person's situation.

When looking for a new chairman, board member or Scout leader it is easy to try to find someone who resembles the previous one.³⁶⁾ But it's important to remember that leadership can appear in many different forms.

Shared leadership

In a national youth project entitled "Making girls stronger in club and association work",³⁷⁾ it was shown that girls are more than willing to be informal leaders, but avoid explicit leadership roles. Leadership among girls builds as much on flexibility as it does on directing. Leaders are willing

³⁶ Marklund & Snickare

³⁷ Swedish National Board of Youth, "Fair is fair" and Petra Ulmanen, (1995)

to follow the group just as much as the group follows its leader. It is a more flexible, but less visible and obvious, form of leadership than what boys practice. When the girls in the project were given the opportunity to choose, they chose working along with another girl as a leader duo. In that way, they didn't have to leave the companionship and relations of the group to stand outside alone. They could also complement each other if they were good at doing different things. Some of the advantages of shared leadership that were emphasized in the project were the fact that the amount of work for each person is less strenuous, setbacks are easier to take together and that it is easier to get support for ideas in the group. One disadvantage is the risk that problems fall between two stools and that nobody takes overall responsibility for the entire operation. Another variation of shared leadership is rotating leadership. Here you take turns at being the leader, one person takes responsibility for organizing one meeting, and another takes the next one.

Discussion

“Good leadership is being able to reach consensus in a group, to listen and take social responsibility”. This was the view of the girls who took part in the Youth Board project “Making girls stronger in club and association work”. Do you think there are differences in the ways men and women want to be lead?

Reflect over the concept “listening and supportive leadership”; how is this idea expressed by women, by men? Are there any differences or resemblances?

Programme ideas

Prominent leaders

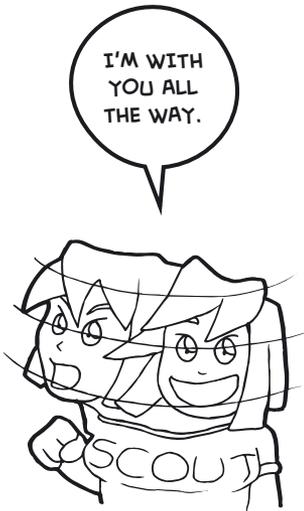
Name several leaders in your society that everybody in the group recognizes. How do you regard their leadership style? How does this correspond with what the above text

says about male and female leadership? How many men women are there on the list?

A leader's good and bad points

Divide up the Scouts in small groups. Ask each group to write down, in just a few minutes, a list of qualities that are good in a leader and qualities that are bad in a leader. If you previously have worked with questions concerning male and female qualities, compare the lists. Are there any resemblances between how a good leader is described and how a man or woman is described? If you are working just with boys or just with girls, can you see any differences in how males and females think about leadership?

What do you really mean?



Men and women have learned different approaches for communicating with others. Many women, for example, use language to attain a spirit of community and agreement while men more often seek attention and status through what they say. These varying styles of communication often lead to misunderstanding and conflicts when men and women converse at home, on the job and during Scout activities.³⁸⁾ During a meeting, for example, women can take up issues or present suggestions as questions. “Have you given any thought to how we can solve the cooking problem? Do you think it would be a good idea to sell ice-cream at camp?” The objective here is to encourage dialogue and open up for joint discussions with the others, and that’s the way women generally interpret the questions. But men often misinterpret this interrogative style. They see it as a sign of uncertainty, or that they are being asked to make a decision or solve some sort of problem for the women. When men present their solutions or decisions, women can sense that they are being brushed aside or completely disregarded. And how many times hasn’t a woman experienced how a man introduces the same proposal that she, only a few minutes earlier, had presented? But he takes it up as his own idea since, when she presented it, he didn’t understand that it was a proposal.

38 Tannen, Deborah (1990)

Everyday language

How do you sound when you know what you're talking about? Men frequently use words and expressions that in themselves send messages of knowledge and competence. Women, who more often desire to create feelings of closeness and play down the differences between themselves and those who are listening, make use of more everyday language. More often than men, women draw examples from their own personal experience instead of referring to abstract models. Moreover, they check up to see that the others are with them by using certain questions and expressions like: "Isn't that right? Do you understand?" Many men, and women as well, perceive a "woman's way" of expressing things as being less substantiated and less important than things said in a "man's way". Here are a few differences between men's and women's way of conversing.³⁹⁾

Women:

- Talk about people
- Keep public speaking short
- Interrupt infrequently
- Add new ideas to subjects that have already been taken up
- Ask lots of questions; expose their lack of knowledge and their curiosity
- Frequently use subjective expressions, like "I feel that Scouting would be good for a lot of children."
- Speak well of others recurrently

Men:

- Talk about things
- Compete for the right to speak and speak at length
- Interrupt often
- Take initiative to new topics of conversation
- Seldom ask questions, avoid showing lack of knowledge
- Use more objective expressions like "Scouting promotes personal development."
- Rarely speak well of others.

Discussion

Can you think of any situation where misunderstanding and conflicts between persons of the opposite sex may have been caused by different styles of communication? How can these misunderstandings be avoided? Should any of them change their ways? What should we think about when communicating with people of the opposite sex?

Programme ideas

Make a little study of discussions that take place during one of your Scout meetings (*without revealing your motive*). Which people take the floor most often? Who talks the longest? Who speaks about what? Do you agree with what has been said about the discussion styles of the two sexes? Another suggestion is for the group to watch a debate programme or talk show with the participants of both sexes.

Male and female in the history of Scouting

Robert Baden-Powell, BP, the founder of Scouting, was a military general and built up the Scout movement with the military as a model. From the beginning, he directed his attentions exclusively to boys and a clear objective with Scouting was training in manliness. This goal reflected the anxiety in British society of that period for male degeneration. BP was troubled by the decrease in power of the British Empire and considered insufficient masculinity of British men to be a part of the cause. Only by improving the quality of manliness, both physically and spiritually, could the nation be saved. Duty, loyalty, sacrifice, courage, honour and allegiance were central concepts in the shaping of male character. And that's the way it was in the Scout movement. Values stated in the Scout Law and Promise deal with finding one's place in a group. Six of the original laws had to do with duty, allegiance and loyalty. Scouting could thus be seen as a place to make feeble boys into real men. In several instances, BP describes Scouting as standing in contrast to womanhood. In early editions of "Scouting for Boys", he writes the following: "Every boy ought to learn how to shoot and to obey orders, else he is no more good when war breaks out than an old woman, and merely gets killed like a squealing rabbit, being unable to defend himself" BP even warned teenage⁴⁰ boys for sentimentality and "girliness", which could threaten male camaraderie.

40 Jeal, T. (1989)

Scouting for girls

But it didn't take long for Scouting to get started for girls. It came to Sweden in 1910 and the first Swedish Girl Scout Association was founded in 1913, one year after the Boy Scouts Association. In some countries, England for one, there were certain restrictions in Girl Guide activities so that young girls could be guided into a more feminine role.

Internationally, there are still two different organizations — WAGGGS (*World association of girl guides and girl Scouts - a worldwide organization primarily for girls*) and WOSM (*World organization of the Scout movement - a worldwide organization primarily for boys*). Through a separate female organization, Scouting became a significant arena for training girls in organizational skills and leadership. The division of Scouting into separate organizations made it also possible for boys to be given training in traditional female tasks such as washing up, housecleaning and cooking. Today, WOSM offers Scouting both for boys and girls while WAGGGS offers Scouting for girls and for boys from a certain age. It is somewhat different in different countries. Within both WOSM and WAGGGS, questions of gender and relations between the sexes have been brought more and more to the surface during the past few years. Part of the work of both organizations has been aimed at increasing awareness of the psychological aspect of gender identity and its relation to socially generated sex roles. One important message from several international seminars has been that Scout leaders must acknowledge and accept every individual's gender identity— but be careful not to allow gender roles to limit and lessen the importance of the individual.

Equality of the sexes

Prior to the WOSM world conference in Durban in 1999, a policy document concerning women and men in the Scout movement was sent out to delegates.⁴¹ In this document, it was pointed out that, even if WOSM is open for

WOSM and WAGGGS

Across the world, there are over 28 million Scouts (members of WOSM) and slightly more than 8 million Guides (members of WAGGGS).

41 WOSM (1999)

both sexes, it does not automatically mean that activities within the organization are just as well adapted for girls as for boys. Nor does it mean that women and men, both adults and young people, who work for the movement necessarily work together on the same terms. In a strategy paper from 2002,⁴²⁾ they continue: “In most of our organizations, Scouting has evolved from a male organization. Even if girls and women have been members for many years, too little consideration has been given to their needs, their programmes, their leadership possibilities and to structures that allow girls and women take full part in our movement. This is often noticeable in the membership statistics from the national Scout organizations.” In reference to coeducational groups, the WOSM policy document from Durban concludes that it isn’t satisfactory simply to put boys and girls together and let them do the same things. Clearly defined methods and objectives are essential if we are really going to meet both sexes. These methods must aim at equal development of males and females and show regard for every individual’s gender identity. The programme in coeducational groups shall comply both with girls’ and boys’ interest and show respect for their individual desires and ways of developing. The principle of rights and opportunities for both sexes — within Scouting and in society as a whole — should, according to this policy document, be emphasized in all member organizations’ Scout programmes. No matter if the Scouting activities in question are coeducational or limited to one gender.

42 WOSM (2002)

Discussion

One objective of the Scout movement at its very beginning was to strengthen the male role in society and make boys into real men. Does this heritage have any meaning for us today? Has the Scout movement come to terms with it and can we discuss it? Is this necessary?

Can Scouting today — in a completely different society — take on the task of helping boys and girls to form their own identities as men and women?

What do things look like where you are Scout leader? Do you do any work with issues of equality of the sexes? How can it be done more actively?

Do a little investigating in your group. How many boys and girls are there in different positions in your group?

We have a responsibility!

Scouting is an active organization even in countries where there is a highly tangible and brutal discrimination of girls and women. The idea behind Scouting for girls in these countries is often improving the lot of girls in a practical and resolute way (for example through information on sexual matters or by offering a chance to attend school). Members of the Swedish Guide and Scout Association live in a country where we have come a long way on the road towards equality of the sexes. Can we, in our situation, help girls and women who suffer from discrimination in other countries? Sweden's Girl Scout Association was a part of the Women's Movement and WAGGGS is the world's largest organization for young women. Scouts now have a unique opportunity to take a leading position once again in promoting social development and demonstrating how gender equality can be a foundation for our operations! Reading books about equality of opportunity between women and men is like trying on a new pair of glasses. Suddenly you see the world in a new way. You discover things you have never seen before (or wanted to see) and uncover new possibilities for change. So, with HIM'nHER in your backpack — and in the back of your mind — get out there and change the world!

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Do you have questions about gender equality, the book or how to work with the issue?

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