

IT'S A wo**MAN'S** JOB

Exploring creativity and gender



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Abstract

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The under-representation of women in the creative industries is argued to represent gender inequality and has in many cases been partly attributed to creativity and masculinity being interconnected as one. In order to increase knowledge of the embeddedness of this phenomenon, this master's thesis explores how understandings of creativity are constructed and the ways in which gender intersects with these understandings from the perspective of students. Additionally, the aim is to examine how these understandings interact with their career prospects and ambitions.

Existing literature on gender identity in creativity are often situated in the industry. The implication is limited knowledge on the grasp of the phenomenon of masculine creativity and its effects on the formation of creativity understandings. This study addresses creativity and gender as discursive phenomena and is based on five semi-structured interviews of film students in the film director programme at the National Film School of Denmark, five secondary interviews of established Danish film directors, and three reports from the Danish Film Institute's task force groups for gender diversity.

The master's thesis argues that gender is especially important due to creativity understandings that emphasise a personal voice. It is observed that character traits within creativity are constructed as non-feminine and the study suggests gender inequality in creative output through feminist essentialism and standpoint theory. Overall, the study points to a lack of gender awareness amongst students which limits the scope of actions. The expected outcome is thus a re-production of gender roles and stereotypes. The research's implications seek to contribute to the dialogue regarding creativity understandings and gender identity in the creative industries and highlight the importance of consciousness of gender.

Definitions of key terms

Creativity: The reader should note that creativity, in the context of this research, represents creativity at the highest level and in relation to a specific sector of production. Creativity can be seen as a general human capability that in minor or major degree can apply to all aspects of life. For example, you can be creative when arranging a birthday party or when cooking a meal. It is therefore stressed that creativity as a term in this study moves beyond general creativity and refers to high-level creativity.

Creative excellence: Creative excellence is a term introduced in this study that represents an ideal in relations to the specific area of production in creative work. Creative excellence includes aspects of creativity that goes further of individual creativity and also addresses the following: 'The creative product' (assessment criteria for creativity); 'Careers' (those who succeed in creativity); and 'Observers' (gatekeepers those who decide creativity).

Creative industries: Defined as "those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property" and is recognised to include the following: 1) Advertising and marketing, 2) Architecture, 3) Crafts, 4) Design: product, graphic and fashion design, 5) Film, TV, video, radio and photography, 6) IT, software and computer services, 7) Publishing, 8) Museums, galleries and libraries, and 9) Music, performing and visual arts (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2001).

Gatekeepers: "Individuals at institutions who make the decisions to present or deny information from audiences" and who controls the access to different 'gates', e.g. careers or academic admissions (Sullivan, 2009: 216). In regards to mass media, gatekeepers are connected to agenda setting i.e. influence the topics in public agenda (McCombs & Shaw, 1976).

Gendering: The process wherein experience and/or prejudices are assigned to a specific sex that reflects an embedded substructure of gender differences and/or stereotypical gender roles (Acker, 1990).

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Introduction

“Creativity, particularly at the highest level, is closely related to gender; almost without exception, genius is found only in males (for whatever reason!)”

– Hans Eysenck (1995)
Psychologist and creativity researcher

This master's thesis examines the relationship between creativity and gender amongst students in the film director programme at the National Film School of Denmark, and seeks to contribute to a dialogue regarding creativity understandings and gender identity in the creative industries.

The last decade has seen an increase in studies that address gender identity and gender representation in the creative industries due to a global under-representation of women in key creative roles (Conor, Gill & Taylor, 2015; Jones & Pringle, 2015; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2012; Taylor & Littleton, 2012). Overall, studies indicate that there is a gendered nature to creativity that can be seen as a result of a long history of creativity and the creative genius being a male preserve (Eisler, Donnelly & Montuori, 2016).

Within the creative industries is the film industry. The male dominance attached to this field is exemplified by a Google search on 'film director' where mostly images of men pop up. IMDb's¹ list of the most influential directors in film history presents 511 film directors – amongst these there are only fourteen women. Gender diversity in the Danish film industry has recently been a much-discussed topic at the Danish Film Institute and in the Danish medias. The concern is especially focused on film directors. Not only is there a very low representation of Danish female directors, the development is also going the wrong way. Since 2004 the number of female directors has dropped by 50% (DFI, 2016b). In the similar time frame of 2002-2015, almost equally as many males as females graduated from the director programme at the National Film School of Denmark, which means that the female students in many cases did not pursue or achieve a career in filmmaking post graduating. This fact raises questions as to whether the suggested masculine preserve of creativity is already modulating before the meeting with the industry.

¹ IMDb is a popular source for films and TV content. The website offers a searchable database of more than 185 million data items including more than 3.5 million films (www.imdb.com).

The heritage of creativity being connected to males is arguably reproduced in the creative industries by the general lack of diversity, but is this heritage also represented in how students in their formation years understand creativity?

The research's aim is thus to increase knowledge of how gender identity interacts with students' understandings of creativity and whether this is reflected in career prospects and ambitions.

Statement of problem

Research on gender differences in creativity that compared creativity test scores, creative achievements and self-reported creativity between males and females does not provide available and/or consistent evidence on innate gender differences (e.g. Proudfoot, Kay & Zoval, 2015; Eisler & Montuori, 2007; Baer, 2012; Kogan, 1974). This indicates that notions of masculinist creativity exist in cultural and societal understandings. I thus propose taking a discursive approach to creativity and gender based on the consideration that any gender differences in creativity exist as a social construction. In order to understand how creativity interacts with gender, there is an interest in exploring how creativity is discursively constructed and the values and expectations attached to it and therefore investigate this from the perspective of students, who are believed to have language that reflects understandings beyond the industry.

Research questions

The above perspectives lead me to the following research questions:

- *How do students construct their understandings of creativity?*
- *What is the relationship between their understandings of gender identity and creativity?*
- *How do these understandings interact with their career prospects and ambitions?*

Research method

The theoretical framework will address the film industry as embedded in the creative industries through a contextualisation but the empirical focus will be limited to the particular industry and the specific job role of film director. The study is situated in Denmark and will investigate students in the film director programme at the National Film School of Denmark. I plan to answer my research questions through a qualitative research approach where text (interviews and reports) is used as data. The research design is placed around a post-structuralist discourse framework.

Significance of study

While there is considerable research literature on work segregation by gender (e.g. Bradley, 1989; Blackburn et al., 2001; Hakim, 1979) and literature that criticises the basis of gender identity (e.g. Butler, 1990), issues surrounding gender identity and the core understanding of creativity are relatively underexplored. While research has addressed understandings of gender and the issues attached as embedded in the industry, there is not substantial research on the impacts and effects on students i.e. the future labour pool of the industry. If there is evidence of a societal structural view that associates masculinity to creativity, it is considered beneficial to investigate understandings of creativity beyond industry practices in order to identify the embeddedness of the phenomenon.

Theoretical perspective

My core theoretical understanding of creativity draws on Teresa M. Amabile's (1982/1983) assumption of creativity as situational and occurring within a complex social context in which everyone has the potential to be creative. The emphasis on creativity as socially defined also serves as the argument for why a discursive approach has been adapted in this study. The understanding of sex and gender is achieved through poststructuralist and postmodern feminist theories that follows Judith Butler's (1990/1999) claim of gender as socially constructed. This implies that the term 'sex' is understood as the biological differences (i.e. reproductive organs) between males and females. 'Gender' is understood as what societies make of sexual differences and refers to notions of masculinity and femininity socially assigned to men and women. This

should, however, not be confused with gender identity which is subjective and means that a person can understand themselves as man or woman or both and either despite of their biologically assigned sex (Anderson, 2015).

Delimitations

The study limits itself to not exhaust theoretical approaches to creativity that is not considered relevant in the context of the creative industries and the empirical object. For example, I will not be using the many tools available to assess the creative abilities of an individual (e.g. Guilford, 1970). Rather, creativity is assumed based the study's object being embedded in a creative field. Studies of gender often pay a great deal of attention to maternity and the childcare responsibilities attached to females. This perspective will not be included in the theoretical exploration due the assumption that students are not yet concerned with this aspect of their career to a substantial degree that will bring value to the research. In the construction of gender, many theories argue for different patterns between societies, social classes, ethnicity etc. While I acknowledge the importance of this, I limit the focus to general concepts within scope of the study.

Empirical object

The following chapter will introduce the reader to the current gender representation in Danish films. Secondly, there will be a brief overview of the film industry in which it will also explain the importance of the Danish Film Institute. Lastly, information regarding the National Film School of Denmark is provided.

Gender representation of Danish film directors

“Films are not for women” was the headline of a recent article published in Weekendavisen. In 2017, Danish cinemas premiered twenty-six Danish films but only three of those films have a female director. The article addressed the alarming development of female directors in the Danish film industry. Since 2004, the number of female directors has declined by 50%, and Christina Rosendahl, chairman for Danish Film directors, argues that if the development continues, “the female director will be extinct in year 2032” (Sand and Mygind, 2016). While there has been a slightly higher representation of males graduating from the film school in recent years, the number of female directors in the industry does not reflect the number of female graduates; in the period of 2002-2015, there were fifteen males and twelve females who graduated from the film director programme at the National Film School of Denmark (DFI, 2016b). The lack of female directors is a current topic in several Danish medias where several people from the Danish film industry have spoken about the urgent need to ensure gender diversity. An article from Berlingske argues that gender diversity and gender representation have been on the film industry’s agenda for years and it is alarming that there has not been any development – rather the only development seen is that of less and less women (Almbjerg, 2016). In August 2016, the Danish Film Institute announced three task force groups who were to discuss how to improve diversity in the film industry (included as data in this research) and officially announced in December 2016 that they would promote diversity and equality of men and women in the Danish film industry but emphasised that the incubation time is long and changes will not be visible in the near future (Almbjerg, 2016).

The film industry in Denmark

The Danish film industry is largely supported by public funding. “Film is not an industry in Denmark, it is a culture. That is why it needs help to exist,” argues Vinca Wiedemann who is the principal of the National film school of Denmark (Sand & Mygind, 2016). In contrast to e.g. Hollywood, who have large production companies, a common characterisation of the film industry in Denmark (and Europe in general) is that multiple companies collaborate in the film production; e.g. one company might handle distribution, one company might handle production and another might be in charge of

applying for funding (Steensgaard, 2015). The size of the Danish film industry can be illustrated with Danish films having a domestic market share of 30% in the Danish cinemas in 2015 (DFI, 2016a).

Despite being a small country, Denmark has placed itself amongst the world's best film nations and began a whole new film movement of Dogma films in 1995 (known as Dogme95) which became an international wave (Schmidt, 2016). The social realism commonly associated with Danish film is described as an element of originality that helped achieve international acclaim and awards. However, in recent years, several articles suggest that Danish films have reached a low point and newer films are described as too mainstream and lacking vision (e.g. Marton, 2016; Pedersen, 2015; Liholm, 2013)

Considering how the Danish film industry is primarily supported by public funding, the Danish Film Institute (DFI), who manages the funding, plays a significant role. DFI is a state institution under the Ministry of Culture and manages the national archives and support for the development, production and distribution of films (www.kum.dk). With the Film Act of 1972, the film industry became part of the Finance Act and DFI was established. The Film Act states that DFI handle the following tasks:

- 1) to subsidize the development, preparation of scripts, production, launch, and showing of Danish films and to ensure distribution of Danish films,
- 2) to spread knowledge of Danish and foreign films in Denmark and to promote the sale and spread the knowledge of Danish films abroad,
- 3) to ensure the conservation of films and documentation material concerning films, the collection of film and television literature, the performance of research and the availability of these collections to the public,
- 4) to provide varied film activities for the general public,
- 5) to ensure continuous dialogue with the film industry and important user groups on the activities of the Institute,
- 6) to promote professional experimental film art and the development of talent by holding workshops,
- 7) to ensure the production of informative films, including for educational purposes.

(www.kum.dk)

The Film Agreement of 2015-2018 states that DFI will receive a yearly funding of DKK 25 million and a one-time amount of DKK 30,4 million. In this timeframe, DFI shall support the production of 82-104 feature films and of 120-140 documentary and short films. These films must be in Danish with the exception of eight films. To encourage international partnerships minor co-productions are allowed in 20-36 films. In this agreement, a trial period was introduced for allocating subsidies to 12-24 low budget films (The Film Agreement 2015-2018). There are different types of support for funding in feature films (www.dfi.dk): The commissioner scheme (support for films with artistic merit); the market scheme (support for films with broad audience appeal); New Danish Screen (talent development programme).

The National Film School of Denmark

The National Film School of Denmark (hereinafter referred to as ‘the film school’) is a publicly funded artistic education and falls under the Ministry of Culture as Denmark’s only public higher education for production of film, TV and computer animation. The school has approximately one hundred students and offers a 4-year education within eight different programmes: animation director; documentary director; (fiction) film director; film photography; film editing; sound engineering; screenwriting; and producer. There are six students accepted to each programme every second year and the even number of students is to allow for them to easily be able to work together within and across the different programmes. The film school describes their admittance process as tough and “applicants must demonstrate talent for cinematically rich expressions and engagement in creative collaborations” (www.filmskolen.dk).

Currently, the film school has two classes in the director programme; one with four males and two females, and one with three males and three females. The division of the sexes of the entire school shows a representation of 54% males and 46% females.

The film school recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. When it first opened its doors in 1966 it was highly criticised for turning films into art instead of “learning it the hard way” through apprenticeships. The school was even squatted by students who protested the elitist admission requirements (Schmidt, 2016). Today, the film school is commonly considered a successful institution and its graduates consists of critically

acclaimed directors such as Bille August, Nikolaj Arcel, Lone Scherfig, Per Fly, Susanne Bier and Dogme95 founders Lars von Trier and Thomas Vinterberg (ibid).

Vinca Wiedemann has been the principal of the film school since 2004. When she took over the job from former principal of twenty-one years Poul Nesgaard, the media wrote it was time to modernise the school and re-emerge as a “powerhouse of creativity” after Nesgaard’s strategy of “secluded workspace” (Frølich, 2003). In an interview with Weekendavisen (Schmidt, 2016), Wiedemann describes that her vision for the film school is to educate the students to be able to create strong, individual and personal stories:

“The human will always be the centre of the story. The technical ironically matters less while the methodological matters more. The personal voice, leadership collaboration and entrepreneurship are what the film school shall strengthen. That’s what our students should be able to do.”

As mentioned, the focus of this research is the students in the film director programme (from hereon referred to as ‘film students’). A film director is the creative force in a film’s production and is responsible for visualising and defining a film’s structure and style. The director serves as the link between production, technical and creative teams and is in charge of casting, script editing, shot composition, shot selection and editing (www.creativeskillset.org).

The film school’s website describes their film director programme as a valuable elitist education that requires huge commitment. The ideal student is described as someone who questions life and existence, possess a strong storytelling talent and have good collaborative skills. Director students have joint classes with other programmes in dramaturgy and film history and especially work closely with screenwriter students. The school states that they prioritise three aspects of a director’s role; “creating films with a strong visual force, dramatization, and working with the actors”, and further describes that the student will learn to put all these things into play through practical exercises and hence develop and challenge their personal language (www.filmskolen.dk).

Literary review

The following chapter will present the theoretical framework of this study. The first section will cover the theoretical foundation for understanding creativity, and secondly feminist theories and viewpoints are explained. The chapter will conclude with a sum up that interconnects creativity and gender through agency and structure.

Creativity

Creativity or “the ability to make new things and or think of new ideas”, as Merriam-Webster defines it, has traditionally been associated as a naturally acquired skill in the dominion of an elite group of specially talented people – often defined as *the myth of the genius* (Fuller, Hamilton & Seale, 2013; Conor, Gill & Taylor, 2015). Latter understandings of creativity primarily refer to the assessment criteria of novelty but its definition appears to be under constant re-examining in contemporary theories. Common for newer understandings is that creativity is increasingly being positioned as a complex relationship between context, the individual, and collectiveness (Amabile, 1983).

The history of creativity

The myth of the genius is an expression for a long history of understanding creativity as belonging to few individuals with innate abilities for masterful creative thinking and who created in lonesomeness. As a result, early studies of creativity has been tinged with mystical associations; “the creative person was seen as an empty vessel that a divine being would fill with inspiration” (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999: 5), and many people believed that creativity was not something that could be scientifically studied because it was a spiritual process. A recent study on creativity discourses throughout history found that the myth of the genius is strongly associated with males; men were considered more creative than women evidenced by the fact that the majority of important artists have been male (Eisler et al., 2016). Creativity and its masculine associations was, however, rarely noted or challenged in literature on creativity until recently.

Some of the first theoretical attempts to define creativity were Freud’s (1908/1959) and Kubie’s (1958) psychodynamic approaches wherein they understood creativity as arising from the tension between conscious reality and unconscious drive. Their methodology of doing case studies on eminent creators (e.g. Leonardo Da Vinci was Freud’s case study) has since been critiqued for isolating creativity from general psychological study (Freud, 1908/1959 and Kubie, 1958 in Sternberg & Lubart, 1999). Another early attempt to define creativity was the Gestalt positioning suggested by

Wertheimer (1945) who believed that insight and productive thinking, i.e. creative process, occur when the essential feature of a problem and the relationship to a final solution are grasped (Wertheimer in Amabile, 1983).

Latter definitions began to focus on the *creative product*, i.e. any observable outcome or response, as the distinguishing sign of creativity. Within this definition the emphasis is placed on the product to be able to produce “effective surprise” in the observer (Bruner, 1962) meaning that novelty, appropriateness and value are the criteria for a creative product (Amabile, 1983).

The new creativity

While there is a long history of different approaches to the study of creativity and disagreement over the definition, most recent research all problematise the idea of creativity as belonging to few unique and talented individuals (Amabile, 1983; Conor et al., 2015; Littleton & Taylor, 2012; Florida, 2002; Fuller et al., 2013).

To understand why the shift in the perception of creativity happened, parallels can be drawn to Florida’s (2002) suggestion of a new ‘creative class’ that arose when creativity began to be a fundamental source of economic growth. He argues that the transformation slowly began in the last two decades when creativity was increasingly viewed as the decisive force of competitive advantage. According to Florida, the creative class consists of people who add economic value through their creativity and it arose when creativity was increasingly seen as something that could not be reduced to the creation of “new blockbuster invention”. Rather, creativity became to be seen as multidimensional and requiring a social and economic environment that nurtures its many forms (Florida, 2002).

Defining creativity

Amabile (1982) argues that an ‘operational’ definition based around the products best captures the subjective nature of understanding creativity:

“A product or response is creative to the extent that appropriate observers independently agree it is creative. Appropriate observers are those familiar with the domain in which the product was created or the response articulated. Thus, creativity can be regarded as the quality of products or responses judged to be creative by appropriate observers, and it can also be regarded as the process by which something so judged is produced.” (p. 1001)

The operational emphasis in the definition is explained as being “for the purpose of empirical research” and Amabile argues that a more theoretical framework must make assumptions about the observers’ responses and what they consider to be creative. She states that: “A product or response will be judged as creative to the extent that (a) it is both a novel and appropriate, useful, correct, or valuable response to the task at hand and (b) the task is heuristic rather than algorithmic” (1983: 360).

There are several assumptions associated with Amabile’s definition. Firstly, the ability to be creative is not considered an expression of the intrinsic quality of a person and anyone can be creative to different extents. Hence, creative activity occurs within the influence of social environment and does not necessarily have to result in “historically significant products” (Amabile, 1983; Littleton & Taylor, 2012). Secondly, creativity is subjectively assessed by the observers through its outcome i.e. product. Consequently, there is no neutral universal measure of creativity. The observers within a field are suggested to be able to recognise the quality of creativity without being able to define it and the criterion for assessment hence “require a historically bound social context” (Amabile, 1983; Littleton & Taylor, 2012).

Individual vs. collective creativity

The theoretical rejection of the creative genius and the new understanding of creativity as socially defined mean that contemporary studies place a great deal of emphasis on collective creativity. In a review of different theorisations of creativity, Littleton and Taylor (2012) argue that contemporary theories do not attempt to theorise the creative person. They place this observation in contrast to the definition of the creative industries that was described to reinstate a focus on the individual, and they argue that theories on creativity – in the context of the creative industries – place more emphasis on the collective creativity than on the individual (Littleton & Taylor, 2012). Taylor and

Littleton argues that the neglected emphasis on individuals in creativity is a result of the theoretical rejection of the myth of the genius and an attempt to demystify creativity (2012). It is, however, important to note that Amabile (1982/1996), Weisberg (1986), Sawyer (2006) and Florida (2002) place the individual as a starting point for the creative process.

Amabile's (1982) model is concerned with individual behaviour but also the social psychological aspects that regard the influence of social environment. She highlights the importance of the individual's task motivation as a factor for creativity but argues "the intrinsically motivated state is conducive to creativity, whereas the extrinsically motivated state is detrimental" (Amabile, 1996: 107). Weisberg (1986) believes that creativity is linked to the individual's abilities in problem solving and argues that "creative problem solving involves a person's producing a novel response that solves the problem at hand" (p. 4). It is, however, acknowledged that many would argue something truly creative is produced by many individuals and seen as novel in society as a whole. Sawyer (2006) sees creativity as culturally defined and argues that creativity cannot exist without the individual but "individuals always create in context" (p. 113). Florida (2002) adds a new perspective by stating that creativity belongs to individuals and argues that it is largely driven by intrinsic rewards.

Gender

Most literature in feminist studies seem to agree that there are patterns of behaviour and social organisation that differ according to sex and gender despite the different theoretical stances (Calás & Smircich, 2006; Francis, 2006; MacInnes, 1998). In general, there is a shared recognition of a gendered dominance in social arrangements and a desire for change, but the framing of the problem and how to change this is however very different. As mentioned, this study understands gender as socially constructed and positions itself within postmodern/poststructuralist theorising on gender.

Nature versus nurture

While there are numerous approaches to explain cause and effect of sex and gender, an important distinction lies in how gender is understood. This can roughly be divided into

two grounded views of gender difference as either biological or socially constructed – or as described by Rose (2001) as “that tired dichotomy of nature versus nurture” (p. 256). The view of gender differences as naturally different has been supported by some feminist stances that believe that women’s biological differences from men should be celebrated (Francis, 2015). The idea of a predestined gendered behaviour that is fixed and inevitable and explained by the different reproductive strategies of men and women is, however, widely criticised. Sex difference theories cite research in brain activity that shows gendered activity of e.g. men using one side of their brain and women using both sides as biological differences (e.g. Gurian, 2002). Opposing views argue that findings on gendered brain activity are not consistent and conclusive and any brain differences are partially caused by different experiences (Browne, 2004; Whitehead, 2002; Paechter, 1998).

Overview of feminist theories

The different theoretical stances of feminism can be categorised as; *liberal, radical, psychoanalytic, socialist, transnational/(post)colonial or poststructuralist/postmodern*.

Early theories of liberal feminism were concerned with the inequality of the sexes denoted by biological differences i.e. two categories of people; males and females. Liberal feminist would later distinguish between the biological ‘sex’ and ‘gender’, and began to see gender as a product of socialisation and experience (Calás & Smircich, 2006). Radical feminists would explain inequalities as cultural practices that value men’s experiences over women’s and describe gender as “a system of male domination, a fundamental organizing principle of patriarchal society, at the root of all other systems of oppression” (Jagger, 1983 in Calás & Smircich, 2006). Psychoanalytical theorising tends to draw on the Freudian stages of psychosexual development and experiences in children’s early developmental relations with parents to explain gender – assumptions that were critiqued by liberal and radical feminist for its biological determinism. Socialist, transnational, and poststructuralist/postmodern views share an aim to challenge the notion of gender as primarily referring to a person’s sex. Instead gender is argued as:

“A process, produced and reproduced through relations of power among differently positioned members of society, including relations emerging from historical processes, dominant discourses and institutions and dominant epistemological conceptualizations.” (Calás and Smircich, 2006: 36)

Socialist feminist in particular see this process as embedded in power relations and historical material conditions. Gender is dynamically theorised as processual and socially constituted in the intersection of sex, race, sexuality, ideology and experiences of oppression under patriarchy capitalism. Both transnational/(post)colonial and poststructuralist/postmodern feminists problematise the entire notion of ‘experience’ and disagree with the assumptions of gender as “a stable and sufficient analytical lens to be applied unproblematically across culture and histories” (Calás & Smircich, 2006: 36).

Broadly speaking, transnational/(post)colonial feminists portray and emphasise the agency of *the Other* and articulate the relationships between the local and the global. In feminist research the Other refer to the application of Simone de Beauvoir’s (1949) notion of describing women as the negative of men; “the lack against which masculine identity differentiates itself” (Butler, 2002: 14). This means that the female sex is *marked* while the male sex is not. The articulation of a relationship between the local and global was a response to the commonly white, middle class and heterosexist representation of gender in feminist theories (Calás and Smircich, 2006).

Poststructuralist/postmodern feminists often take inspiration from Beauvoir’s notion of ‘women’s otherness’ and argues that “the linguistic figure of ‘woman’ occupies as that which is ‘other’ to the dominant (phallogocentric) language, system of rules and concepts of knowledge in modernity” (Calás and Smircich, 2006: 52). Furthermore, the *body* is especially an object of inquiry and is observed by Fonow and Cook (2005) to address the body as “object of inquiry”, “category of analysis” and “in relationship to the material” (p. 53).

Butler’s (1999) performative gender theory, which largely contributed to queer studies, is frequently cited in poststructuralist/postmodern theorising wherein she argues gender as the effect of assigning it to a sexed body by stating that “bodies cannot be said

to have a signifiable existence prior to the mark of their gender” (p. 13); meaning that at birth one is called into a sex and “the naming as well as performing one sex/gender is part of a power/knowledge system that maintains such distinctions institutionally and discursively” (Calás and Smircich, 2006: 55).

Gender as socially constructed

Theories that oppose biological determinism consider gender to be something that is acquired through social constructions (Francis, 2015). Poststructuralist feminists used Foucault’s explanation of power as operating through discourses to account for social change and to avoid presenting individuals as passive and fixed recipients of socialisation (e.g. Kessler and McKenna, 1997; Davies, 1989; Butler, 1990/1999). Foucault’s notion of “people as positioned in and produced by discourses” could further explain the idea of gender as constructed since ‘maleness’ and ‘femaleness’ are produced by discourses in this view (Davies, 1989). Sex has commonly been understood as an “unproblematic, straightforward, ‘common-sense’ categorization” (Hawkesworth, 1997) but as observed by e.g. Butler (1990) not everyone easily falls into the categories of male and female and thus argue that gender identity is subjective. In the context of social constructivism, the term gender has been used to indicate the differences in behaviour based on gender identification and considers it a social phenomenon. In performative gender theory Butler, however, clarifies that performativity is not a social constructivist account of ‘doing gender’ but an analytical approach to problematise such ‘doings’ (1999). Butler’s account of gender means that there is a possibility for disruption and intervention in the norms of gender understanding but argue that disruption can only be achieved through consciousness (Butler, 1990). A common feminist notion for achieving consciousness and awareness is, however, argued to be easier for the objects of oppression (Munar, 2016).

Masculinity and femininity

Since gender is socially constructed and gendered traits are not tied to the biological sex, it means that females can act in ‘masculine’ ways and males in ‘feminine’ ways:

“When the constructed status of gender is theorized as radically independent of sex, gender itself becomes a free-floating artifice, with the consequence that *man* and *masculine* might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and *woman* and *feminine* a male body as easily as a female one.” (Butler, 2002)

In this view, gender then becomes a reality to the extent that it is performed and masculinity and femininity as terms are used to describe *acts* of gendered behaviour to reflect the diversity of the socially constructed self (Francis, 2015). Butler explains the binary structure of masculinity and femininity as a result of the production of a *heterosexual matrix* that naturalises some behaviours and marginalises others – a binary structure that also acts as constraints to the expression of gender (Butler, 2012).

MacInnes (1998) and Hood-Williams (1999) present criticism of gender as concept. They argue that gender behaviour studies always presents males as doing masculinity and females as performing femininity which makes the performance of gender appear to be intractably connected to their sex i.e. there is no gender only sex difference. Francis (2015) suggests that the reluctance to label certain behaviour in females in masculine ways and males in feminine ways can be to avoid to “reify what are shaky and contested characteristics of either gender” (p. 12), Furthermore, she argues that behaviour tends to be interpreted in gendered ways and provides the example of “what might be read as aggression in a man might be read as manipulative/bitchiness in a woman” (Francis, 2015: 13).

In his substantial work on culture Hofstede (2001) defines the societal norm of masculinity and femininity as the following:

“Masculinity stands for a society in which social gender norms are clearly distinct: Men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. Femininity stands for a society in which social gender roles overlap: Both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.” (p. 297)

While Hofstede stresses that the attachments to masculinity and femininity will vary across countries and context, his definition suggests that masculinity is less of a fluid

gender role. He points to universal societal beliefs of men being more concerned with materialism as opposed to women who are more concerned with quality of life. In his study of masculine and feminine roles within organisations, Hofstede points to an ego vs. social behaviour in the sexes; men highly valued advancement, earnings and training and women valued friendly atmosphere, position security and environment highly (Hofstede, 2001).

Essentialism and standpoint theory

Feminist theory believes that dominant perceptions of masculinity and femininity have lead to *gender roles* and *gender stereotypes* i.e. societal norms that dictate behaviours considered as acceptable and appropriate based on the sex. Wood and Eagly (2012) explain that beliefs about the common traits of the sexes lead to social perceivers *essentialising* these traits, but masculine traits are regarded as virtues in men and vices in women, while feminine traits are regarded as vices in men and virtues in women (Anderson, 2015). In feminism, essentialism refers to “any theory that claims to identify a universal, transhistorical, necessary cause or constitution of gender identity or patriarchy” (ibid). This implies that women are commonly viewed in comparison to men, and it is argued that essentialism presents inequality of the sexes by equalising men as universal humanity and an expression for mankind (Munar, 2016).

The poststructuralist/postmodern argument for rejecting the view of being born into a sex is to challenge essentialism to a “view from nowhere” wherein naturalised traits of the sexes do not create “gender scripts” for men and women to fit into (ibid). Feminist standpoint theory argues that when the masculine is placed as a universal representation of mankind, it leads to knowledge being grounded in one social position. This situated knowledge is believed to devalue experiences of females and the poststructuralist/postmodern claim of reality as socially constructed makes the body and gender flexible instead of fixed. Thus essentialism portrays a social reality that is unstable and ambiguous (Calás & Smircich, 2006).

An example of the idea of essentialism and standpoint theory can be seen in common understandings of men’s and women’s abilities in leaderships. Men are commonly

believed to have innate traits that position them as better leaders, and women are seen in comparison to these traits, e.g. 'she is not a good leader because she shows emotion and men do not do that' or 'he is not a good leader because he shows emotion which is what women do'. In the poststructuralist/postmodern view the idea that emotions are feminine and a trait not suited for leadership does not represent a 'truth', rather it is a dominant discourse that was socially constructed. The discourse being positioned as fluid also makes everything negotiable, e.g. speaking of emotions differently will lead to a new (context dependent) social reality.

Sum up

The presented theories of creativity as socially defined and gender as socially constructed highlight the complex context wherein this occurs. It has been explored how creativity tends to be theoretically defined on its output, and how the ability to be creative is not only based on innate abilities of an individual but largely affected by the social and cultural context. The construction of gender is also socially and culturally contingent which makes both terms fluid and discursively constructed. In summarisation, the applied theory has showed that there are individual and collective dimensions of creativity and gender. This is illustrated in the following model:

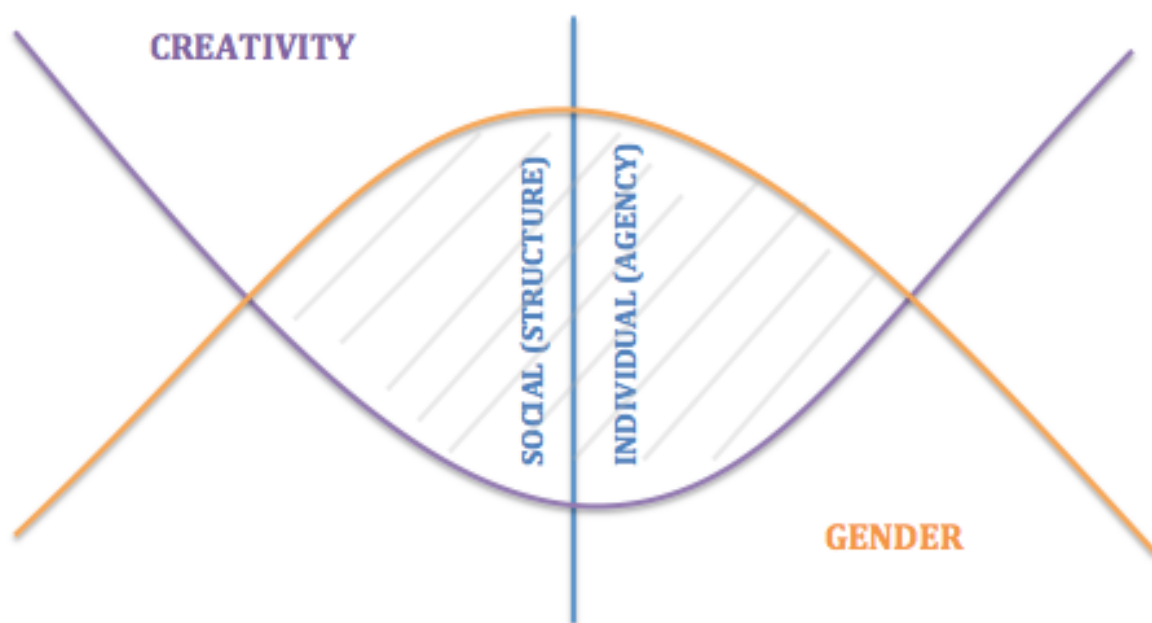


Figure 1: Created by researcher

As seen in the figure above, creativity and gender represents a complex relation between *agency* i.e. the capacity of an actor to act in any given environment and *structure* i.e. how individual actions are constrained by social systems (Schwinn, 2011).

The study's focus on creativity and gender as discursive phenomena means that the relationship between agency and structure is dialectical and understands society as forming individuals who create society (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). However, a poststructuralist argument is that we are channelled and led by prior conditions (dominant discursive practices) that can limit the scope of the individual's actions. The grey lines in the figure represent these prior conditions and available possibilities. This means that social structure pre-exists in the understanding of creativity and gender, but these are fluid and open for interrogation (Schwinn, 2011). The question however emerges as to how actors choose amongst the socially available possibilities and alternatives represented in the grey area, and how this interact with where creativity and gender interconnects illustrated in the purple and orange line.

Contextualisation

The following chapter will define the context of this study that surrounds the empirical object. This regards to the embeddedness of the film students, the film industry and the creative industries. The sections will explore factors relevant for this context in terms of a creative career and the current landscape for division of labour within the creative industries.

Defining the context

As we have explored in the literary review, the context within which a phenomenon occurs is crucial for the understanding of such and hence the context wherein this research is situated can be illustrated as follows:

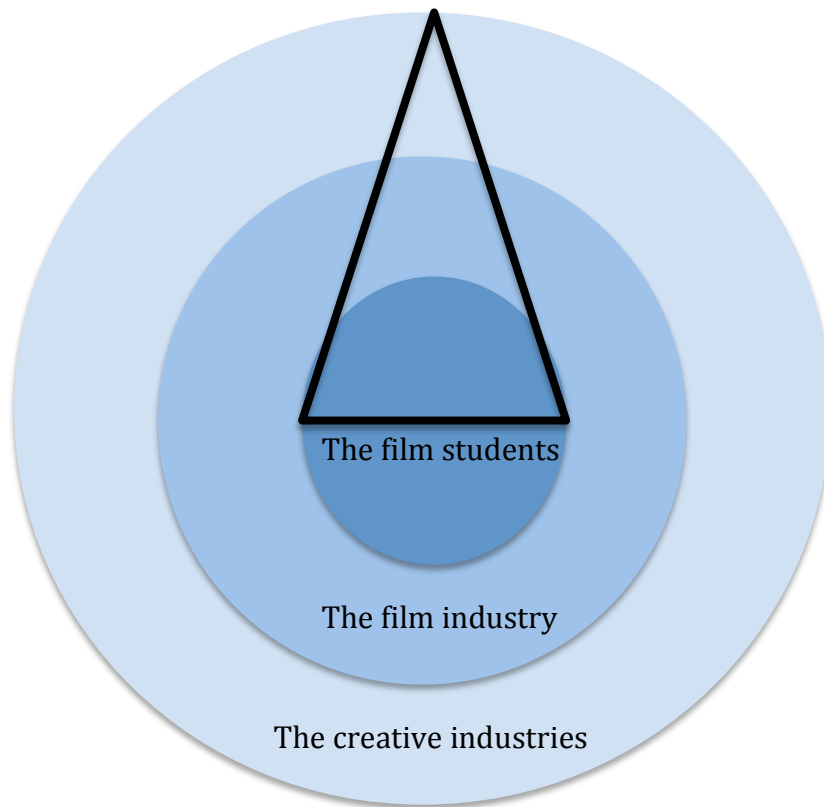


Figure 2: Created by researcher

The black triangle represents the defined context of this study and the shade of the colour represent the richness in data and/or the degree of focus (the darker, the richer). This means that the film students provide the rich data and represents the deep examination but these finding are seen as embedded in the film industry. The creative industries represent the surrounding phenomenon the film students and the film industry are embedded in. The understanding of these as interconnected implies that the students' statements are not considered to operate in isolation from its embedded context. The model thus reflects a relationship between the statements and the surrounding context. Therefore, it becomes relevant to explore the theoretical foundations for a creative career, and the conceptualisation of creativity and gender in the creative industries.

Creative careers

The terms 'creative career' or 'creative labour' is simply associated with doing creative work in the creative industries (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011). As similarly argued by Gill and Pratt (2008), McRobbie (2009) and Florida (2002), 'creatives' (i.e. people employed in the creative industries) became a new type of worker and creative industries a new field of labour. Gill and Pratt (2008) formulates that the type of labour links to:

"A preponderance of temporary, intermittent and precarious jobs; long hours and bulimic patterns of working; the collapse or erasure of the boundaries between work and play; poor pay; high levels of mobility; passionate attachment to the work and to the identity of the creative labour" (p. 14)

The growth of the new economy claimed by Florida (2002) has posed a range of challenges; Morgan and Nelligan (2015) argue that creativity has come to signify more than performing symbolic and knowledge work. They consider the challenges to be associated with "making a living and building a career in fields where work is often in short supply, project based, allocated by word-of-mouth informal networks" (p. 66). The willingness to work in the creative industries is e.g. explained by Florida (2002) as a result of the industry having the desirable features of flexibility, recognition and intrinsic interest. Similarly, Ursell (2000) argues that there are possibilities for self-actualisation and public esteem (Ursell, 2000 in Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011)

In Hesmondhalgh and Baker's (2011) study of creative labour across different creative industries, they found that there is a common tendency in creative industry policy discourse to celebrate creative labour and ignore the contradictions involved; contradictions that include profound inequalities of access and reward, the short-term basis work that constrains the workers' abilities to meaningful self-actualisation and while the freelance and autonomous nature of creative work might provide more freedom it also involves isolation and a lack of solidarity with other creative workers (p. 220-221). Furthermore, the research showed that a successful few enjoyed considerable benefits, which make the returns for creative work highly uneven – and

interestingly, creative workers did not appear to be fully aware of the conditions in which they operate (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011).

Creativity and gender in the creative industries

The conceptualisation of creative excellence in the creative industries carries several contradictory associations; firstly, the indefinable nature of when and how creative output is novel and appropriate, and secondly, who to credit the creative achievement to considering the importance of the context in which it was created. Theoretical claims have deferred from the notion of the creative genius, yet the creative industries still appears to claim to the individual's abilities and traits as demonstrating intrinsic notions of creativity – as observed by Littleton and Taylor (2012).

The celebration of the individual's creativity, skills and talent as a driver for exceptional economic growth in the industry (Florida, 2002) and how creativity came to be viewed as a “wonderstuff for transforming workplaces into powerhouses of value” and “the oil of the 21st century” (Ross, 2008 in Taylor & Littleton, 2012: 23) lead to a whole new status of creativity – not only culturally but also politically. Governmental policy documents were acknowledging the fast economic growth of the creative industries and it was assumed to create new jobs and promote social inclusion (Littleton and Taylor, 2012). The creative industries became branded as “hip, cool and egalitarian” and were celebrated for promoting diversity (Gill & Pratt, 2008). A paradox presents itself by the fact that numerous research point to a substantial lack of work diversity in gender, race and class (e.g. Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2015; Conor, Gill & Taylor, 2015; McRobbie, 2009).

Gender inequality in the creative industries appears as a global phenomenon and there are numerous statistics that show that women are severely underrepresented in key creative roles. Interestingly, there does not appear to be literature that explore how and/or why the current division of labour of having a large male representation in the creative industry is beneficial.

The large representation of males is especially seen in job roles that entail creative authority such as creative director in advertising, director in TV/film production, content creators in media, while women are more represented in coordinating roles within areas such as PR, Marketing and Publishing. Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2012) suggest that gender inequality is as a result of the persistent use of the stereotype of 'masculinist creativity', and it is argued that dominant perceptions of masculinity and femininity in the creative industries affect the assessment of creative output and the division of labour. They point to perception of females as caring, supportive and nurturing as an explanation for why women are often seen in coordinating roles; as opposed to men, who are considered more creative because they are less bound by rules and are therefore often occupying key creative roles (ibid).

Recent statistics from the film industry and the role of director in the UK and the US shows a similar development as seen in Denmark, which is a decline in the number of female representation.

In the UK – a country that was frontrunner in the political celebration of the creative industries – an audit report shows that there is not a single female Chair or Chief Executive of a Television Company and men outnumber women by more than ten to one in decision-making roles in the TV/film industry in general (Centre for Women and Democracy, 2013). The British Film Industry's Statistical Yearbook (2016) shows a percentage of 9.4% female directors in all UK films released in 2015, which has decreased from the 15% of 2011. Female writers are also under-represented with only 14.4% of the UK films written by a woman – a decline from previous year's percentage of 18.9%. Lauzen's Celluloid Ceiling report (2016) shows that 93% of the top 250 US films released in 2016 had a male director. Overall, women comprised 17% of all directors, executive producers, producers, writers, cinematographers, and editors in the same year. Both statistics show decline of 2% from last year's percentage, which had seen no change since 1998.

Gill (2011) argues that gender inequalities in the creative industry remains an issue simply because it is not talked about. Gill describes gender inequality as sexism, which she defines as an "agile, dynamic changing and diverse set of malleable representations

and practices of power” (2011: 62). Her argument is that sexism in the creative industries is often denoted to be due to individualistic failure. She reasons that this “toxic discourse of individual failure” not only has had resonances with academia (e.g. the previous notion of the creative genius) but also keeps operating because of an “invalidation and annihilation of any language talking about structural inequalities” (Gill, 2012: 63). The lack of a “vocabulary of the workplace” (McRobbie, 2011) and a language to make sense of the inequalities consequently meant that equality was assumed – yet men are privileged in indices pay, access to jobs, social networks, or any other factors (Gill, 2002).

In their study on sexism in the film industry Jones and Pringle (2015) found that gendered processes produced “regular inequalities between women and men in terms of pay, access to work, affirmation, support systems”. Despite the industry’s perception of merit, talent and the ‘good idea’ it was shown that across a range of roles, women were less likely to be recognised and rewarded for their ‘good ideas’ and talent (p. 46). Jones and Pringle also argue that gender issues in the industry is “unspeakable” but consider inequalities to be unmanageable by the current form of creative labour (2015: 46).

Methodology

The following chapter will explore the methodological considerations of this study. Firstly, it will address qualitative research methods and define the social constructivist stance of this study. The data of this research will then be presented followed by sections that explain the poststructuralist-discourse framework, case sampling and data collection methods. Lastly, the analytical approach and considerations regarding the role of the researcher, validation and limitations will be presented.

Qualitative research

It has been assessed that a qualitative approach is necessary for answering the research questions due to the study's motivation of understanding the student's world and its attention to social relations. A qualitative research approach implies an emphasis on the "qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008: 8).

Qualitative research use methods (e.g. interviews, observation) suitable for describing a phenomenon in its context and seeks to provide an interpretation that leads to a greater understanding of the phenomenon. The use of texts as empirical data is a common feature of this type of research (e.g. interview transcripts or observation notes) and hence it relies on understanding social realities through texts. Texts thus represent the foundation of interpretation and become a substitute for the reality under study (Flick, 2014: 28-29). This means that a researcher ought to focus on the "everyday perception and knowledge" represented in the interviews and translate these into a formalised and generalised "version of the world" (ibid). Objects in this research are therefore not reduced to single variables and a final truth but represented in the practices and interactions of their everyday context.

In qualitative research, assumptions have to be made about the nature of social phenomena and how something should be studied. These assumptions vary from different *ontological* and *epistemological* positions, which are rooted in the philosophy of science (Bryman, 2016).

Philosophy of science

The philosophy of science is the assumptions, foundations and implications for science that shapes the researcher's understanding of the world and the theory of knowledge (Bryman, 2016). The utilised orientation in this study is *social constructivism*.

Social constructivism

Social constructivism draws on a structuralist and poststructuralist philosophy of language which claims that reality is created through language – giving language a social status (Wenneberg, 2000). The social constructivist stance considers *everything* in the world as fundamental constituents of socially shared discourses (Gergen & Gergen, 1991). Gergen and Gergen argue “the discourse gains its ‘sense of reality’ as it is used in various social and scientific practices” (1991: 80). Several definitions of discourses are offered but in this study discourses are generally understood as a particular way of speaking of and understanding the world (Jørgensen & Philips, 2008: 10).

Ontological considerations

The concept of ontology refers to the nature of social phenomena and the part of reality that is made the object of the study (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2012). Gergen and Gergen (2005) present social constructivism as build around the fundamental idea of ‘reality’ as socially constructed, meaning that nothing can be considered a reality until it is agreed upon. Wenneberg (2000) adds that as a social constructivist you seek to “debunk” reality by critically exploring social phenomena and not accept any phenomena as natural. In this philosophy of science, emphasis is placed on the importance of culture and the context within which society is understood. When reality is not naturally given, the concern is thus to study how reality is socially constructed (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). Reality is hence defined as “a quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognise as having a being independent of our own volition” (Berger & Luckmann, 1966: 13). The subject is decentered and the individual therefore uses discourses to create cohesion and understanding of reality hence becoming an actor in discursive and cultural change. Existing discourses will, however, frame these changes and limit the scope of the subjects’ actions and possibilities for advancement (Jørgensen & Philips, 2008). Nevertheless, it is important to note that when individuals attempt to define reality, they always speak from a specific cultural tradition in a particular language or through visual and oral media (Gergen & Gergen, 2005).

Epistemological considerations

Epistemology refers to the way knowledge is achieved, which implicates the method of a study to be operationalized within the conditions of the epistemology. Social constructivism rejects the idea of the individual has having an innate and objective 'knowledge'. Knowledge is produced through language and it is the individual's learnt language that structures reality for them (Wenneberg, 2000). Social constructivists define knowledge as "the certainty that phenomena are real and that they possess specific characteristics" but emphasise that all claims to knowledge are contextual (Berger & Luckmann, 1966: 13). Gergen and Gergen (2005) argues that with a social constructivist approach social arrangements and actions are not limited to something rational or the truth i.e. *common-sense*; rather every social phenomenon is up for negotiation and can be constructed in new ways. Truth and meaning are assumed not to exist in an external world but created by the subject's interaction with the world – which can be constructed in different ways even within the same phenomenon (Gray, 2014).

Practical example

An example of how discourses operate in society in relation to creativity and gender can be found in Pixar's industry recommendations for focusing on collective creativity and transgenders Lili Elbe and Caitlyn Jenner.

As explored in the literary review, creativity has historically been associated with the myth of the genius, and there was a societal tendency to see creativity as a mysterious solo act. The animation studio Pixar can be seen as an example of a different way of speaking about creativity, which illustrates how this discourse on creativity is changing. The current president of Pixar, Ed Catmull, has avidly spoken about the novel outcome when creativity is seen as a collective task. He argues that the good idea is not in the mind of one individual but what makes a film good is when it is a collection of ideas (Catmull, 2008). This perspective is e.g. seen in how the first sixteen James Bond films were led by five different directors, but in recent years there are frequent changes in the directors for every film (Patrick, 2015). This indicates a discursive change in the understanding of a film not being depending on one 'genius'.

Lili Elbe is known as the first transgender person to undergo sex reassignment surgery in 1930, and at that time being transgender was spoken of as a disease and an expression for schizophrenia (Faurholt, 2016). The disease-discourse of transgender has, however, shifted into a discourse of being born into the wrong sex, which especially became apparent by the fact that transgender has recently been removed from the national list of psychological diseases in Denmark (Ritzau, 2017). This is also exemplified when former athlete and reality star Bruce Jenner became Caitlyn Jenner. Her transition was celebrated as brave and an expression of freedom and became a front-page story for fashion magazine Vanity Fair (Bissinger, 2015).

Implications for study

The social constructivist stance of this study implies that the concern is to understand the subject's reality and inquire into the way the reality is constructed (Becker and Luckmann, 1966). The formulations of reality will not exhaust what is reality for members of a society but within a given context and within the subject's socially constructed knowledge. This ultimately constitutes the fabric of meanings without which no society could exist (Becker & Luckmann, 1966).

Data presentation

The data of this study is presented in the following table. Please note that the data has been marked with different colours so as to situate the data in the discourse framework presented in the next section.

<p>Interviews with film students – analysis of objects</p> <p>(Appendix 1+2)</p>	<p>Christian Arhoff, Class of 15-19 Object 1: Photo</p> <p>Katrin Björginsdottir, Class of 15-19 Object 2: Post-its</p> <p>Katrine Brocks, Class of 15-19 Object 3: Picture frame</p> <p>Mads Mengel, Class of 15-19 Object 4: Notebook</p> <p>Nils Holst-Jensen, Class of 13-17 Object 5: Photo collage</p>
<p>Interviews with film directors collected from secondary data</p> <p>(Appendix 3)</p>	<p>Lars Von Trier interviewed by Nils Thorsen for <i>Politiken</i>.</p> <p>Lone Scherfig interviewed by Peter Schepelern for <i>Ekko</i>.</p> <p>Nicolas Winding Refn interviewed by Jacob Ludvigsen for <i>Soundvenue</i>.</p> <p>Susanne Bier interviewed by Majbritt Lacuhr for <i>Alt for Damerne</i>.</p> <p>Thomas Vinterberg interviewed by Kristoffer Zøllner for <i>Berlingske</i>.</p>
<p>Reports from DFI's task force groups for gender diversity in Danish film industry</p> <p>(Appendix 4)</p>	<p>Group 1: <i>Interpretation of DFI's report on gender division in Danish film</i></p> <p>Group 2: <i>The financial learnings from DFI's report on gender division in Danish film</i></p> <p>Group 3: <i>Barriers for women's access to funding in Danish film</i></p>

Research design

I place my study within a poststructuralist research approach wherein I applied a micro-discourse and a grand-discourse framework (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2000). The framework addresses how this study understands the various ways discourses operate. Fawcett (2012) explains that poststructuralist perspectives tend to “concentrate on the operation of language, the production of meaning, and the ways in which knowledge and power combine to create accepted or taken-for-granted forms of knowledge and social practices” (p. 2) and thus it links with the social constructivist stance of this study. According to Gergen and Gergen, social constructivism “relinquish the grip of methodology as the royal road to truth”; consequently, methods do not provide guarantees of objective knowledge but attest to the realities of a particular community (2011: 8). Correspondingly, the aim in poststructuralist research is not to concentrate on knowledge claims as false or true but place emphasis on identifying meanings that are context specific and that relate to the operating discursive practices (Fawcett, 2012).

My research approach is inspired by Mik-Meyer’s (2016) study of disability and Dick’s (2013) study of sexism. Mik-Meyer and Dick both applied a similar research framework with the argument that disability and sexism can be difficult to research and define because of the contested nature of the terms. It is argued that the terms can be seen as social facts that are simultaneously constructed as an objective reality and subjective interpretation. As explained by Mumby (2011), it is important that discourse studies do not differentiate between the subjective and the objective but explore how they are constituted in dialectical relationship to one another (Mumby, 2011 in Mik-Meyer, 2016). Similar to Mik-Meyer, Dick’s study investigated discourses as simultaneously local achievements and dominant discursive practices and found that competing reality claims depends on how versions of reality acquire authority (2013). I consider creativity and gender to entail the same duality of the objective and the subjective and argue that they are terms that entail specific characteristics i.e. social facts that possess a contested nature. By adopting a poststructuralist-discourse framework, I am able to pay close attention to the relationship between the subjective and the objective and how my empirical object interacts with context specific discursive practices.

The applied framework and creativity and gender being addressed as discursive phenomena mean that I consider the terms as a “structuring, constituting force, directly implying or tightly framing subjectivity, practice and meaning” (Alvesson and Karren, 2000: 1145). To explain the contextual situation of this study I borrow the terms of ‘monologue’ and ‘dialogue’ used in Mik-Meyer’s study (2016: 9). As mentioned, I consider my empirical object, the film students, to be embedded in the film industry and the film industry to be embedded in the creative industries. Monologue represents how the film student responds to questions about creativity and gender. These responds are, however, part of a dialogue with the context in which they are embedded i.e. the film industry and creative industries and thus also represent the discursive practices herein.

Van Dijk (1993) argues that discourse analysis “requires true multi-disciplinarity, and account of intricate relationships between text, talk, social cognition, power, society and culture” (Van Dijk in Alvesson and Karreman, 2000: 1132). To embrace the complex contextual setting of my research, I have applied Alvesson and Karreman’s (2000) discourse framework and illustrated where the data is positioned as shown on below:

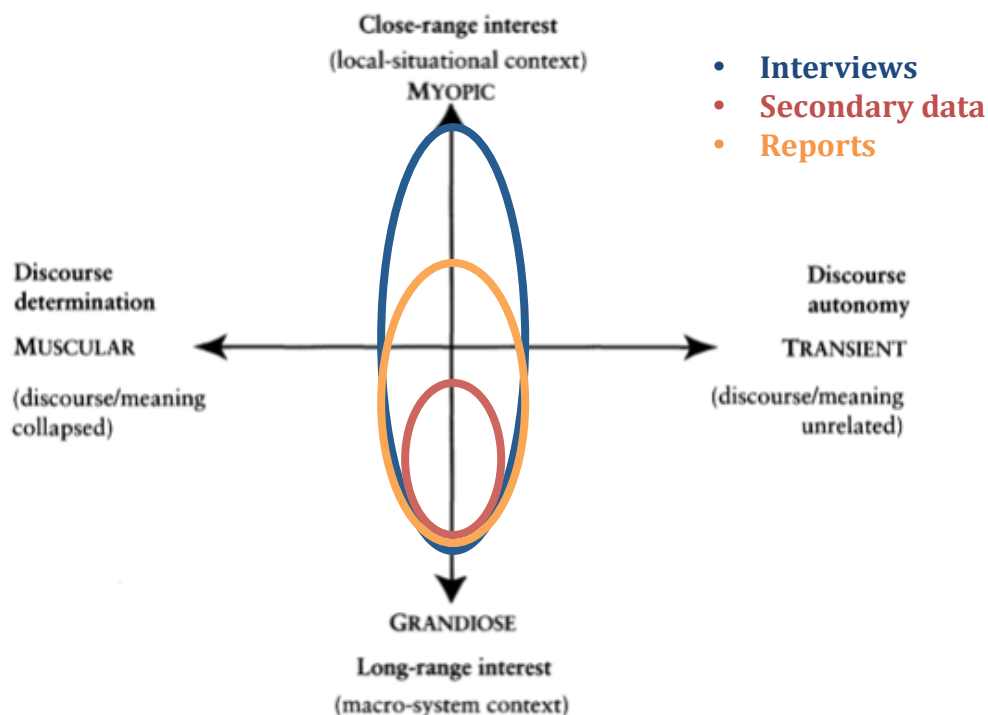


Figure 3: Alvesson and Karreman, 2000: 1130

As seen in the figure ‘grandiose’ and ‘myopic’ refer to what I call grand and micro discourses. The framework indicates the implications for how you choose to analyse discourses and in what type of setting. I have applied a close-range and long-range interest by situating film students’ discourses (the local-situational context) as interacting with discourses in the film industry and creative industries (macro-system context). As seen in the figure, the reports are placed closer to the local-situational context because the reports include aspects specific to the film school. The combination of the two ensures that my analysis becomes multi-disciplinary and able to account for the embedded discursive practices and important social actors. Language use is thus understood in relations to a specific process but analysed in an assembly of discourses that constitutes a form of reality – stemming from dominating language use (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2000). This does not mean that the research exhausts a general truth about creativity and gender discourses, but represents a fraction of discursive practices within the context of the study.

Case sample

The film students are situated as the subject of the analysis and can hence be placed as a *case study*. The aim of a case study is to provide thick descriptions or reconstruction of a case (Ragin and Becker, 1992). I have identified the film industry and creative industry as embedded in the case and applied a methodological approach that makes it able to provide thick descriptions of the case. The concern of the study is not solely to provide statements about the concrete case since I consider the film students’ statements as a “particular instructive example for a more general problem” (Flick, 2014). I therefore specify it as a *case sample* because of the research design’s ability to be applied in numerous other areas of the creative industries. For example, the same research questions and literary review could be used to investigate discursive practices of creativity and gender of students in advertising focusing on the role of creative director.

My sampling decisions were based around covering a wide research field and providing a deep analysis (Flick, 2014). The first step was choosing which industry within the creative industry I wanted to focus on. I chose the film industry out of personal interest. Through the literary review I found that the job role of film director was mentioned

greatly as portraying gender issues. I then narrowed my focus to this specific job role and finally decided to make my case sample the film students in the director programme at the Danish Film School. I chose to focus on students because I consider them to possess a knowledge and way of speaking of things that have not yet been affected by industry practices. E.g. as seen in the contextualisation, there is not a language available to speak about gender issues in the film industry. My assessment was that the film student would not yet have been exposed to a particular industry language on creativity and gender, and considered them as a representation of formations in creativity understandings and the future labour pool of Denmark's film industry.

Data collection

As presented, the collected data consists of five semi-structured interviews with film students, five interviews with film directors collected from secondary data and three reports from DFI's task force groups.

As a starting point for planning my study, I reviewed existing literature on the topic to understand what is already known and what theories and concepts are used and debated. The format of my literary review relates to what Bryman (2016) refers to as a *narrative review*. A narrative review seeks to arrive at an overview of the studied field and provides an assessment and critical interpretation of the literature. The review can then function as a background and justification for my study.

In contrast to *quantitative* studies, the aim is not to derive hypotheses from the existing literature, but to use insights and information from the literature as context knowledge covering theories, concepts and definition within my research topic (Flick, 2014). The literary review sought to provide an insight to the complex context within which the object of my study exists and has functioned as a framework within which I could derive themes to help develop my interview template and content analysis template.

Semi-structured interviews

The interviews were performed using a semi-structured interview guide (see appendix 5) and this format was chosen to allow for new question to be included during the interview (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). The length of the interviews were approximately 1,5 hours and were held in the period of week 45-48 in 2016. They were conducted one-on-one and in-person at the offices of the film students. All interviews were audio recorded, and were conducted and transcribed in Danish.

It was important to me that the interviews functioned as a dialogue and casual conversation. I therefore sent the film student the interview guide prior to the interview so they could get an overview and idea of what I wanted to talk about. This was to ensure an open dialogue instead of an answer-question scenario. I hoped that they would focus on what was important to them since they knew what the interview would concern. I did not take notes during the interviews to not place myself as investigator. Furthermore, I asked them to bring something that represented creativity for them – either an object or photo. This method is defined as *photo elicitation* and implies attributing personal meaning and value to an image (Bryman, 2016). The reason for including this method was to get the film students to talk about creativity based on their own perspective without being guided in a specific direction by the interview questions. This also provided an opportunity for the conversation to go in different directions that perhaps went outside the scope of the themes in the interview guide.

Interviews collected from secondary data

For my secondary data, I selected five Danish film directors whom I assessed to be representative of a successful career. I based the assessment on the critical acclaim of their films, award nominations or mentions by the film students in interviews. The selected film directors are, as previously mentioned, Lars von Trier, Lone Scherfig, Nicolas Winding Refn, Susanne Bier and Thomas Vinterberg.

I collected my interviews by searching various search platforms such as Infomedia, Google and YouTube. I primarily used the directors' names as search words but would also combine them with words such as 'interview', 'personal interview', 'creativity',

‘talks about’ etc. I selected the five interviews based on Scott’s (1990) four criteria for assessing the quality of documents: *authenticity*, *credibility*, *representativeness* and *meaning* (Bryman, 2016: 542) – see appendix 6. These criteria provided me with guidelines as to assess the reliability of the source (the media and journalist) but also the agenda of the article and helped to eliminate those articles that were e.g. primarily for the marketing of a film the given directors had made. I used a content analysis template (see appendix 6) when reading through different interviews to help select those that covered themes relevant for my research. The selected interviews might not cover every theme of my content analysis template, but I chose the interviews that I considered the most detailed and explanatory in aspects of the themes.

Reports as data

The reports were used as ‘the background voice of the film industry’ and were included in the discussion part of the analysis. The reports can be characterised methodologically as documents, i.e. standardised artefacts that typically occur in particular formats (Wolff, 2004 in Flick, 2014). Documents are argued to “represent a specific version of realities constructed for specific purposes” (Flick, 2014: 357), and thus the reports are not used to validate the statement in the interviews. The aims of the reports were to provide a perspective to the discussion that represents an ‘industry reality’ and were hence used to contextualise the analysis.

Analytical approach

I used the software programme *Nvivo10* to transcribe, code and analyse the data. I created a coding frame, what Nvivo calls ‘a tree’, with the selected themes in two coding cycles. When coding the data, I systematically assigned *nodes* to passages of the text that spoke about the themes. A node is defined as “a collection of references about a specific theme, place, person or other area of interest” (Bryman, 2016: 596). When the data have been coded, the node will incorporate passages of text where the code appears. During the coding process I paid attention to new themes that could emerge from the data and those recognised as significant were added to the coding frame.

The first cycle on coding was primarily based around themes assessed from the literary review and/or new themes that emerged. These nodes were then read through and based on this I derived categories of analysed discourses into a new coding frame. The data was then re-read and nodes were assigned to the categories of discourse.

The data was analytically approached as guided by the defined context explored previously (see figure 2 on page 29) and by the micro-discourse and a grand-discourse framework explained in the research design section. This means that there was an in-depth focus on the interviews with the film students and an emphasis on the way they speak of the different subjects i.e. language use that represents micro-discourses. Secondary interviews were included in the analysis when there are strong parallels to be drawn to the film students' statements and/or to provide perspectives that reflect a director embedded in the film industry – thus representing grand-discourses. The results of the analysis were interpreted and placed in a connection with the task force groups' reports (also reflecting the film industry) that represents an interaction between micro and grand discourses. The discussion draws on the theoretical framework of the study thus reflecting the embeddedness of the creative industries.

The reader should note that the identified discourses are not systematised into explicit categories as to reflect the social constructivist understanding of the individual using discourses to create an understanding of reality. Since knowledge is produced through language, the aim of the analysis becomes to present the particular ways of speaking of and understanding reality. This also implies that the discourse framework is considered to operate naturally in the analysis, and dominant discourses are represented in subsection headlines and in how statements are presented in the analysis. Since the data has been situated in the discourse framework and it has been explained what type of discourse the data represents, the analysis will not also define this.

The role of the researcher

The social constructivist stance of this study means that I am part of the social construction of discourses in the empirical data. I am not merely observing a phenomenon but interacting with the object I am investigating. This is evident in the

interviews as well as in the secondary data. The interviewee's understanding of reality in the context of the interview will inevitably be defined in the social interaction with the interviewer. Furthermore, my understanding and interpretation of collected secondary data can also be affected by subjectivities, i.e. my own experiences and views. Subjectivities can also be represented in the choices of theories included in the study. I can hence not exclude the possibility that my position as a researcher might have an effect on the theory choice, research design, collected data and analysis. I have a learnt language and a social/cultural tradition that has constructed my knowledge and understanding of reality that unavoidable are represented to some degree. As a female student within the creative industries, I am also more closely attached in the subject I am investigating. While I am not attempting to affect and change my interviewees' understandings of the subject, I have to acknowledge that my part in the construction of meaning.

I have shown a great deal of awareness of my position during the research process in order to limit my subjectivities colouring elements of this study. This implied paying significant attention to whether my questions and understandings went beyond theory driven and subjective assumption. Furthermore, my focus was to allow for the discourses on this subject to gain its sense of reality through the research design.

Validation

I have included internal and external validation to assess the validity of the study.

The internal validations stem from a position of 'subtle realism' which were based on three premises: 1) The validity of knowledge is assessed on the basis of their plausibility and not on certainties; 2) Phenomena exist independently of the research's claims and assumptions are thus only approximate; and 3) Reality is accessible through perspectives that represent reality and do not reproduce it (Flick, 2014: 484). This implies that the production of data was my starting point for assessing the research's validity and followed by how I presented the phenomena in the analysis. In the validation processes, I reflected on my interview guide and methodological choices and

how this interacted with my analysis. This was to seek an internal validation as to whether the research actually answered the research questions.

The external validation implies getting someone to read my results and provide their perspective on it. Lisa Jespersen, a student at the film school, and I had several failed interview attempts due to her time constraints at school. Lisa expressed a strong interest in my research and since we could not meet within a reasonable timeframe of my research deadline, we arranged that she would serve as the external validation. I sent her the master's thesis' abstract and an overview of analysis results, and we arranged a meeting to discuss her perspectives.

Limitations

The methodological choice of the film school as the empirical object results in the context being small since there is a total of twelve students with six students in each class in the director programme. While the aim was to conduct a minimum of eight interviews it was not possible due to study related commitments. The senior class was in the process of shooting their graduate films, which meant that some students were outside the country filming. There were only a couple of students who did not respond to my contact efforts but several students had to decline due to commitments that would not allow them meet for an interview within the timeframe of this research. I considered including students from the private film school Super16 but the school could not provide me detailed accounts for their perspectives on creativity. Furthermore, it was considered that including a new school and a new agenda on creativity could complicate the research's context in an undesirable manner. Despite the smaller amount of interviews, it is argued that the research is representative for its context. The five students nearly represent half of the students in the director programme. The interviewees consist of three men and two women and it is thus representative for the division of gender in the film director programme that has a small male majority.

Analysis and discussion

The study's analysis is divided into four main sections: The myth of the genius; The value chain of creativity; Creative excellence; and Gender representation. All the main sections will be concluded with a discussion – a section that is called 'Discussion and theoretical considerations'. The analysis will present the results of the study's data:

- Interview with film students (**appendix 1+2**)
- Interviews with film directors collected from secondary data (**appendix 3**)
- DFI task force groups' reports; referred to as Group 1, Group 2, Group 3 (**appendix 4**)

The myth of the genius

The interview data from film students presents some paradoxes in the notion of the myth of the genius. While it is expressed that they do not believe that creativity is something that has elements of mystifications, they do believe that you have some sort of disposition for it. It has been observed that when the film students address the topic logically it is not believed to exist, but numerous statements indicate that childhood experiences are important for the validation for their own personal creative abilities that refer to innate talents. However, when speaking about role models or established directors some film students undermine the idea of them as the embodiment of a creative genius and instead highlight a common neglect of acknowledging the team behind them. Interview data from established director show a strong divide in the way they speak about their talents.

Creativity is kind of something you are born with

Every film student clearly states that they do not believe in the myth of the genius. However, while they tend to speak about creativity as something you can learn, they do not place it as 'open to all'. It is not clearly stated that creativity is something you are born with but the students emphasise that people in general can have specific innate dispositions or talents. It is believed that certain skills can be learned, but some people will naturally be better at something or can more easily learn certain things due to their biology. On this topic, some film students express that environment and childhood successes are crucial for whether certain dispositions can flourish:

"I think it's a discussion of inheritance versus environment. If someone is said to have a talent and something they are just better at than others, then there must be something in the biology or genes [...] but I also think it has a lot to do with where you get your success experiences as a child [...] I was always praised for being able to understand people well and why they did what they did [...] That made me the person I am today, and the ability of understanding people well is important for making films." (Mads)

Mads provides the example of how he could never be e.g. a basketball player because he is simply not built as one but also explains how his parents were not interested in

sports and therefore he was never praised for his efforts when he did sports as a child. He believes that the lack of childhood success in this area would naturally not make him achieve talent in sports. Instead, you achieve talent in those things you are praised for. Similarly, Katrine emphasises how her parents encouraged her to engage in creative activities as a child and how it has contributed to nourishing her creative disposition:

"I think you are born with a talent and then you can immerse yourself into it and get better [...] even though I didn't have artistic parents, I was always praised for bringing home something I made that was expressive. [...] I think I always felt an approval in that direction." (Katrine)

Both Christian and Nils state imagination and having images in your head is an innate ability for a creative person. Katrin draws a rough line between creative people and non-creative people by saying:

"I think it [creativity] can be learnt, but only certain people gain something from learning it and think it's the greatest thing in the world. There are also some terrible people who are just boring and uninteresting [...] people that have nothing to say that anyone would be interested in." (Katrin)

However, Katrin makes it quite clear that she does not really believe in innate talents and that a person can work towards certain goals if there is something they are interested in doing.

Christian, Nils and Katrin also emphasise environment as a factor but do not mention their parents as having a role in nourishing a talent or disposition or other examples of how their creativity has been nourished through specific environmental factors.

You need a childhood experience

When discussing where creativity comes from, the film students often relate the belief of being a creative person themselves to childhood experiences that served as an indication for their creative abilities. This indicates a common belief that creativity is

somehow meant to occur or show itself early in life. Nils explains how creative activities are so important to him that if he does not produce anything creative during the day he “gets in a bad mood or depressed”. He says that this feeling has been following him since childhood.

There is a general pattern of the film students validating their creativity through childhood experiences by tying statements such as “when I was young” and “I have always” when speaking about their personal creativity; but when it comes to believing whether those creative abilities are suited for being a film director in particular, the lack of certain childhood experiences can serve as a hindrance:

“I have struggled a bit with my own creativity through my life. When I was younger, I thought it was something ‘wow’. Something you were born with and you knew it from when you were five years old [...] I did not have a strong need to express something artistic all the time and then I thought ‘well okay, I guess I am not an artist’.” (Katrin)

Katrin explains how it was only recently that she realised that creativity is also about learning certain tools and methods, and it angers her that she “wasted so much time” pursuing her dream of becoming a director due to the belief of a childhood experience as a crucial indication for whether you have a creative talent or not:

“When I was younger I would read or watch interviews with men who all had a story about how they fucking saw Citizen Kane in the cinema when they were nine years old, and turned to their mother after and said ‘I am going to be a film director’. I was very aware about this when I was younger. Or even convinced that since I didn’t have that ‘child in the cinema experience’ then I could probably never be a film director.” (Katrin)

The data presents some indications that for those who can describe a clear moment of when they knew they wanted to be a film director – such as Mads who explains he “fell in love with creativity when he found out there was no right or wrong”, von Trier who says he “was born to do it”, or Refn who at a young age stated that “the second best thing in the world was to make film, the best thing was to watch films” – they do not

speaking about a struggle of deciding whether or not they were going to pursue a career in film making.

Bier explains how her dad “gave her a kick in the butt” and had it not been for him she might have kept studying architecture instead of applying to the film school. Katrine tells how her “normally very supportive” parents looked “deeply concerned at her as if she had megalomania” when she told them she was applying to film school. She describes a struggle of saying out loud that she wants to be a film director:

“I remember how I at my first interview [at the film school] was sitting in front of six people, amongst those Vinca who is the principal of the school and she asked me ‘Katrine, how long have you wanted to be a film director?’ When she asked this I was like ‘wow, this is so strange’ but just the thought alone of saying the sentence ‘I want to be a film director’. I had never said that and I told her that I thought it was so terrifying to say out loud. Vinca then said ‘Katrine, I hereby give you permission to say that you want to be a film director’.” (Katrine)

The creative genius is not that genius

There is not a single film student who does not mention Lars von Trier as someone who could be the embodiment of a creative genius but it is interesting how they speak about factors that makes him a genius which differs greatly from the idea of a ‘God-given talent’:

“I think the reason Lars von Trier is genius is because he is able to set up obstructions [...]. He makes some drastic decisions whether it comes down to the technical stuff and use of equipment or setting a frame around his films that is enormously encouraging for creativity and also for all the people he involves in his work [...] that is not really very divine.” (Katrine)

Mads and Christian describes von Trier as the greatest film director who ever existed but they emphasise that this is due to his ability to renew himself and creating films that do not resemble each other. There are some indications that the film students de-

mystify branded geniuses in the film industry by focusing on all the factors that make a good film, factors that one man cannot do alone. Due to the tools and methods they have learned through their education, the film students understand film making in a different way and this insight makes it less plausible to believe that a good film comes down to one creative genius:

“When you actually work with creativity it’s not very magical. It is not like ‘wow, how did they do that?’ It’s a way of working and a way of thinking [...] When we work so much with it at the school and constantly talk about it and develop a language about it, then it becomes very de-mythologised.” (Mads)

On the same topic, Christian emphasises that while a person might exist as a genius in popular social understandings, there is a common neglect of understanding how many people are involved with a production and how one man cannot make a great film alone:

“The one thing you never talk about when talking about film direction is that Lars von Trier, Woody Allen and Paul Thomas Anderson all had the same team behind these films. It’s a giant misunderstanding about this genius people speak of because this genius also works with the same people all the time [...] It’s not one man who makes a good film. It’s too big a work for one person to solve a two-hour long film. I think it’s rarely talked about because the director wants to appraise this genius feeling [...] we’ve had a lot of people from Lars von Trier’s team who came and spoke at the school and they all say that he is genius at what he does and what he does is film direction. He then also has a genius photographer, a genius sound engineer and a genius actor.” (Christian)

The quote simultaneously touches on the subject of collective creativity (which will be explored later in the analysis) but also how some standards exist for speaking about the genius that does not reflect the reality of filmmaking. It then becomes more interesting that the interview data from established directors show how those who are referred to as artists are also those who do not speak of the collective aspect of creativity. Scherfig and Bier are referred to as film directors while von Trier and Refn are referred to as artists by their interviewer. Vinterberg refers to himself as an artist and talks about an

experience that established him as an artist and made him proclaim “je suis l’artiste”. A continuous theme in von Trier’s interview is that true creativity is not something that can be achieved by the common man, and he states that substances such as drugs or alcohol was his way of reaching “the other world” where creativity is only found. Refn is referred to as a “radical film artist” and he describes how he can only relate to things that are somehow about him:

“As long as all roads lead back to me I am in high spirits. If they don’t then I have to manipulate them. Making art is extremely narcissistic, just like it’s exhibitionist.” (Refn)

These statements and the referral of an artist instead of simply film director are examples that can be interpreted as portraying a creative genius and relate to Christian’s point of the genius as commonly addressed in an individualistic manner.

Discussion and theoretical considerations

The analysis shows some contradictory notions on the perception of creativity in its nature. While the theoretical framework presents creativity as an ability everyone can learn and argue that it is not an expression of intrinsic talents, the film students emphasise that there are innate dispositions that determine an individual’s creative abilities. Abilities and talents are, however, presented as a discussion of nature versus nurture, which indicates childhood and society as a facilitator or obstructor for developing creative talents. There is a strong emphasis on the need for a childhood experience and thus it appears that there is a need for ‘proof of creativity’.

Two problems are observed regarding these perspectives: 1) the need for creativity to be nurtured means that the socialisation of gender is important; and 2) there is a stigma attached to pursuing a creative career unless creative abilities are validated.

The first problem refers to Butler’s (1990) notion of the production of a heterosexual matrix that naturalises or marginalises behaviours. If creativity is indeed masculine, it can serve as a binary structure that acts as constraints to the expression of gender. This means that there might not be the same freedom in the social construction of the self

between the sexes. In other words, if prevailing discourses on creativity are related to males and behaviours attached to creativity is gendered as masculine, then the sexes are not socialised into creativity equally. This binary structure indicates that there are barriers for women in pursuing a creative career because feminine behaviour in specific areas of creativity might not have been naturalised.

The second problem indicates an understanding of creativity as lingering with the 'divine', meaning that pursuing a career as a film director is ideally reserved for those who knew since childhood that it was the direction in which they wanted to go. The childhood experience can be seen as an expression of a realisation of innate abilities. The stigma attached appears in the analysis when difficulties are presented in stating that they want to pursue a career in filmmaking. This indicates that creative validation is not solely individual but also societal. These perspectives relate to the before mentioned heterosexual matrix of creativity as masculine and marginalising women. This could imply that a career in filmmaking is more often pursued by people who fit into the societal understanding of a film director. Furthermore, it indicates that the theoretical move of creativity from intrinsic abilities to 'open for all' is not rooted in common understanding.

There are several indications that the creative genius discourse still exists to some extent in societal understanding, and it is especially apparent in the secondary interviews. It is noticeable that the male directors are referred to as artist by their interviewer while Bier and Scherfig are not, which exemplifies the male preserve of creative genius. The film students portray a strong awareness of creativity as a collective task and dismiss the idea that one person alone can make a great film but there are indications that this understanding is due to the 'inside knowledge' achieved through their education. The suggested societal belief that a film depends on a creative genius is illustrated in the secondary interviews where the (artist) directors are credited as the lone man behind the film-masterpiece. It is interesting to observe that Bier and Scherfig speak of their films as an achievement that involves numerous people, which indicates that genius and collective creativity cannot be combined.

There is an interesting observation in regards to the strongly branded genius Lars von Trier, who says himself that he cannot achieve true creativity without substances. This ironically speaks against any innate abilities and being born into creativity.

The value chain of creativity

It has been identified that the film students speak of creativity very differently depending on different phases of the creative process, which can be illustrated as a value chain:



‘The good idea’ regards their own individual creativity and how they process their ideas. ‘Tools’ is the phase in which the film school enters and how the students through their education have learned methods and tools to evolve their ideas. ‘Execution’ is the actual production of the idea and this is where collective creativity becomes important. ‘Evaluation’ is where the creative product i.e. the film is assessed and this is done both individually and by observers.

The good idea

When the film students speak about individual creativity there is a clear pattern of emphasis on how they process ideas. When describing this process, it tends to concern where they get their inspiration from, how they process the ideas, and how they validate the ideas.

“All the ideas you are ever going to have are influenced by things you have seen before. So I think everything is a remix.” (Katrine)

Katrine describes how every idea takes inspiration from somewhere and she quotes Jim Jarmusch and says, “amateurs borrows, professionals steal”. Numerous statements from

the film students express that borrowing or stealing from everywhere and everything is actually an important method, which is exemplified in the following quote:

"You need to be fed with inspiration, especially because you can't invent everything yourself. I wouldn't even make films if it wasn't because there were other people who make good films that I liked so much that I wanted to make something that resembles it." (Nils)

Ideas are generally described as something fluid and uncontrollable; good ideas occur suddenly and they almost never occur when you are aware that you want to get a good idea. For this reason, the film students describe how crucial it is to write ideas down immediately and how important writing it down is for the creative process. Mads's object, a notebook, illustrates this (appendix 2: 4):

"I think a blank piece of paper [symbolises creativity]. A notebook is a big deal to me. It's such a private thing. No one is going to read it so I can write and do whatever I want. I can play and make my own universe. There are no expectations and it's where I come up with my funniest ideas [...] People are most creative when they are safe and it's a game." (Mads)

Tools

"All six director students in my class are taught the same tools but we make completely different films. We probably just use the tools differently." (Nils)

The importance of the film school becomes very evident in the interview data when it comes to the students resolving their ideas. Nils describes that the best thing about the film school is that you get to practice a lot and sort out what you like and do not like. Being taught different methods and tools in filmmaking is commonly described as learning ways to express ideas but it is stressed that the film school does not want to teach a right or a wrong way but focuses on teaching the students how to develop a personal language expressed in the way they tell stories and show things exemplified in the following quote:

“He [the teacher] really strives to be objective and so he says ‘I can see you’re interested in pure lines and that you use a lot of natural sidelight and you like to have passages of red in your image’. He reads it completely sober instead of saying ‘it was so moving and beautiful that you...’. He makes a virtue of not using value-laden words about the things you make. I think that’s really cool.” (Katrine)

Speaking of the same course, Katrin says:

“It seemed super random at first but then after you had done it lot, he [the teacher] came closer and closer to what you liked visually and what you liked mood wise. Suddenly it was like ‘oh apparently I have a personal style that I didn’t know of’. [...] It completely changed my life; the thought that my film will always be a Katrin-film.” (Katrin)

Some film students mention that creativity needs a framework to set some boundaries for your ideas and the school is described as setting these. This aspect also reflects back to the phase ‘The good idea’ since some tasks they were given by the school could have limited their idea processing within the tasks’ frames. Katrine’s object, a picture frame, (appendix 2: 3) illustrates this in how she has chosen a frame to symbolise creativity. She describes how it can even be less encouraging for creativity not to have a framework and being told, “you can do whatever you want”. Other students also express that it can be more difficult to create something without the school making some initial decisions and then letting the rest be up to them. They make the connection to how this is also important for a director to have methods and tools that make them able to provide a framework that shows a clear path and direction for the entire set.

Execution

There are strong indications that it is in the execution phase where ideas are validated. The validation is regularly described as entailing a lot of decision-making, following a gut feeling and collaborations between the film students. This phase is where there is a strong connection between the film students’ interviews and collective creativity. They express how the team they work with play a crucial part in validating ideas but it is also in this process that the film students emphasise that their creativity is challenged.

Ideas are generally describes as being in constant flow and a good idea one day can be a bad idea the next. Collective creativity seems apparent in the way people in different functions also have their expertise in certain areas that can contribute to how the idea is executed in the best possible way. However, in this process ideas become sensitive and can be lost:

Sometimes it feels like I almost don't do anything else at this school but make decisions. And there's no right or wrong so you have to have an inner voice and be in contact with it [...] It's the director's utmost task to make sure that as much of the initial little idea stands purely in the final result and in the meeting with the audience." (Katrine)

Some students express more difficulties than others in trusting the inner voice and the gut feeling, but they all emphasise that the balancing act of listening to the team's suggestions is important. While the students might express some creative challenges in the team work, it is still quite clear that having a team is one of the most important aspect of their education, which is exemplified in the following quote:

"What we learn at the school and what everyone says is that 90% of attending this school is gathering your team. It's not so much the classes and teaching. It's when I graduate I can gather a film crew with people I've gone to school with for four years and who knows me really well. That's why you want to go here, because it's a network". (Mads)

Evaluation

Based on the interview data it seems that the evaluation process mostly occurs individually. This becomes apparent in the way they only emphasise whether they liked the final outcome in the end. Some film students describe how they are their own worst critics and link the quality of their work to whether they felt like the idea they had were solved the way they had imagined it in the beginning. An unsuccessful balancing act of collective and individual idea execution is described as a reason for why they are not satisfied with the final outcome. The following quote summarises this view:

“One thing that is very difficult about this school is that you have 28.000 opinions all the time. Instead of me just writing a film alone, I have a scriptwriter and I have a producer. Then we have consultancy meeting with famous scriptwriters and teachers who all have some sort of opinion about the film that pushes it in different directions. If I don’t manage to stay true to myself then you listen to some good advice that end up torpedoing your film because you listened too much” (Christian)

Several students emphasise that the work they are less pleased with is the work where the film does not reflect them and their individual voice; however, they are aware that the individual voice is only found by making a lot of films. Their personal assessment of their work is greatly concerned with evaluating the decisions they made in the execution process. Nils describes how his best works were when he “did not try to fulfil other people’s idea of how a film should look” and Katrin emphasises that all the decisions you make are based on an entire life of liking certain things and these things are what should make the film your own.

The school is overall described by the students as providing objective feedback and acknowledging all work as valid in the sense that they do not place themselves as a tastemaker in whether their films are ‘good’ or ‘bad’. Katrine, however, mentions that the school’s evaluation of subject choices and role choices in the film can be thought provoking. She describes an episode that had quite an impact on her:

“I’d made a semester-film about a girl who had to have her uterus removed, and there was a teacher, I won’t mention any names, who, after I showed the film, asked if I’d thought about what kind of audience I was addressing with this film. And then I said ‘what do you mean?’ and he replied ‘I just noticed I wasn’t very touched in the final scene. I could see she was sad but I just wasn’t very moved. I’m thinking it might be because you are addressing a female audience and it’s actually a women’s film you’ve made’. [...] I think it’s so thought provoking that if you make a film that’s about women who have problems that only women can have then it’s suddenly a women’s film.” (Katrine)

Mads and Katrin also mention this episode, and Mads addresses it as a common film industry discussion on whether men can relate to women in the same way that women

can relate to men. Katrin describes how she was quite upset about the teacher's comments but it did not appear as an issue with fellow students:

"I thought it was such a strange moment. I don't believe that men can't relate to women. This idea that men are so simple that they can't relate to how a person is feeling when she has to go through something that makes her unable to have kids. [...] I was furious and I remember I walked out of the room and said 'what the fuck happened?' And everyone was just like 'ah that's okay, that was just his experience'." (Katrin)

Discussion and theoretical considerations

The analysis shows that there are different phases to creativity that portray a complex relationship between individual and collective creativity. The first phase wherein the good idea emerges are described as an individual process where ideas are processed personally by writing down ideas in a notebook. The students express a desire for creativity to have a framework in order to sort the flow of thoughts. These perspectives link well with Florida's (2002) understanding of creativity as "distinct kinds of thinking and habits that must be cultivated both in the individual and in the surrounding society". However, the students' emphasis on personal creativity also supports Taylor and Littleton's (2015) argument of the theoretical neglect to pay attention to individuals. The theoretical notion of individuals always creating in context as an argument for why creativity is always collective can be challenged based on the analysis above. When the film students describe the process of 'the good idea' it is emphasised as a personal and individual process. Thus it can be seen as an expression for a context within which individuals create that does necessarily reflect collectiveness. The students express how they are inspired from all aspects of life both films or people they have met and observed in this process which means that if creativity is always collective it is collective in the sense that it represents the individual's life world stemming from society. As the analysis shows, the collectiveness clearly enters when the idea has to be executed, which is described as a complex battle of balancing individual and collective ideas. There is an important observation on these perspectives. If films are seen as a 'remix' and the idea process concerns borrowing and stealing from existing films, it becomes especially problematic that the majority of films are directed by men.

If we visualise inspiration as a big lake you can fish in, and in this lake there are primarily one type of fish. That fish would be the common thing brought home to the dinner table. In other words, if the majority of creative output is male, the majority of creative inspiration is also male. This can be seen as an expression of the dominant “system of rules and concepts of knowledge in modernity” where feminist theories argue that women are seen as the ‘other’ and thus place constraints to feminine creative output (Butler, 1990).

It is interesting that the students understand the film school as objective when numerous statements indicate that the people from the school can push their film in different directions. This is especially exemplified in Katrine’s experience. The discussion of whether a story can be ‘relatable’ relates to a point about the quality of a story addressed in Group 3 where it is written that, “there is a dominant normative quality concept, which is very narrow and can exclude an eye for quality in different stories. This leads to women’s stories being discarded because they do not fit into the familiar story of what quality is”. Parallels can be drawn to the episode Katrine describes and raises the question of within what framework of quality the film school assessed her work. Katrine’s experience portrays the feminist notion of essentialism and standpoint theory. The teacher’s statement indicates that his knowledge of a story being relatable to both sexes appears to be grounded in the view of the male as an expression for humanity i.e. what people want to see in films is grounded in the male perspective. This view on essentialism links with Group 3’s argument of a narrow quality concept prevailing in the film industry that sort out ‘women’s stories’.

Creative excellence

In the definition list of key terms (see p. 2), creative excellence has been identified to address the following areas: ‘The creative product’ (assessment criteria for creativity); ‘Careers’ (those who succeed in creativity); and ‘Observers’ (gatekeepers those who decide creativity).

The creative product

When speaking about the creative product there is a unanimous emphasis on whether the film has a personal voice – a voice that comes from the director. The films students tend to speak of a ‘great’ film as a film that is personal and where you can sense the person behind it. There are some considerations about how some film can be more creative than others while still maintaining a level of quality. However, the students often emphasise the ability to bring feelings into the creative product as indications for the film’s excellence.

A personal voice is everything

“I think you define originality with the director having a very strong voice. That you can feel their identity in the film” (Mads)

The film students express that they attempt to make their film projects very personal. It is quite clear that finding your own personal voice is an aspect of their education that they are most concerned with. Mads defines a personal voice as instantly being able to see who made the film by saying that, “you can see it’s a Lars von Trier film within the first three seconds and you can hear it’s a Woody Allen film by the very first line”.

Katrin express that the personal voice comes from an ability to be honest:

“It’s important that it’s easy for you to give something of yourself and opening up [...] when I look at my class the one thing I see we all have in common is that we’re all like ‘here you go, here’s my heart’” (Katrin)

Christian describes how he focuses a lot on making film that are one-to-one with himself where “the feelings are mine but the story is a metaphor”. He believes that there are certain stories that only certain people can tell. He explains how he often uses female characters because he feels that he can write himself as a woman and he finds it interesting. However, he makes the example of not being able to tell a story about what is like to be an immigrant because he does not feel he has an approach to capture the feeling of being a ‘stranger’.

Excellence shows in feelings

Some students also believe that the product needs to have elements of risk in order for the voice and identity to become strong:

"I think it has a lot to do with being bold and not scared of anything. Daring to take risks without knowing exactly what will happen but just hoping for the best." (Katrin)

"It is all about giving something of yourself. Giving all your anxieties and depressions. It is often about whether you can sense that there is something at stake or not." (Christian)

Elements of risk taking can commonly be connected to originality and innovation, but it appears that this is not what concerns the film students. When they describe what makes a film good, they tend to describe the feeling the film brings instead of focusing on film craft e.g. the tools or method applied. Excellence shows in the observers' reactions to the product and novelty is not a 'requirement' for making a good film. This refers back to Mads's point of originality stemming from the strong voice:

"Excellence shows in whether people feel something [...] If I am sitting in the cinema and feeling something then it does not matter how it's made because it will be a film that moved me." (Christian)

"A film doesn't have to be completely new and innovative. It can still be really good even if it resembles something else." (Mads)

Careers

Describing the successful career reflects more general observations such as work ethic and requirements for individual traits but also relates to established directors and role models. The film students generally concentrate on a "burning passion" as a necessary requirement for success. When speaking about established directors and/or role models there are tendencies to assign a constant need to create as the ideal for a successful career. Furthermore, there is a strong emphasis on inevitable failures and how success is reflected in those who overcome them.

The ideal film director

“Someone who at the same time is extremely self-confident and self-absorbed but also really nervous and constantly worrying whether other people think what you are doing is good.” (Nils)

When describing the ideal film director there are clear patterns of the film students emphasising character traits that relate to confidence and also to ‘the world’ and to people, which is exemplified in the following quotes:

“You have to radiate some sort of leader charisma. And believe in yourself so people are willing to bet on you.” (Nils)

“Full of ideas and independent. What else? Adventurous. And sensitive. Having a sensory apparatus that is attentive. Taking in the world in an open way.” (Katrine)

There are several students who focus on the necessity of having a natural interest in people and a natural curiosity about life in order to be able to “tell stories”. It has been observed that there tends to be implicit emphasis on having to be ‘an interesting person’ who has something to say that will interest people. This appears to be more important than being skilled in the craft of filmmaking.

Make films or die trying

All film students have numerous statements that relate to the strong desire and need to create and produce as an expression for creative excellence. Their statements reflect that having a burning passion for making films is what makes someone successful. There are strong indications that the film students have a belief that the ones who do not ‘make it’ are those who did not want it enough or did not fight for it, which is seen in the following statements:

“[A successful career] requires a really high work ethic and a lot of stamina. It has to be so important to you to produce that there is no alternative to it. It’s not always the best people who make films because the best people might have been lazy.” (Nils)

"I think it's the strong desire and need to create that makes you creative. That you do not only like to consume." (Christian)

The quotes show that the film students do not consider success in creative excellence to necessarily reflect an individual's skills and talents but it is achieved by a strong work ethic and by continuously creating. Mads explains that it might be an illusion that "the world is fair to those who are really good" and they will naturally succeed but his impression is that might not be the case:

"Of course there's someone who's just not good enough. There's a competitive element [...] I also think many are drawn to it because of the prestige around it but find out it's tough and rare to achieve and realise it's not what they want after all. Then there are those who are just straight up unlucky. You didn't get the chance because someone didn't believe in you at that moment or didn't like your film – even though you're really fucking talented."
(Mads)

Numerous students express the belief that those who succeeded i.e. established directors have in common that they all fought a tough battle for their career – and success hence requires seeing filmmaking as a life-necessity.

Success leads to failure

When the students speak of established film directors there is a common thread of understanding their careers as a combination of successes and failures, and they address it as an inevitable part of a creative career. It is explained that all these failures are why you need to have a mentality of never stopping to make films no matter how much resistance you face as explored in the previous section. A career in filmmaking hence also has to be a balance between failures and success. Christian describes how he has a strategy for his career that is reflected in his observations of established directors:

"Most people start out with a small film. If that becomes a success, then they make a big film. But if the big film becomes a failure then they're done. So you have to have a method that ensures you'll keep working. So it's a 'career securement' to keep making films all the time. Don't care about all that other stuff." (Christian)

There are some interesting parallels to be drawn in the secondary interviews where the directors also address their failures. Scherfig had a success film with 'An Education' and she describes how someone told her, 'Congratulations! Now you're allowed to make three failures'. She explains that a success film creates some expectations of having "to serve a duty of gambling and make some sort of artistic bet" in your next work. When Vinterberg talks about his struggles of following up on this debut film success 'Festen', he describes a conversation he had with his mentor Ingmar Bergman:

"One day he told me one the phone 'Festen was a masterpiece, but what are you going to do now?' I spoke back and forth about my different ideas, and he replied 'When you have made such a film and haven't yet decided what your next one is going to be, then it's going to be very difficult for you. From now on you may never hold a film premiere without deciding what your next one is going to be. Because two things can happen; it'll either go terrible and then you will try to be strategic. Or even worse; it'll go well and so you want more of the success and then you'll become even more strategic. If you decide on your next project before you finish your film then the road from the heart to the hand is much shorter'."

(Vinterberg)

The above quote both reflects Christian's point on having a method that ensures you keep working through the failures and successes, but also how strategy and creative excellence cannot be combined. Being too strategic in their films is also what Bier, Trier and Refn states as causes for failures. For example, Bier describes how she after a success film thought she could "wink my eyes and then I'd made a hit" and was quite unprepared for her follow up film being seen as a failure. She describes that the experience taught her to never just "use your best tricks".

Observers

Observers are those who observe the creative product and can be characterised as gatekeepers due to a crucial role in assessing a creative product's excellence. The film students have mentioned the following gatekeepers: the audience; DFI; the film school; critics; the film magazine Ekko; and film festivals. The students portray a strong understanding of gatekeepers' assessment as subjective. The quality of creative product is connected to timing and how it 'fits' society at the time it is created when they

address the audience. When speaking of DFI as a gatekeeper there are several indications that they are understood as someone who do not judge you by your talent and merit, but your ability to 'sell yourself'.

There is no such thing as an objective assessment

"Often a film becomes a success because a lot of critics think it's really great. But if you have a film coming out and critics give it different stars, then what kind of expression is that?" (Christian)

The film students all express that the quality assessment of a film will always be subjective. They do not speak of any parameters wherein a film can be assessed as portraying creative excellence. It is quite clear that the students ascribe the success of a film to gatekeepers but they do not necessarily consider this an expression for the film's quality due to the subjective nature of quality assessment:

"There's obviously a culture elite; critics, filmmakers themselves, unions and the film school is also an institution that has a voice. [...] But it's really difficult to talk about creative excellence because you can't speak about it objectively. You can't say a film is bad because someone could stand next to you and think it's good. That's why a critic's job is so weird. It's a good job but it's only one man's or woman's voice. [...] Well I can also contradict myself a bit because masterful films come out sometimes that most people think are really great. The Lord of the Rings, The Godfather, The Matrix. There are some things everyone can agree is fucking well-made." (Mads)

As Mads mentions, there are examples of films that the majority of observers perceives as excellent which indicates that a quality assessment lingers with some sort of objectiveness. The film students attach levels of "randomness" and "coincidences" to films that are generally perceived as great and expresses that it has a lot to do with timing. The following quote summarises this view:

“I think there are some who capture something that fits with the time. I don’t think these people planned for it. For example, ‘Festen’ came out exactly at the right moment where people were so ready for this type of thing. I don’t even think Thomas Vinterberg knew anything about this.” (Christian)

Christian’s quote not only reflects back to how excellence rarely comes from strategy but also shows how context is crucial for the success of a film – or as Katrine puts it, “if what you have to say is interesting for society at the given moment”. Katrine explains that ‘the right moment’ stems from a need for something new and says, “there can be such a thing as an objective consensus on being really tired of watching dogma films or social realism in Danish films”. Mads connects what interests society to the personal voice and states:

“All art, whether it’s a film or a painting, derive from society. So what I’m commenting on or the stories I’m telling represent Danish society from the 90’s till now. [...] There’s lots of films that were complete failures when they came out but years later people realise that it’s actually a stroke of a genius.” (Mads)

Relatedly, Christian says, “if something has value, it will be found eventually” and Katrine provides the example of the artist Marcel Duchamp who exhibited a toilet in an art museum in the 30’s and signed it ‘Duchamp’. She describes how it was not acknowledged as something valuable or creative until thirty years later when it was praised as novelty and started a new art movement of placing objects in new contexts. These perspectives indicate that a creative product can possess a level of excellence in its nature regardless of the observers’ assessments but simultaneously it appears to be the observers’ assessments that make excellence definable.

You are only as good as you say you are

Although the students have not been exposed to gatekeepers other than the film school, they primarily address DFI and critics and speak of them as dominant gatekeepers for their career prospects. In regards to the film school most students express an understanding of their admittance as an expression for, and validation of, their

individual creative abilities but there is no evidence that the film school is considered a gatekeeper for a career in filmmaking:

"It's very few from the film school who will get to make a feature film. In itself that's a principle of coincidence. [...] It's survival of the fittest when we graduate. There isn't room for all of us even though we're only six students every second year. There's not enough director jobs in Denmark." (Mads)

Consequently, the film students focus on DFI as a career-gatekeeper because they are the primary source for funding in Danish films. This is a system they are not yet familiarised with but the students still express strong opinions on how they do not perceive DFI as distributing funding based on talent and merit:

"Everything is built around the person that comes and asks for money, because it's crazy expensive to make films. You have to be able to sell yourself so they trust you know what you're doing and that you'll get to the finish line. There's an aspect of 'fake it till you make it'. There are so many examples of directors who keep making bad films but keep getting money because they're good at walking into a room and say 'hey I know my shit'." (Nils)

The above quote reflects several similar statements from the other students and demonstrates how individual character traits appear to be considered crucial for career prospects. The secondary data cannot provide an industry perspective on what character traits have meant for their filmmaking opportunities but there are examples that speak of the trust Nils mentions. Bier mentions how awards "opens doors" for funding she would otherwise never get anywhere near of, and von Trier describes how he received funding for a film solely based on the title and nothing else. It is important to note that these examples are from a time when the directors had had successful films already but it shows how a successful film appears to be how trust can be established in the film industry.

DFI can make or break a new director

As mentioned, numerous students appear to consider DFI as having a huge impact on their careers. Mads describes them as “dealbreakers” and some students express some level of distrust in the consultants who decide which films are funded. Nils describes them as “has-beens” who does not always “get it” when it comes to creative excellence. Some students express that they acknowledge the huge role DFI has, but prefer not to think about it because it feels better to remain in the belief that they are in control of their own careers. There are several statements that show that the students believe that DFI is step one for a feature film when they graduate but after that first film it will become easier to go elsewhere. This is exemplified in the following:

“My impression is that if you, as a new director, go out into the world and ask for funding you won’t get it. It has to be in your home country you make film number one and then it’s easier to get money for the second one. It’s very difficult to make films in Denmark without DFI. That’s why I think it’s important that there’s a variation in consultants. [...] No matter how skilled a consultant is, it will always be subjective. I can imagine it’s very difficult to grant funding for a film you’d never see yourself.” (Mads)

On this matter, Nils also adds a perspective that in such a small country as Denmark it is naturally difficult to make something that is not mainstream because there are not enough people to have an audience for films that are even a bit unconventional. Christian and Katrine mention a well-received film called ‘Forældre’ that recently came out in cinemas as an example of how gatekeepers might be too concerned with a film’s ability to earn money that they lose sight of a film’s potential. Katrine describes the film as “fresh and a little bit different” and “more interesting than a lot of other Danish films coming out” and explains that the film had been done for two years but it was not believed to be able to earn money so it was not initially released.

Discussion and theoretical considerations

It is observed that concepts of novelty, appropriateness and value, which are theoretically associated to creativity, do not appear in the data. Rather, creative excellence is understood as the ability to portray a personal voice in the product.

Interestingly, this is also what the film school state as their primary educational goal – teaching the students to develop a personal expression. This indicates that the students’ understandings of creativity might be affected by the school’s understanding. In the film students’ statements, there are no mentions of how the assessment of the products reflects the actual quality of the product but they place the assessment as stemming from society and whether it fits. This understanding links to Amabile’s (1983) argument of creative activity occurring within the influence of social environment. These above perspectives raise the following concerns: 1) if creative excellence comes from society then societal knowledge effects creativity; and 2) the personal voice as an expression for creative excellence makes gender even more important.

Firstly, the idea of knowledge being created from nowhere is argued as an illusion in feminist theories. As explored previously, feminist essentialism and standpoint theory thus implies that when the male voice is made the point of departure for a societal understanding of creativity, an individual is socialised into creative masculinity. This relates to the second point of the personal voice and implicates that the feminine voices are the ‘other’.

The students’ strong views of a career as a director requires seeing filmmaking as a ‘life necessity’ portrays the theoretical understanding of a creative career as “the passionate attachment to the work and to the identity of the creative labour” (Gill & Pratt, 2008). Individual character traits appear to be understood as more important than talent and merit, which indicate that there is a specific identity associated with being a film director. The identity appears to be associated with portraying confidence and an ability to ‘sell yourself’. If we consider Hofstede’s (2001) notion of masculinity and femininity in connection to the film students’ understandings of a creative career it is clear that behaviour gendered as feminine do not match with a creative career. The notion of masculinity as attached to being assertive, tough and focused on material success links perfectly with the necessity of portraying confidence and the willingness to sacrifice everything for a career in filmmaking. Femininity as attached to being modest, tender and concerned with the quality of life speaks to the exact opposite of the film students’ understandings of a creative career.

The analysis shows that the identity of film director, in the meeting with gatekeepers, is closely related to traits of masculine attachments, which indicate a binary structure, wherein notions of femininity are constrained. Similarly, Group 3 argues that females are more gendered than males because, “the press and DFI speak of ‘woman director’ and ‘women’s films’ that serves to maintain females in specific roles and attributing them specific agendas”. This is supported by one of Group 1’s conclusion that states “it is much more difficult for a female director to debut with a feature film funded by DFI” and in the period of 2010-2015 only 18% of the funded films were made by a female director. The students do, however, not express an awareness of these aspects and thus their emphasis on hard work as a way to achieve success can be seen as an expression for the “toxic discourse of individualistic failure” as argued by Gill (2012) that neglects to understand structural inequalities. There are hence strong indications of gender blindness amongst the film students.

Another example of gender blindness is the lack of trust associated with the consultants at DFI, who is believed to play a crucial role in their career prospects. Not receiving funding is explained as an inability to acknowledge creative excellence and focus on financial gains. There is no mention of how the consultants might have implicit and unconscious biases in regards to gender. Group 3 argues that the consultants might have an idea that there is equality of the sexes but unintentionally value the familiar – and the familiar is male. Thus indicating that biases do exist and must be considered.

Gender representation

Speaking of gender and gender representation there is a general perception amongst the film students that within the context of the film school they are all equal. Creativity in its essence is generally addressed as requiring both masculinity and femininity. In relation to the industry the students have observed that there are traditional stereotypes prevailing but do not express concern about them. Some students express that there is a lack of female role models and consider that being able to reflect yourself in an established director is important for their own personal and professional development. The data also indicate that dialogues on gender inequalities are rare.

Lastly, there are several statements that assign history as a cause for male dominance in the film industry.

We are all equal. Or are we?

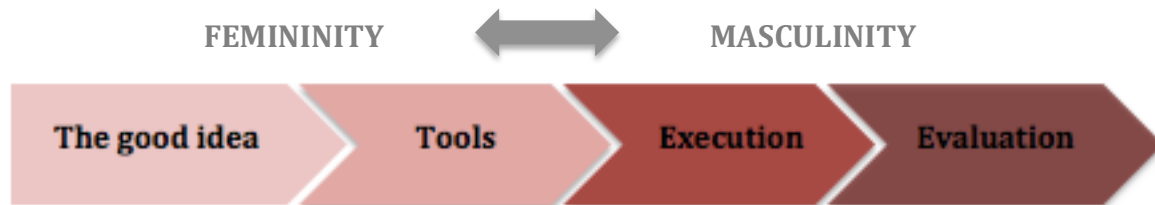
The students portray a strong awareness of the film industry being a male dominated world. However, there are several indications that the film school is considered a 'safe-place' in terms of gender:

"In this little micro cosmos, this constellation that is the school, it is a very different picture. I don't feel like there's anything I need to fight for in terms of gender. But it's something I'm aware exists." (Katrine)

When the topic of gender is discussed in the interviews all students express that they believe there is a 50/50 balance in regards to the entire school and as Christian puts it, "I don't see the problem under this roof [the film school] where everyone has equal opportunities to express themselves and everyone is just as dominating". The film students make it clear that while there might be some stereotypes in the film industry they do not recognise them in the film school. Creativity is understood as ideally having both masculine and feminine traits but they do not see these traits as connected to the sex. Mads explains this in the following quote:

"I believe femininity represents empathy, sympathy, understanding and a certain approach to emotions. [...] Masculinity represents action and concreteness, kind of the getting the abstract to the concrete part. I think everyone needs both in them, and some element will reflect in some more than others. I've met lots of women where the masculine energy is higher than the other [feminine]. But you need both because you need the female energy to understand what you're doing and the psychological aspect of it; how to make people feel what you feel. Then you need the other [masculinity] to concretise everything because you have to explain it to twenty people who are going to do the work. It can't be abstract at that point. It has to be concrete; how are we going to do it and act on it." (Mads)

As the quote shows femininity and masculinity appears to relate to different phases of the creative process. This aspect can be illustrated in the value chain of creativity in the following way:



The execution phase, in this context a film set, is where the film students express evidence of gender roles and gender perceptions. Statements on this matter appear as contradictory notions of understanding the role of director as having no gender, yet males are positioned as naturally being more equipped to be directors and females as fit for producers:

"A director is allowed to be detail oriented and completely forget to have an overview. Then the producer comes in and takes your hand and reminds you that we also need to look at this. I think it goes back to how men traditionally have been more allowed to explore their interests and with women there's been a sense in being sensible. [...] It's really difficult convincing people that you have a strong vision when you're a woman. It isn't really when you're a man." (Nils)

The film students make it clear that they do not agree that this perception reflects the abilities of the sexes but they turn to the roles of director and producer to explain how masculinity and femininity are often represented on set. They emphasise that the idea of males as naturally being better at portraying the masculine traits that are needed in this phase whereas females need to prove something stems from a social and cultural heritage:

"Society plays a huge role. There's something very general of the culture in how toy commercials for boys praise competition and for girls it's tea parties, equal hierarchy and being proper. Even in elementary school I was taught how girls' hierarchy was a line and boys' was a pyramid. Boys will always fight their way up and girls just accept everything. That's what my female teacher taught me." (Mads)

The students highlight decision-making processes on set as an area where females in particular are sensitive to gender prejudices. It is explained that if a director expresses a need to take their time to make a decision, it can be seen as a sign of weakness and a lack of determination. Some students describe how females tend to be more exposed than males exhibiting the same behaviour:

“There is some macho bullshit about how women can’t make fast decisions. Something like ‘we need an answer now!’ and then the woman is like ‘oh I need to think about it for a minute’. I think that’s the typical cliché. And that she can’t lead a group of thirty men and portray that authority connected to the job.” (Christian)

You need to look the part

As explored in the previously the students tend to distance experiences of gender inequality to exist outside the parameters of the school and although the film students themselves tend to focus on intrinsic factors that make a good director it appears that in their meeting with the industry they are exposed to certain expectations that relates to stereotypes:

“I feel it a little bit when I’m out on set or when I’m meeting with people who are experienced in the industry. Then I feel like I need to prove myself a little extra. I remember one of the first photographers I worked with told me the first time he met me that he thought it was very difficult to imagine me leading a set because I had a soft and sweet voice.” (Katrine)

This topic is not spoken of by a lot of students but Nils expresses a strong dissatisfaction with some teachers at the film school whom he considers to make stereotypical assumptions about students, which he describes, in the following quote:

"I was telling a photography teacher about this film idea and afterwards he looked at me very strangely and said that it seemed as if Luke Skywalker just walked in and told him about the dark forces [...] It's so annoying being told that you look like a nice schoolboy who's doesn't have any darkness inside. As if I'm only meant to do something pretty and sweet just because he thinks I look skinny and feminine." (Nils)

Nils further explains how he has observed this with his fellow students as well and provides the example of how e.g. his classmate who goes to the gym a lot is expected to make action films but he actually makes "soft and feely" films. Nils connects this to the general perceptions of what type of films men and women make and states that he believes "it doesn't mean men and women can make the exact opposite" but he believes society affects you to believe so.

There is a need for more female role models

"When we have lectures on film history in the school then 90% of the films shown are by male filmmakers. When we go through Danish film history one woman is mentioned and that's an actress." (Mads)

Role models are described as someone you can look up to and be inspired by and that it can help to map out their own career seeing how other people did it. It is greatly mentioned that role models are not necessarily established directors but also teachers at the school or someone outside the school they admire for certain abilities or character traits. Their fellow students are also described to be a great source for inspiration. When it comes to industry related role models, some film students express that there is not a lot of diversity. Katrine and Katrin especially emphasise that it has been difficult for them to find role models they can reflect themselves in:

"I have some sort of need to find other female directors I can mirror myself in [...] because within Danish film there's not really any female director where I think I stylistically resembles them [...] I would really like it if I could find a female director who was a bit older than me, and who works in the industry and learned to navigate in it." (Katrine)

"I truly believe that the reason it took me so long to get here is because I didn't have enough female role models in this film direction industry." (Katrin)

It is not something we can talk about

"I think there are some strong role models here [at the film school], female teachers, who are yet still kind of like, 'not to sound like a feminist but wouldn't it be great if there were equally as many role models for men and women...wait, no no, I'm not a feminist'." (Katrin)

Katrin expresses strong concerns in regards to the lack of addressing gender and has observed that there is some sort of shame associated with feminism. She considers it very problematic that people appear to be scared and/or cautious to talk about gender. These perspectives are also reflected in other students' statements:

"Our way of speaking about equality and diversity in Denmark is very polarised and you'll quickly be called out for being too politically correct or for being a feminist. You really have to be careful whom you'll piss off when you start talking about it. People tend to be like, 'ugh, do we have to talk about this again?'" (Mads)

"It often becomes unfriendly. I think men often feel attacked when you begin to speak about equality, as if they took something from us. Whereas I don't think it's about us against them. It's just about acknowledging that there's an uneven distribution of resources in Danish film." (Katrine)

It stands very clear from the film students' statements that feminism is taboo at the school and attempts to speak about it does not appear as constructive conversations but rather becomes "heated debates". There is a level of discomfort associated to it and some students believe that attempts to open dialogues about gender are rarely welcomed.

It has been a man's world

"Film history is dominated by men but what's really funny is that before being a film director was a prestige-job it was actually women who had it. There were a lot of women in the beginning of film history and female directors who did very brave things, but at that time the director role wasn't something you really noticed. As soon as it became prestigious it suddenly became men from there on. [...] History and culture has set deep traces. For example, when you say director, the first thing that pops into my head is a man, a white man. That element comes from deep traces that stems from one hundred years of an industry dominated by a sex and a colour." (Mads)

The above quote shows an interesting perspective on the role of men and women in film history. Other students also mention the male dominance in the film industry as explained by history. They mention how the weight of equipment has naturally meant that there were a majority of men working on film sets because there simply was a need for big men who could carry heavy things around. They express a belief that this has changed in today's world where modern equipment is much lighter, and yet as Christian describes it, "it's very rare you see a woman working in the light department". A few students mention that a set is often dominated by "locker room talk" due the majority of male workers. The film students consider the majority of males in most job areas of the film industry problematic. They state that an equal balance is desirable. When speaking of gender inequality, all students mention quotas but without considering it as a proper solution to the problem. The following sentence summarises this view:

"I would hope that it could be solved in a different way. It should be the best man for the job, oh see, the best person for the job. People need to be looked at equally and I can imagine it's a terrible feeling getting in somewhere knowing that there had been a quota." (Mads)

There is a clear pattern of the film students expressing that change is happening but slowly because it is society that has to change. For example, Nils says it is a "1000 year process" and Mads says, "old generations has to die". The only solution begins at the root of the problem; what you are being taught as a child as exemplified in the following quote:

"If we're going to do something about it then it has to happen very early. We need to look at how we talk to our kids and what type of pressure we place on girls and what type of pressure we place on boys. I think it [gender] should be part of your education." (Katrin)

Discussion and theoretical considerations

The analysis brings an interesting perspective to the film students' understandings of creativity and gender. They present a differentiation of feminine and masculine creativity that are situated in different phases of the creative process. Feminine creativity is needed to connect to the emotions necessary for finding a personal voice and telling a good story, but when the film has to be executed it requires masculine creativity. This understanding of creativity thus implies that feminine creativity is not represented in a phase that meets the industry. As presented in the section 'The value chain of creativity' it was shown that individual and collective creativity occur in different phases, which can be connected to the same phases for feminine and masculine creativity; the idea phase represents individual and feminine creativity, and the execution phase represents collective and masculine creativity. The crucial problem with these notions according to performative gender theory is that a woman has barriers to the behaviour attached to masculine creativity, but a man can easily use both. Furthermore, feminine creativity being constructed as individual implies that it connects more to agency than structure, which means that it is not an expression of a pattern in society to the same degree as masculine creativity.

The film students tend to express contradictory notions of gender. Their statements show that equality is assumed in the context of the film school but there are evidence of gender roles and gender stereotypes in their statements. The film students situate the role of director as traditionally male but underlines that this is not represented in the context of the film school wherein it has no gender. Gender understandings are thus distanced from the film school, and any evidence of stereotypes is believed to exist solely in the film industry. The stereotypical associations to a film director is not expressed by the majority of students and can hence both be seen as a lack of awareness or as an expression for it not being a common problem.

The experiences of Katrine and Nils, however, show another example of performative gender theory. The notion of gender involving the performance of an ideal (that nobody inhabits) that is part of a power system that maintains distinctions is illustrated in the structural view of masculinity and femininity in filmmaking. Katrine was not perceived to portray the expected level of masculinity and Nils was perceived as portraying femininity – which indicate that their gender performances did not fit into the dominant convention of gender in the context of the film industry.

Group 1 and Group 3 argue that the lack of female role models is contributing to the male dominance of the film industry. The division of gender can serve as a confirmation of what males and females can achieve success in and guide career choices in the direction of the familiar. Hence, initiatives to make female role models more visible could contribute to a more equal gender representation. This view is supported by the analysis wherein some students express a desire for more female role models. Role models are described as important for learning how to navigate in the industry but also serve as inspiration for methods in filmmaking. The lack of females in the film industry means that males becomes the primary source for mirroring and thus reproduces stereotypical associations.

The analysis shows that gender is taboo and it is a topic that is difficult to have a dialogue about. This perspective supports Gill's (2012) and McRobbie's (2011) arguments that there is not a language available to address gender inequality. This could mean that there are experiences of gender inequality that might exist unknowingly and will keep operating and be reproduced because it is not addressed. Result from Group 2's report show that this is an industry problem and they recommend actions that replaces assumptions of equality with common knowledge, and consider that this consciousness will contribute to gender diversity. This supports Butler's argument of the possibility of disruption in gender understanding coming from consciousness.

There is nothing in the data that indicates that the film students portray gender differences and/or gender inequalities as being caused by individual agency i.e. patterns of motivated acts; rather there is a strong societal-structure view where social learning

experiences are explained as a cause. Their understanding of structure appears to be historically embedded due to the students' tendencies to draw on film history to explain inequalities. The students do not consider direct action such as quotas a solution (which is also the view of Group 1, 2 and 3). Rather, the students appear to have a strong belief that society will eventually 'fix' it.

Conclusion

The following chapter will provide a conclusion to the study wherein the research questions are answered. Lastly, the master's thesis will suggest recommendations for further actions.

This master's thesis explored how gender identity interacts with students' understandings of creativity, and whether this is reflected in career prospects and ambitions. The theoretical framework was based on literature on creativity as occurring within a complex social context (Amabile, 1983) and poststructuralist and postmodern feminist theories that follows Butler's (1990) claim of gender as socially constructed. The contextualisation addressed gender and creativity in the creative industries (e.g. Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011). The research questions were explored through a qualitative research approach that relied on interviews with film students, secondary interviews with established film directors, and reports from DFI task force groups. The data was situated and analysed within a poststructuralist discourse framework in order to account for the phenomena's embedded discursive practices. The study's analysis and discussion were presented within the following themes: The myth of the genius; The value chain of creativity; Creative excellence; and Gender representation. The following sections present the conclusive statements and thus answer the research questions.

How do students construct their understandings of creativity?

The students' understandings of creativity are constructed through a discussion of nature vs. nurture. There are contradictory notions of the relationship between innate creativity and societal affects. Creativity is understood as an ability that ideally occurs in childhood and society serves as a facilitator or obstructer for the developments of the innate creative abilities. However, students' statements also present creativity as an ability that can be learned by applying particular ways of thinking. There is a dismissal of the myth of the genius that represents creativity as innate dispositions wherein the students argue for the importance of collective creativity. There is a strong emphasis on creativity and creative excellence as an expression of a strong personal voice and thus the individual is highly represented in creative work.

The evidence of an under-representation of women in key creative roles in the creative industries and the suggested male preserve of creativity, combined with the above findings of the students' understandings of creativity highlight an importance of the socialisation of gender in regards to creativity. Through Butler's (1990/1999) notions of the heterosexual matrix and performative gender theory, questions emerge as to

whether the sexes are socialised into creativity equally and have the same freedom in the social construction of the self. The students' emphases on childhood 'proof of creativity' and society's role are believed to indicate a binary structure that naturalises or marginalises behaviour in creativity. The close connection between creativity and individuality presented by the students further the argument for the importance of gender in understandings of creativity.

What is the relationship between their understandings of gender identity and creativity?

The students' statements present creativity as a relationship between femininity, i.e. the approach to feelings, and masculinity, i.e. the concrete actions. Interestingly, character traits constructed as feminine are argued to belong in individual creativity and is not ideally represented in funding processes and on film set i.e. in the industry. The students explicitly understand the role of director as having no gender. However, statements show how males are described to have a social advantage due to understood differences in boys' and girls' upbringing and the traditional job division of a male director and a female producer. While the students acknowledge stereotypes and gender roles to prevail in the film industry, there is limited evidence of the students connecting these to the film school. Gender seems invincible in the context of the film school and gender is not described as something that concerns or affects creativity and creative excellence. Furthermore, the film students' statements show that gender is not a topic that is considered constructive to address in conversations. Consequently, no conclusive evidence of a relationship between gender identity and creativity in the students' understandings has been found.

The above perspectives lead to a curiosity as to the causes of the limited gender awareness amongst the students. The application of performative gender theory and feminist standpoint theory to examples provided by the students indicates that the male voice is often the point of departure for societal understandings of creativity. This places the woman as the 'other' and ultimately constrains feminine creativity. The implications of this argument make the relationship between gender identity and creativity crucial for gender equality. If the norms of 'doing' gender is disrupted through consciousness as argued by Butler (1990) then the lack of awareness implies gender

roles to be socially re-produced and eternalised. The question then emerges as to how spaces can be created that allow for conversations about gender that can activate consciousness.

How do these understandings interact with their career prospects and ambitions?

The interviews revealed that the students' understandings of creativity influenced their careers prospects and ambitions. However, there are no profound findings that their understandings of gender identity had an impact. The influences of creativity understandings are represented in the students' emphases on childhood experiences with creativity, that serves as a validation of pursuing a creative career. Furthermore, the students express a belief that a career in filmmaking is achieved through devotion to the work, luck and whether the personal voice fits into society at the given moment. The students emphasise individual traits as more important for career prospect than skills and talent and argue that a filmmaking career requires an ability to balance success and failure. There is a strong awareness of gatekeepers and their role in the students' future careers, but focus is given to gatekeepers' abilities to acknowledge the individual's creativity and the creative excellence of a film.

Despite the students' awareness of gender inequality and the male dominance in the film industry, no attention is given to gender in connection with career prospects and ambitions. This is considered to represent the "toxic discourse of individualistic failure" (Gill, 2012). The image of a gatekeeper as having creativity biases but not gender biases, supports notions of gender blindness amongst students. Through Hofstede's (2001) notions of masculinity and femininity, it was shown that behaviour gendered as feminine do not fit in with the understandings of a creative career. Overall, the study presents several indications that gender is in fact an issue, and questions emerges as to why it appears as a non-issue amongst students, especially given their awareness of industry gender inequality. It is observed that when students mention gender inequality they distance it from the industry and link it to the general values and cultures of society. The implication of this perspective is that there are no specific actions to be taken. Consequently, any suggestions of changes in the film industry for gender equality implicates that nothing will change if the values and cultures of society do not change.

Recommendations

The following section presents ideas and opinions for actions to be taken in regards to the findings and understandings achieved through this master's thesis. These are not conclusive recommendations but describe a landscape of practices that possibly could inform a productive dialogue on creativity and gender.

It is considered that the students benefit from an individual and collective awareness of gender understandings, gender roles and stereotypes. In particular, it is suggested that students are attentive to the following:

- A masculinisation of stories.
- Actions guided by gender perceptions by teachers, students and on film set.
- Dialogues on creativity that favours males and masculinity.

The film school can become an active force in changes that increase awareness of gender roles and limit gender inequalities. The following actions are suggested:

- Include more female directors in film history classes.
- Increase the number of female guest lecturers and female external collaborators on students' film projects.
- Develop and implement strategies for creating an open space to address gender.
- Mentor programmes that 'dress the students' for their meeting with the industry with a particular focus on increasing visibility of female role models.

DFI is a dominant gatekeeper for the students' future careers in filmmaking and should therefore have a visionary strategy for talent development and career paths that ensures diversity. It is suggested that the strategy includes the following aspects:

- Clear target goals for diversity, e.g. percentages that state a desired division of funds amongst the sexes.
- Film consultants should be equipped with methods and tools that help to limit gender biases and prejudices e.g. through seminars and workshop.
- Improvement of the talent development programme as to ensure equal opportunities for access to the director's first feature film.

The creative industries are considered to serve as a common representation of creative work. The industry as whole is considered to benefit from the following:

- Awareness of the possible feminisation and masculinisation of job roles.
- An increased focus on collective creativity to limit notions of the creative genius.
- Consciousness of gender bias in order to increasingly acknowledge creative potential in both sexes.
- 'Novelty' as a concept of creativity should be re-examined and reflected upon and perhaps include the importance of the personal voice, which could also serve to limit the notion of the creative genius.

The media is commonly considered to have significant role in societal understandings, and hence understandings of creativity and gender. It suggested that a 'Code of Conduct' is developed in regards to how directors are addressed in the media. It could include the following elements:

- Films directed by a woman should not be referred to as a 'woman's film'. This also includes films with female lead characters.
- Awareness of the myth of the genius and its masculine associations as to reflect how female and male directors' achievements are addressed.
- Gender diversity in mentions and publicity of directors e.g. Politiken implemented a gender diversity strategy for film directors and the percentage of mentions of female director's increased from 25% in 2013 to 40% in 2014 (DFI, 2016).

Further research is suggested to contribute to the dialogue on creativity and gender identity in relations to career prospects. The following studies are suggested:

- Qualitative studies on female director's experiences in regards to the funding processes.
- Investigations of barriers in a director's first feature film.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Transcripts

Transcript excerpt

The following is a small excerpt of a transcript to provide an example of how the interviews were transcribed (please note that all transcripts are in Danish):

Start Time	End Time	Transcript	Speaker
00:00:02.2	00:02:17.7	Introduktion	
00:02:17.7	00:02:25.6	Vi kan starte med at snakke om kreativitet generelt. Hvordan forstår du det at være kreativ og hvad forbinder du med en kreativ person?	I
00:02:25.6	00:03:33.7	Jeg sad og tænkte lidt over det og det jeg har skrevet ned er at for mig handler kreativitet om en lyst til at producere. Det at være kreativ er også noget med at man har brug for at lave noget. Det føles ikke som en nødvendighed at der er et emne jeg skal sige noget om for så kan jeg ligeså godt skrive en bog. Det er fordi at der er noget materiale som jeg godt kan lide at arbejde med. Så jeg har bare lyst til at lave noget ellers så bliver man i	N

		dårligt humør eller deprimeret hvis ikke man kan føle at dagen har haft et afkast i noget produkt som jeg kan lide. Så jeg tror både at det med at kunne lide at arbejde med noget materiale som får mig er film og så lysten til at producere og lave noget.	
00:03:33.7	00:03:48.1	Det er noget som også er en del af dig som person? Det kan helt overskygge om du er glad eller ej?	I
00:03:48.1	00:05:01.6	Ja det er noget der har været der siden jeg var helt helt lille. Altså at være kreativ på den måde at jeg har tegnet og lavet tegnefilm og lavet musik. Jeg har altid vildt godt kunne lide at se film og har godt kunne lide at gå rundt og forestille mig... Jeg kunne godt lide Jurassic Park fx da jeg var lille. Jeg kunne godt lide at gå rundt i haven og forestille mig at der kom en dinosaur ud der og føle at jeg var inde i den verden. Så tror jeg det med at lave tegninger fx er en måde at være inde	N

		<p>i den verden på. Det har noget at gøre med en lyst til at være i film eller godt kan lide film. Det er selvfølgelig noget med at være meget meget glad for noget, et medie, men også noget med at jeg ikke er tilfreds med ikke selv at lave det. Jeg kan ikke bare gå i biografen og tænke det var en god film og nu går jeg bare hjem. Når jeg ser noget jeg syntes er godt så vil jeg gerne lave det selv også og får lyst til at kopiere det</p>	
00:05:01.6	00:05:08.1	Du har haft det sådan lige siden du var lille og inden du startede her?	I
00:05:08.1	00:05:23.5	Ja det har det. Jeg har altid elsket at tegne efter eller hvis der var noget musik jeg kunne lide så prøvede jeg nærmest at lave noget i samme genre. Så jeg tror det har rigtig meget at gøre med at have lysten til også at producere det og lave det.	N
00:05:23.5	00:05:26.2	Hvornår vidste du at du gerne ville være instruktør?	I
00:05:26.2	00:05:55.4	Det vidste jeg måske da jeg var 12-13 år. Da jeg	N

		<p>fandt ud af at kameramand og instruktør ikke var det samme. Og hvordan det foregik at indspille en film. Jeg troede i starten at det tog ligeså lang tid at indspille en film som den faktisk varer. Det var meget abstrakt. Men da jeg så fandt ud af hvad det var så tænkte jeg det var det jeg skulle være.</p>	
00:05:55.4	00:06:15.6	<p>Du nævnte at du knytter kreativitet til et medie. Kan kreativitet være anderledes afhængigt af hvad ens medie er?</p>	I
00:06:15.6	00:06:43.4	<p>Nej, jeg tror det er den samme følelse. Hvis man gerne vil være musiker så elsker man musik. Så hører man noget man synes er fedt og så har man lyst til at prøve at spille det selv. Eller hvis man vil være forfatter så læser man ting man synes er fantastiske og så prøver man at skrive noget lidt lige sådan. Så på et eller andet tidspunkt har man jo udviklet noget stemme selv så er det lidt mindre kopiarbejde.</p>	N

Full transcripts

Full transcripts are stored on Google Drive and can be accessed by following the link below. The link will lead to a folder called 'Transcript' where each interview is located in an individual document named after the interviewee's name:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B3H0GTBKZxAWZmE3ZjNrbERsa0U?usp=sharing>

Appendix 2: Objects

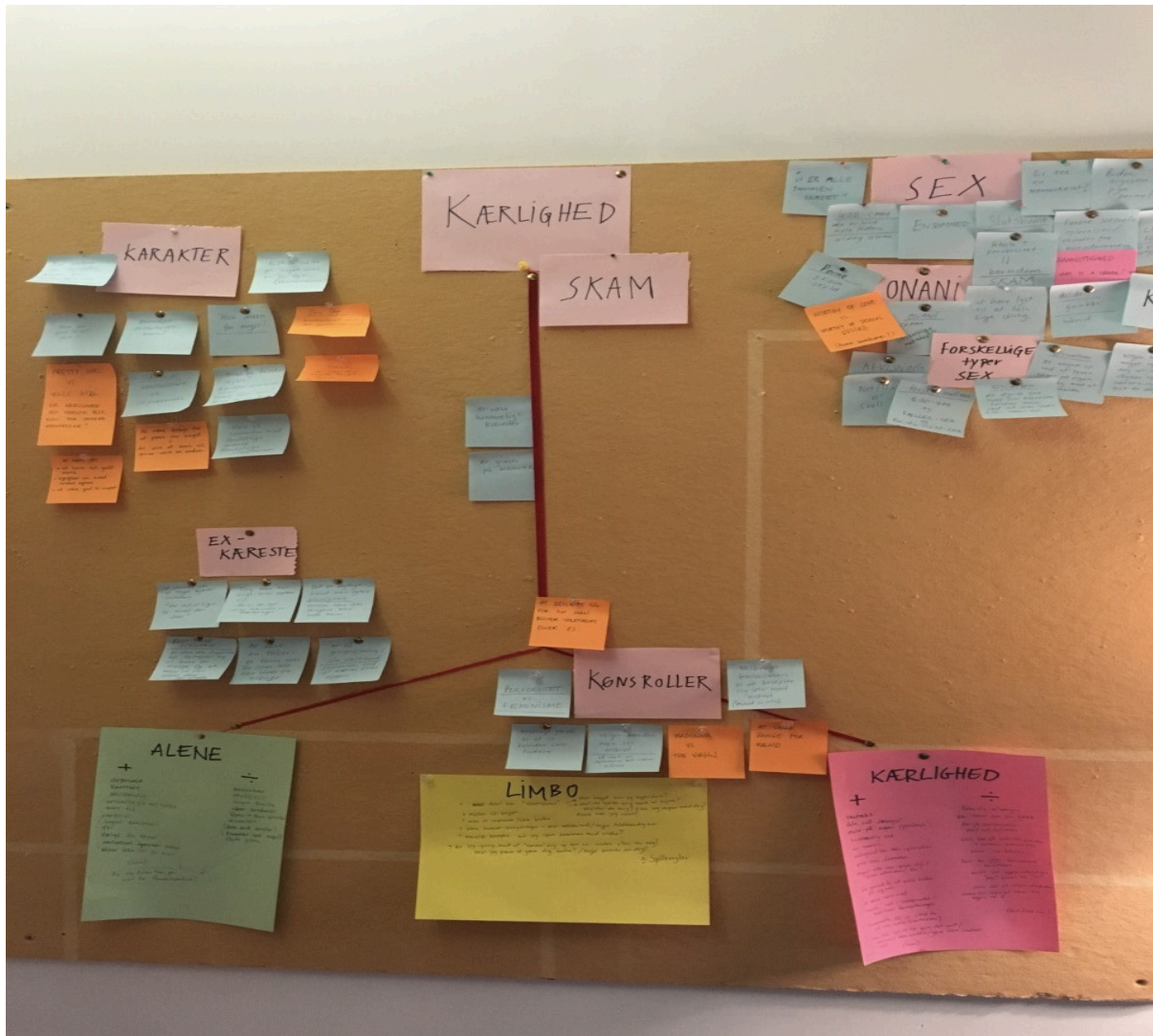
The film students were asked to bring an object/photo of something that symbolised creativity to them. A transcript of their statement accompanies the objects presented below:

Object 1: Christian



"This photo from the film 'A Woman Under the Influence'. The film is about a woman who's mentally ill and has a very difficult time. She's trying to get better but her husband loves who she is when she's ill. That's the person he loves. Creativity is a strange thing because sometimes you wish you were without it because it would be an easier life. But in one way it's also amazing that you have to listen to yourself. So I think it's a disease. Those who are good at can't stop doing it. But I's really hard."

Object 2: Katrin



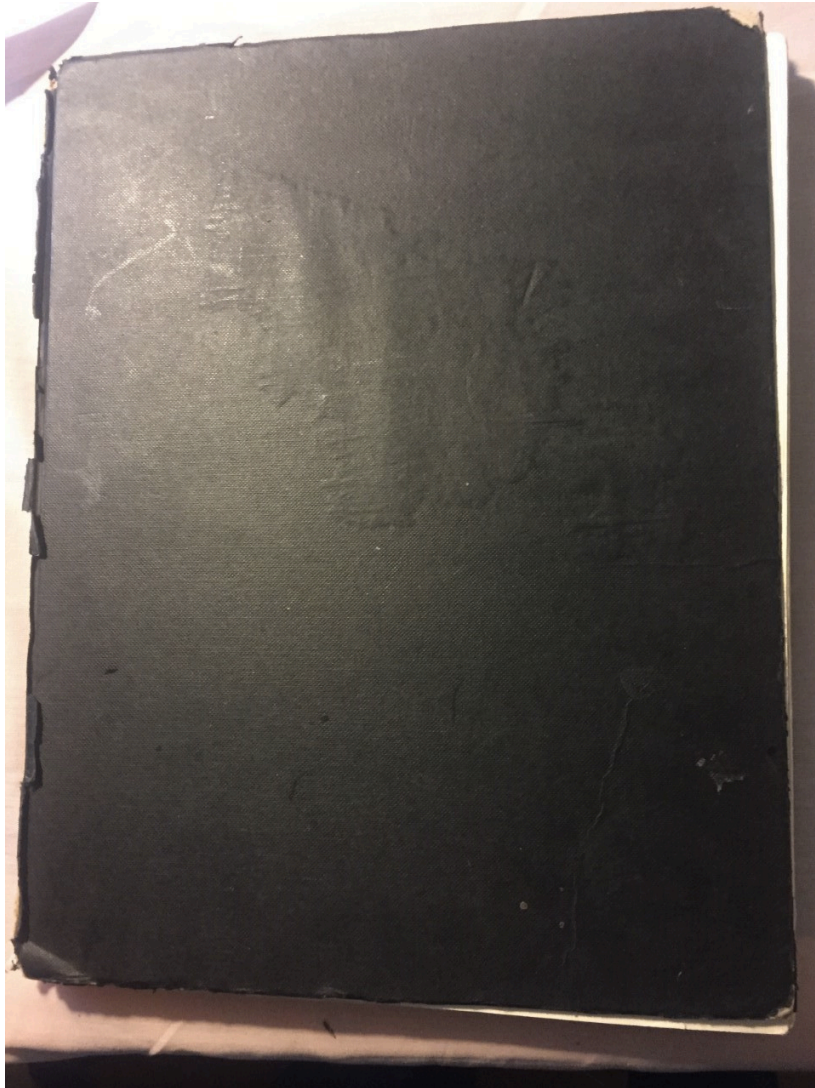
"I think it's my wall of post-its is a really good image of creativity. You can sort out in your mind and it's been a cool process where everything is allowed to go the wall. Also things you kind of new would never be in the film. Just everything that's in your heart and you want to say because I had a need to talk about them. It's funny to look at now because it's so fucking random but something did come out of it."

Object 3: Katrine



"I got this as a present from my friend. She made it herself and it shows my star sign and you can turn on lights she installed so it shines. My friend who gave it to me is like the embodiment of creativity. We were at a summerhouse once and our shoes got soaking wet after we had gone for a walk and it started raining. Her first instinct was to put her shoes in microwave when we got back. Of course it didn't work and the house smelled terrible. But I really think that embraces what creativity is. Just doing something without thinking about it. I have think this symbolise how creativity needs a frame. If I don't have a framework to be creative in, my mind goes completely blank."

Object 4: Mads



"I think a blank piece of paper. A notebook is a big deal to me. It's such a private thing. No one is going to read it so I can write and do whatever I want. I can play and make my own universe. There are no expectations and it's where I come up with my funniest ideas. No one is ever going to see it and it's just for myself. People are most creative when they are safe and it's a game. When it has a playful element, just like children are extremely creative"

Object 5: Nils



"When I look at these images from this music video I instantly want to make a film. There's no logic in the images, there's no story told and there's not a lot of lyric in the song that can be transferred to the images. Yet it still goes together perfectly with the music because there's emotions and moods, and spaces and universes, that makes the sound match the images. There are small blip-sounds in the sound that is visualised with small light bulbs turning on and off. In the energetic chorus there's a game-boy version of Björk who's running. It goes matches the feeling so well. It's simply inspired. It's made with the method 'when I hear this warm little sound my brain associates it with a small light bulb'. The video is super personal in its expression; it's a pure round of Gondry's feelings and associations. There's nothing else but pure makers-joy in this video. You can tell he enjoyed building the set and he himself wanted to live in it. It's so infectious. It's the most beautiful little universe in images. An important factor is that you can see you everything is made. There are no crazy effects. It's kind of 'homemade'. That makes it very human and inspiring. You think 'I could also make this small set in my flat'. It makes you want to do it I think."

Appendix 3: Secondary interviews

Lars Von Trier

Von Trier, L. (2014). '*Von Trier tørlagt, nøgen og på røven*' interviewed by Nils Thorsen. Article published 29/09. Politiken. Denmark.

Accessible on: <http://politiken.dk/magasinet/interview/article5555223.ece>

Lone Scherfig

Scherfig, L. (2010) '*Sådan lavede jeg An Education*' interviewed by Peter Schepelern. Article published 04/03. Ekko. Denmark.

Accessible on: <http://www.ekkofilm.dk/artikler/sadan-lavede-jeg-an-education/>

Nicolas Winding Refn

Winding Refn, N. (2016). '*At være Nicolas Winding Refn*' interviewed by Jacob Ludvigsen. Article published 19/05. Soundvenue. Denmark.

Accessible on: <http://soundvenue.com/film/2016/05/at-vaere-nicolas-winding-refn-200319>

Susanne Bier

Bier, S. (2016). '*Susanne Bier om Oscars og lammende lussinger*' interviewed by Majbritt Lacuhr. Article published 03/05. Alt for Damerne. Denmark.

Accessible on: <http://www.alt.dk/kultur/interview/susanne-bier-om-oscars-og-lammende-lussinger>

Thomas Vinterberg

Vinterberg, T. (2015) '*Når tingene styrter sammen, må man bygge dem op på ny*' interviewed by Kristoffer Zøllner. Article published 26/04. Berlingske. Denmark.

Accessible on: <http://www.b.dk/personlig-udvikling/thomas-vinterberg-naar-tingene-styrter-maa-man-bygge-dem-op-paa-ny>

Appendix 4: Task force groups' reports

Group 1

The focus of the report is 'the talents' access to a film debut by investigating new talents involvement in festivals and the concept 'NDS præsenterer' (A series of events in Cinemateket called 'New Danish Screen presents') and promotional activities in Ekko (film magazine), Politiken (newspaper) and CPH PIX (film festival).

Joof, H., Egelund Siig, M., Fischer, T., Frellesen, S., Schelin, K., Rosenring, N. K. Stærmose, B. and Rosendahl, C. (2016). *Tolkning og botanisering i DFI's rapport: Undersøgelse af kønsfordelingen i dansk film*. DFI. Denmark.

Accessible on:

http://www.dfi.dk/Branche_og_stoette/Mangfoldighed/Koensdiversitet.aspx

Group 2

The focus of the report is to investigate the financial learnings from DFI's investigation of gender diversity in Danish film. They have included supplemental data and contributed to knowledge and data to gender distribution. Their main conclusion is that female filmmakers are just as profitable as male filmmakers in regards to ticket sales.

Erhardt, B., Palmquist, H., Nielsen, H. B., Jarek, J., Jensen, J., Mouritzen, M., Hanson, M. K., Leegaard, P. D., Ezra, R., Pedersen, S. J., Christensen, S., Jørgensen, S. G., Thomsen, S. L., Pedersen, K. and Barslund, K. (2016). *Bud på økonomisk lære af DFI's undersøgelse af kønsfordeling i dansk film*. Edited by Pedersen, K. DFI. Denmark

Accessible on:

http://www.dfi.dk/Branche_og_stoette/Mangfoldighed/Koensdiversitet.aspx

Group 3

The main focus of the report is to discuss structures and systems that creative gender inequality by investigating existing career paths and filmmaking processes that unintended makes it easier for certain groups of people to establish a career in films. Solutions are presented as to how the gatekeepers of certain structures and systems can support change.

Sommerlund, J., Bro, R. K., Bro, A., Heeno, M., Damgaard-Sørensen, M., Andersen, R. T., Sieling, C., Sørensen, B. H., Schønnemann, M., Valentin-Beck, M., Barslund, K. and Madsen, J. L. (2016). *Barrierer for kvinders søgning til dansk film*. DFI. Denmark.

Accessible on:

http://www.dfi.dk/Branche_og_stoette/Mangfoldighed/Koensdiversitet.aspx

Appendix 5: Interview guide

Themes	Sub-themes	Example of question formulation
1. Understanding of creativity in relations to the individual	<i>Creativity in general</i>	How do you understand the ability to be creative? What qualities do a creative person possess? Is creativity something you are born with or something you can learn? What influences your idea of what creativity is?
	<i>Personal creativity</i>	What is creativity for you? How do you do creativity? What motivates you?
	<i>Creative product</i>	How do you assess the quality of a creative product? Who decides when and why something is creative?
2. Understanding of creativity in the context of the film industry	<i>Creative excellence</i>	What do you consider as creative excellence? What has influenced your idea of what excellence is? What has the film school taught you about creative excellence?
	<i>Creative career</i>	What does it take to have a creative career? Why does someone make it and someone not?
	<i>Role models</i>	Who do you look to for inspiration? Are role models important?
	<i>Gatekeepers</i>	Who do you consider the gatekeepers? Are gatekeepers important for creative success?
3. Perspectives and opinions on gender identity in relations to creative excellence	<i>Gender differences</i>	Do men and women do creativity differently? Is there something women are better than men and men are better at than women? How do you understand masculinity and femininity in relations to creativity?
	<i>Gender representation</i>	How do you think the industry represents the different genders? Are there job roles you see as more female and more male?
	<i>Inequalities and biases</i>	Do you think the industry has gender issues? What would you explain as the cause for gender inequality? Do you have any experiences with gender biases? Is the subject of gender part of your curriculum at school?

Appendix 6: Content analysis template

Selection criteria's:

Authenticity

- What source is interview from?
- How much interpretation occurs?
- Is there a substantial use of direct quotes?

Credibility

- Is the source trusted and credible?
- What was the purpose of the interview?

Representativeness

- What year is the interview from?
- How long is the interview?
- How in-depth are the interviews?

Meaning

- What themes do the interview cover?
- What is talked about in the interview?
- What questions are asked?

Content analysis:

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Understanding of creativity in relations to the individual	How is creativity talked about in general? How is their personal creativity talked about? How the creative product described?
2. Understanding of creativity in the context of the film industry	What is mentioned as important for creative success/excellence? How do they talk about their career? Do they mention any role models/influences? Who or what factors are mentioned as important for their success?
3. Perspectives and opinions on gender identity in relations to creative excellence	How do they talk about gender differences? How do they believe the genders are represented in the industry? Do they mention experiences of inequality and/or gender biases?