To Tender Gender
The Pasts and Futures of Gender Research in Archaeology

PAG
Ing-Marie Back Danielsson & Susanne Thedéen (eds)
Almost thirty years have passed since gender studies entered archaeological discourse in earnest. What is the current status of gender research? One of the aims of this book is to contribute to answering this and other related questions. Another is to shed some light on the pasts and possible futures of gender research.

Contributions deal with publication statistics in journals over the last thirty years, neo-realist discussions of Mayan body-politic, intersectional analyses of current Swedish museum exhibitions and Viking Period box brooches, masculinities in practice at a cultural heritage site, Viking period bodily abilities and disabilities and experiments regarding how once-lived bodies and lives may be materialized.
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Much Ado about Nothing?
Gender Research in Journals
during the Last 30 Years within Archaeology

Ing-Marie Back Danielsson

Abstract
This paper accounts for the extent to which gender research is represented in leading archaeological journals throughout the 1980s to the present through the database Arts & Humanities Citation Index (ISI). The paper regards gender research as including gender, feminisms, masculinities, queer, intersectionality and embodiment. It is concluded that gender research, despite its alleged significance and progress in later years, is substantially marginalized within mainstream archaeology. Comparisons are also made between gender archaeology and mainstream archaeology and differences between the two are discussed. The paper further addresses current research trends within the humanities placing an increased emphasis on publications in leading peer-reviewed journals. Since the paper shows that gender research is poorly represented in such periodicals the author urges archaeologists interested in gender to publish in these journals.

Introduction – how past gender research can help future gender research
This paper analyses how archaeological gender research is represented in peer-reviewed archaeological journals throughout the 1980s to the present. The analyses are made through using Arts & Humanities Citation Index (ISI) of Web of Science. So far, few articles have been published, discussing statistics of gender research. Rosemary Joyce made a welcome review in 2005, in which she accounted for the number of articles within archaeology and anthropology explicitly devoted to research on the body and embodiment. She saw a significant increase in the number of articles from the 1990s and onwards (Joyce 2005:141). However, as pleasing as such an increase may be, the number of articles discussing a specific topic must also be related to
the total number of archaeological articles published. By making such a comparison, it is possible to ascertain how gender archaeology develops in relation to other archaeological research. This is what I try to attempt in this paper, and for my purposes gender archaeology includes, for instance, feminisms, embodiment, masculinities, and queer (see more below).

Of course, by focusing on articles published in journals, represented through Thomson & Reuters’ Web of Science (Arts & Humanities Citation Index, ISI), a large quantity of gender work published elsewhere is omitted. This is not to say, obviously, that such work is unimportant or insignificant. Rather, the statistics and the analyses made through using Web of Science only represent archaeological gender research according to the same index, not a complete coverage of gender work within the discipline. It is the “world” according to Thomson & Reuters, you might say. Despite this admittedly annoying limitation, I argue that the following analyses are both relevant and revealing. I complement the analyses with statistics gathered from *Fornvännen*, Journal of Swedish Antiquarian Research.

During the last few years academia has been forced to a large extent to apply corporate and business strategies (e.g. Aronowitz 2000; Lyotard 1984; Hamilakis 2004 and references therein, cf. Strathern (ed.) 2000). Apart from viewing students as (primarily?) financial assets, departmental budgets are also dependent on how well they stand out in bibliometrical analyses of their research (see for instance Riddarström 2011, but also Strannegård 2011). This general characteristic is a part of a greater international movement that involves universities, funding agencies, companies, research councils, etc. (Strannegård 2011:29). Not least the European Science Foundation’s continued and recently updated release of the European Research Index for Humanities must be seen in this context. Although this ranking, as well as the inclusion/exclusion of certain journals as well as publishers in indexes, is stated to guarantee bench-marking standards, it inevitably, in my view, prompts a discussion on the possible long-term effects on the quality of research of this bench-marking system. This is the case since it also will have (and has!) a great impact on what research will receive funding in the future (cf. Riddarström 2011, Strannegård 2011:29). Although important – indeed imperative – such a discussion is outwith the scope of the current work. However, it is probably not too far-fetched to believe that it could be profitable to be in the journal publishing business in the future.

The analyses presented here, and the interpretations thereof, concern past gender research. However, with the above in mind, it is argued that this material can be used as a guide for planning future publications within archaeological gender research. In fact, after doing this (statistical) review I most decisively urge researchers interested in, and devoted to, gender research to publish in leading peer-reviewed journals.
What, then, can be said about the quality (and I admit I use the word quality with a twist of irony) of gender research as represented through appearances in leading peer-reviewed journals during the last 30 years? Before answering this question I will account for the conditions under which the following statistics apply.

Preamble

Arts & Humanities Citation Index (ISI) from Web of Science lists 81 archaeological journals that have been assessed by Thomson & Reuters as "important and influential". The list of journals changes over time, as more journals may be added to the database. This means that it is almost impossible to get the same results of, for instance, two identical analyses, if a longer period of time has passed between the analyses. Search words have been gender, feminin*, masculin*, queer, embodi* and intersectional*. When I use the concept gender research all of the above is included, unless otherwise stated.

Gender research has been practiced within archaeology for almost 30 years, and I have divided these into ten year spans. I account for the frequency of gender-related articles sorted by journal, author, language and country of origin. I have also made comparisons between gender research and mainstream archaeology to see if there are any differences between the two. The comparison has focused on differences in the number of times the articles are cited, and differences in document types. Web of Science distinguishes between articles, reviews, book reviews, proceedings paper, editorial material and a few other rarely occurring document types. How, then, is mainstream archaeology defined? Such a question really deserves an answer worthy an article on its own. Ericka Engelstad (2007:226ff) has discussed this relevant question to some extent and demonstrated how mainstream publications – and authors – are entangled in, and connected to, a number of political relations and issues. Here I have defined mainstream archaeology as those articles that do not include gender research.

It must be pointed out that the index mostly includes Anglo-American journals. For instance, the oldest and biggest Swedish archaeological journal, Fornvännen (Journal of Swedish Antiquarian Research) is not included. (Though I pointed out to Fornvännen whilst writing this paper that it should try to be indexed there, and today it is). Despite this, gender articles are searchable in Fornvännen due to the fact that its articles are Google indexed. Therefore, this paper also comments on gender research within this journal. Before breaking down the total number of gender articles into ten year spans, I account for a couple of general trends in gender archaeology. The main focus of the paper is however on trends within gender research in archaeology during the last ten years (2001–2010).
General trends

The total number of articles within archaeological research has increased substantially during the last 30 years (Fig. 1). Despite this, the number of gender articles is steadily fairly low in comparison to the total number of published articles.

Fig. 1. The diagram shows the total number of archaeological articles per annum from 1985 to 2010 as well as how many of these that discuss gender research.

Figures 1 and 2 account for the total number of published articles within indexed archaeological journals, as well as the number of gender articles in relation to the total number of published items. From these diagrams it is difficult to discern a specific pattern for the gender articles. While the total number has increased, although in a jagged curve, the numbers of gender articles fluctuates over the years. Overall they make up a small percentage of the total. It must be noted that when a journal has gender research as a theme, the statistics are immediately affected. Reports from gender conferences have similar effects. Examples can be found from 1994, 1996, 2003 and 2007.
Fig. 2. The number of gender articles in proportion to the total number of articles. As can be seen gender articles amount to only a few percent of the total amount of published archaeological articles. Reports from gender conferences and certain journals’ concentration on gender research in certain years affect the percentage greatly.

The share of gender articles vary between a low of 0 and a high of 7.8% (1994) of the total number of articles. Between the years 1990 and 2010 the proportion of the gender articles is almost constant at between 2 and 3%. Using the concept trend to investigate three consecutive years of increase (cf. Furingsten 1983:111) shows no visible trends during the chosen time span. The exception to this is the last three years (2007–2010), where gender articles have increased proportionally (but not in absolute numbers) (Fig. 2). Generally, during the 30 years gender has been used within archaeology, gender articles account for a very small portion of the total number of published articles in journals.
Gender research in archaeology 1981–1990

According to the database, only one (1) article with a focus on gender research was published between the years 1981 and 1990. This article, ”Who made the Lapita pots? A case study in gender research”, was written by Yvonne Marshall and published in the *Journal of the Polynesian Society* in 1985. It corresponds to 0.1% of the total number of articles (n=968) published within the ten year span.

In this context it is worth pointing out that gender research within archaeology started in the beginning or mid of the 1980s with early contributions by Conkey & Spector (1984, “Archaeology and the Study of Gender”) and also Hodder (1984, “Burials, houses, women, and men in the Neolithic”). Prior to this, there were really only Norwegian archaeologists, whose conference on gender in the late 1970s, 1979 to be exact, resulted in the publication “Were they all men?” published as late as in 1987 (Bertelsen et al. 1987). In Sweden, inspired by the Norwegian feminists, Stig Welinder was the first Swedish archaeologist to use the concept of gender in an article from 1989. It is decidedly outside the scope of this article to account for, and review, the histories of gender research. Such accounts and reviews have been made on several occasions. In fact, it will be demonstrated in this paper that gender research is devoted to reviews of itself as a discipline to a much greater extent than other kinds of archaeological research (mainstream archaeology). This typical trait of gender research is commented on below and in the section *Summary and conclusions*. I refer readers interested in gender histories and reviews to Arwill-Nordbladh (2001), Bolger (2012), Dommases et al. (2010), Geller (2009), Joyce (2008), and Nelson (2006), Sørensen (2000), Voss (2008) to mention but a few.

When using Thomson & Reuters’ index it is of course important to understand why some articles are included in their index, while others are not. First of all, as declared earlier, not all of the listed 81 “important and influential” journals have been indexed from the 1980s and onwards. Secondly, key words are supplied by the author but ISI also generates KeyWords Plus for many articles. When defining a topic such as, gender, the topic search function searches Title, Abstract, Author, Keywords, and Keywords Plus. Not until the year 2000 did Thomson & Reuters begin to process keywords and abstracts for the Arts & Humanities Citation Index (e-mail reply 2011-09-24, Tarneet Nandra, Thomson & Reuters). This could explain why not all gender articles published in journals in the early years of gender research appear in the database. Due to these facts, and the almost infinitesimal number of gender articles (one article) in this time span according to the index, further analyses were considered futile for this time span.
Gender research in archaeology 1991–2000

Between the years 1991 and 2000 gender articles comprised 2.6% of the total number of archaeological articles. This corresponds to 55 gender articles of the total 2,122 printed items. Of these 55 articles, 10 were explicitly devoted to feminism, 1 to masculinity and 7 to queer. The relatively high number of queer oriented articles can be attributed to a special issue of “World Archaeology” on queer topics in 2000, increasing the number of articles using a queer perspective by 6 to a total of 7.

![Graph showing the total number of archaeological articles published between the years 1991 and 2000 and the number of gender articles within the same period per annum.]

Fig. 3. The total number of archaeological articles published between the years 1991 and 2000 and the number of gender articles within the same period per annum.
Gender research in archaeology 2001–2010

During the ten year span 2001–2010 the total amount of archaeological articles was 3,360. Of these, only 89 articles were labeled gender articles (Fig. 4), or 2.6%.

![Graph showing the total amount of published archaeological articles and gender articles between the years 2001 and 2010.](image)

Fig. 4. The total amount of published archaeological articles and gender articles between the years 2001 and 2010.

Of the 89 gender articles, two (2) discussed masculinity. Whereas the search word feminis* resulted in 22 hits, no article was found discussing femininity. Likewise, there were no results using the search term intersectional*. 25 was the result for embodi*. Queer yielded three (3) hits. Some articles were categorized in several gender subfields, for instance both under the heading queer and masculin*.

Citation statistics 2001–2010

Arts & Humanities Citation Index allows you to make citation analysis of articles published within the indexed journals. This means that it is possible to see to what extent an article is cited after it has been published, and in which journals. Between the years 2001 and 2010 mainstream archaeology had an average citation of 2.55 per item (Fig. 5). Five of the top ten cited articles were published in *Journal of Archaeological Science*, followed by one each in *Archaeometry*, *Journal of Archaeological Research*, *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, *American Antiquity* and *Journal of*
World Prehistory. Further, the top five most cited articles had been cited between 86 and 114 times after their publication (Fig. 5).

If we instead focus on gender articles the following can be discerned. The top ten cited articles were published in *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* (3), *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* (2), *Journal of Archaeological Research* (2), and one each in *American Antiquity*, *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*, and *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology*. The number of times gender articles have been cited is substantially lower compared to those of mainstream archaeology. The top five cited gender articles were only cited between 25 and 43 times after their publication (Fig. 5).

The h-index count, and is based on, a list of publications ranked in descending order by the Times Cited count. According to the used database, “…an h-index of 20 means there are 20 items that have 20 citations or more. This metric is useful because it discounts the disproportionate weight of highly cited papers or papers that have not yet been cited.”

Despite the encouraging fact that gender articles have a higher citation average than mainstream archaeology, this must be seen in relation to the total number of articles in respective field. Here I have chosen to include into mainstream every other archaeological article that does not discuss gender. Hence, it is not surprising that the average citations per item is higher for gender archaeology – mainstream archaeology comprises citation practices for 3,360 articles and gender archaeology only practices for 89 items.

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<th>Mainstream archaeology</th>
<th>Gender archaeology</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Times cited, top 5 articles</td>
<td>86–114 times</td>
<td>25–43 times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h-index</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average citations per item</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>4.89</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Fig. 5. Differences in citation practices between mainstream archaeology and gender archaeology for the years 2001–2010.
Countries and authors dominating the gender scene 2001–2010

98% of gender articles for this time span were written in English. 2% were written in Spanish. In terms of publishing language, gender archaeology is less diversified in comparison with mainstream archaeology. 93% of mainstream articles are written in English, followed by German (3.5%), Spanish (1.2%) and, French (1.1%), with the remainder unspecified.

Of course the country from which the author, or rather journal, comes from does not necessarily have to be English speaking just because an article is written in English. However, this is very much the case. Of the articles published within the investigated ten year span USA is in total domination having published some 70% of the gender articles (Fig. 6). Other, (mainly) English speaking countries/territories follow: England, Canada, and South-Africa. Norway is an exception with 2% followed by the “Other” category with 8%.

![Gender research articles 2001-2010](image)

Fig. 6. The countries that have published the highest number of gender research articles during the last ten years (2001–2010).

Looking in greater detail at the authors dominating the US scene we find the following researchers to have been the most diligent: Suzanne M. Spencer-Wood with 7 articles, Barbara L. Voss with 5, Paul A. Shackel with 4, Silvia Tomaskova with 3, followed by authors with 2 articles each: M.-L. Stig Sørensen, M.M. Lee, S. R. Hutson, and M. Hegmon.
There are differences between gender archaeology and mainstream archaeology when it comes to publishing countries (Fig. 7). Whereas USA also dominates mainstream archaeology (38%) other countries offer some resistance to this dominance. England has 19%, followed by Australia’s 5%, Germany’s 4%, Canada’s 3.7%, and France, South Africa and Spain having some 2% each. This means that mainstream archaeology is more diversified when it comes to participating countries.

<table>
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<th>Publishing country</th>
<th>Mainstream archaeology</th>
<th>Gender archaeology</th>
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<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-Africa</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 7. Differences between mainstream archaeology and gender archaeology when it comes to publishing country during the time span 2001–2010.

Differences in document types – differences in research focus?

There are differences in document types between mainstream archaeology and gender archaeology (Figs 8 and 9). Mainstream archaeology can be said to be more oriented towards publishing new research in articles (51%) and giving its views on recently published books (30%), thus in total corresponding to more than 80% of the document types. Only 10% of the articles are devoted to regular reviews. By comparison, gender research is somewhat less prone to publish articles or new research (45%) but all the more into writing reviews (34%). According to Thomson & Reuters’ Web of Science a review means that a review is made of scientific research, books, art, and/or software. A book review on the other hand is a review made of a monograph or publication written on a specific topic.

Then what might this difference mean in terms of research focus? Seemingly, mainstream archaeology is more concerned with doing research (as represented through a higher proportion of articles devoted to publishing research) and a desire to know what else is going on in the archaeological world (the book reviews), perhaps implying an outwardly oriented stance. Gender archaeology on the other hand, can be said perhaps to be more introspective with its large proportion of regular reviews of conducted gender research.
I have looked through the gender articles labelled “Reviews” and most of them are, indeed, reviews, mostly of gender research within specific archaeological fields where the reviews are made by gender researchers too. However, and importantly, the reviews likewise point to future directions for gender research within a variety of archaeological subfields, which is exciting. So, if reviews may be classified as introspective, they equally hold potential for directing future (gender) research. It can also be argued that it is sound to (re-)evaluate progress and set-backs on a methodically and theoretically level within any research field, a discussion that mainstream archaeology thus to some extent is lacking.

Fig. 8. The different document types that hide under the label “gender archaeology” during the last ten years (2001–2010). It is significant that gender research to a much greater extent than other archaeological research (mainstream archaeology) is devoted to writing reviews – compare with Fig. 9.
Fig. 9. The different document types that are represented outwith gender archaeological research, what I here refer to as mainstream archaeology. Compare with Fig. 8.

During the last ten year span, which journals have published the highest number of gender articles? Of the 81 listed journals in the database only 11 journals published more than 2 articles discussing gender research. This is a rather poor result bearing in mind that each journal usually contains several articles per annum and we here are speaking in terms of articles per decade. The number one journal between 2001-2010 is Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory that published 14 gender articles, followed by Historical Archaeology (11), American Antiquity (10), Journal of Archaeological Research (10), International Journal of Historical Archaeology (7), American Journal of Archaeology (6), Journal of Social Archaeology (6), World Archaeology (5), Journal of Anthropological Archaeology (4), and lastly three in each of Antiquity and Cambridge Archaeological Journal. It must be remembered that in most cases the gender articles are not evenly spread out in the journals. Rather, the high number of gender articles in Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory is only due to the fact that the journal in 2007 had a special issue that focused on gender research.

Before presenting the conclusions from these analyses, I will comment briefly on gender research as represented through the previously mentioned Fornvännen. Fornvännen, Journal of Swedish Antiquarian Research, has indeed a very long history, 105 years, and it is the leading journal for antiquarian research in Sweden. Of hundreds of articles published during the last 30 years, I have, with an amount of good will, counted seven (7) articles that
have a gender perspective. In addition, 12 reviews have been made of books that to some extent contained gender perspectives.

The Norwegian journal K.A.N., Kvinner i arkeologi i Norge (Eng. Women in Archaeology in Norway) must also be mentioned. It published twice a year during its time of existence (from 1985 to 2005) and printed 25 editions before it sadly went out of print. An obvious drawback with such a journal is that it unfortunately can be avoided in its entirety. If gender research is published in bigger, mainstream journals perhaps gender articles will be read by a wider audience and cited to a greater extent.

Summary and conclusions

In this paper I have analyzed to what extent gender articles are published and cited in indexed journals, both in absolute numbers and in relation to other archaeological articles. The analyses have been made by using Thomson & Reuters’ Arts & Humanities Citation Index (ISI) and comprise almost 30 years. On average, gender articles account for c. 2% of the total amount of published archaeological articles. Exceptions exist, especially if a journal has a special issue on gender, and if reports from gender conferences are published. Despite these welcome exceptions the number of gender articles in relation to the total number of published articles in important and influential journals is low. Seemingly, gender research is a marginalized phenomenon in journals with assumed bench-marking standards. Ericka Engelstad has pointed to the fact that gender work, sadly, is rarely found in mainstream archaeological books either (Engelstad 2007:227 citing Conkey and Gero 1997:414-416).

Trends

It is fairly evident that some theoretical perspectives a more connected to certain periods of time than others. An example of such a trend is the queer perspective which peaked during the late 90s, if indeed a modest number of 7 may be referred to as a peak. Masculinity is another theoretical entry to study prehistory. Although very small in numbers, masculinity research shows an increase during the last decade. Feminisms have a bigger hit ratio within gender research than queer and masculinity. However, I would like to emphasize that there is a total absence of research into femininities and intersectionality.
Gender archaeology versus mainstream archaeology

Gender research can in itself be said to be a theoretical perspective that embraces diversity. However, in comparison to mainstream archaeology, gender archaeology is not quite so embracing when it comes to publishing countries and choice of language for the period 2001–2010. Mainstream archaeology is more diversified than gender archaeology when it comes to publishing country. The same is true for publishing language.

There are also differences when it comes to the types of document published by mainstream and gender archaeology. I have argued here that the document types also signify different research focus and research traditions. Compared to mainstream archaeology, gender archaeology reviews itself to a greater extent, as well as investigating the pros and cons of proposed and implemented methodological and theoretical frameworks of reference. I maintained that such writings and evaluations are important since they highlight, and assist in, the constant and necessary development of gender research within archaeology. Indeed, it is probable that any research field would benefit from using such a practice.

Directions for the future

I started off the paper by situating the appearance of (gender) articles in leading journals in a wider context. I would like to finish where I started with a recommendation that gender researchers should try to publish in these important and influential journals for several reasons. For one thing, gender research published in such a way is not so easily discarded if found in an issue also devoted to other topics. Another reason is funding. Universities and funding agencies will probably, to a far greater extent than previously, place a greater weight on articles published in leading journals, and let the results of bibliometrical analyses guide their allotment of money to researchers.

References


