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Theatre in critical education

Exploring issues of work and family life coherence in a Danish context

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Abstract

How does theatre function as a pedagogical tool in critical education? Through a qualitative case study on a political educational project initiated by a Danish trade union, this thesis explores how theatre can be used as a pedagogical strategy in education that seek to promote social change. The educational project is about issues of work and family life coherence, and through the lens of critical education, this thesis examines how understandings of these issues are constructed within the educational project. Departing from deconstructionist theories, the thesis emphasis how social categories of class and gender affect how participants construct their understanding of issues related to work and family life coherence, but also examine how divergent meanings are negotiated in the educational setting. The findings show, that the narrative form of theatre can engage participants in the educational project in ways that holds potential for promoting social change.

Keywords: Critical education, theatre, Work and family life coherence, Gender, Class

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1. Introduction

As a student in Social Studies of Gender, I often wondered why discussions in class seemed somehow detached from the relational context my fellow students and me were in. In class, we discussed issues of privilege and non-privilege based on gender, race, class, body ableness and alike, and in our exam papers we identified and analyzed how such power differentials structured various levels of society. Despite our focus on the power of social categories, I continuously experienced how privileged students, including myself, dominated our classroom. White, well spoken, English fluent, often male (despite the fact that the majority of students identified as females) took the majority of the space in class. It was rarely pointed out by neither students nor teachers how our classroom was dominated by these power structures, and rarely did we connect the feminist theories we discussed to what went on in our classroom. The structures we were all arguing against in class, were dominating the very same classroom. It let me to wonder about the pedagogical tools that might be available for education that seeks to challenge oppressive structures.

Several critical educators have been preoccupied with developing pedagogical strategies that might lead to social change. Paulo Freire's (1996 [1970]) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* advocated for an educational practice that engaged students in problem-posing leading to conscientization (Freire's concept of consciousness raising) - the realization of one's own embeddedness in oppressive structures, from the position of the marginalized. Kevin Kumashiro (2015) is concerned with how teaching can disrupt and challenge the status quo, inside and outside the classroom and urges educators to focus on what Kumashiro calls the *hidden lessons* of teaching that refer to the various ways oppression can play out in teaching spaces. McKenzie & Bieler (2016) suggests that critical education take its starting point in everyday experiences and practices of student's lives. Critical education should be contextually grounded, socially oriented, and focused on narration as a site for negotiating oppressive, dominating norms.

During an internship in 2015, I experienced the use of theatre in a political educational project. I began to wonder if the ability of theatre to bring narration of everyday experiences into the classroom would pose a desirable pedagogical strategy for critical education. This thesis take its departure in an educational project that uses theatre as a pedagogical tool, initiated by 3F, a large trade union in Denmark. The initiative for the educational project is taken because many members of 3F face difficulties in making work and

family life cohere. The educational project is intended for union activists, members and local union board members. The play in the educational project is performed and developed by the theatre group Rejsescenen. Rejsescenen specializes in debate oriented theatre and has worked in collaboration with the union movement many times before. The role of the play in the educational project is to create awareness about the issues related to work and family life coherence, and thus addresses unjust structures from which these issues emerge. Through participant observation of four educational event, this thesis explores how theatre can be used to uncover how meanings of work and family life issues are constructed in an educational setting.

1.1 Review of theatre as education

In the following, I give a brief overview of how theatre as education has been studied previously. Many scholars have pointed to the potentials of drama-based educational methods, since these approaches seem to influence change in practice to a higher degree than non-participatory approaches.

“Thus, narrative and drama-based approaches are increasingly being used to communicate new research to different audience, across occupation, age and subject boundaries. They have been suggested as a particularly significant way to advance awareness and understanding of human and social issues” (Shah et al. 2015: 268).

As such, theatre seems like an adequate tool when one wish to engage people in social and relational issues. Several studies have shown positive results from using performance and theatre in education (see for example Koukounaras-Liagis 2010, Harlap 2013, Mitchell & Freitag 2011, Kaplan, Cook & Steiger 2006). Through evaluation of theatre-based educational programs these studies show, that theatre sketches and drama activities have led to greater self-recognition and realization of differences in experiences based on gender and race (Kaplan, Cook & Steiger 2006). Mitchell & Freitag (2011) has documented how locally based educational theatre encourage a sense of bystander responsibility that lead communities and individuals to take responsibility for the safety and well-being of their local environment. Other action-based researchers have explored the learning and development of non-actors engagement in drama-based activities (see for example Powell & Serreire 2013, Marín 2007, Bowers & Buzzanell 2002, Butterwick & Selman 2003). These studies points to a significant ability of theatre to develop emotional and bodily understandings of domination and oppression.

This thesis contributes to the body of research that explores the potential of using theatre in education. I explore whether theatre as a storytelling practice encourage participants to connect to issues of work and family life coherence through personal narration. Rather than to focus on individual learning processes, I wish to explore how theatre can help bring forward how various actors in the educational project construct their understandings of issue of work and family life coherence in order to mobilize for social change.

1.2 The aim of the study and research questions

The aim of this thesis is to study a particular educational setting and examine how meaning is constructed within this specific setting. In this thesis, this involves focus on what messages about issues of work and family life coherence 3F distributes in the play and how these understandings are negotiated by the participants in the educational setting. The purpose is to discuss the pedagogical strategies applied by 3F and clarify conditions for change. I therefore take my theoretical point of departure in deconstructionist theories that allow me to examine how meaning is constructed and negotiated through language as a discursive practice. Deconstructionist theories simultaneously allow me to remain sensitive toward social categories such as gender and class that are central to the issues of work and family life coherence. The above research interests will be explored through a qualitative case study that includes document analysis of background material on 3F's stance on issues of work and family life coherence and participant observation of four educational events that include the performance of the play and a following facilitated discussion among the audience.

As such, the overall aim of this thesis, is to explore the educational project through the lense of critical education and examine

How different understandings of issues of work and family life coherence are constructed in the educational project?

This overall aim will be investigated through the following research questions:

- *How does theatre work as a tool for education in the case study?*
- *How does the participants' construction of work and family life coherence differ from how these issues are constructed in the background material and the play?*
- *How does gender and class shape experiences of work and family life coherence as it is expressed in the educational project?*

1.3 Reading guide

Since this thesis explores a concrete educational practice, I begin by introducing the case of this study. This will be done in *chapter two* where I introduce the union 3F and the educational project in detail. *Chapter three* addresses the theoretical and conceptual framework of this thesis. I begin by developing a framework for how critical education can be perceived and proceed to conceptualize gender and class, which are central analytical categories in this thesis. I introduce *chapter four* with a brief note on the methodological standpoint of this thesis, before I give an account of the methods used for gathering the empirical data. This chapter also includes consideration of my relation to the field along with a presentation of the analytical strategy applied. *Chapter five* presents the document analysis of the background material provided by 3F and the play developed by the theatre group. The analysis focuses on how issues of work and family life coherence is constructed, in order to uncover what messages about gender and class are formed in the material and the play. The findings of this analysis become central in relation to the second part of the analysis, which will be presented in the following chapter. In *chapter six*, I turn to the analysis of the participant observational study of the participants' discussion of the play. I begin this chapter by giving an account of the participants in this study to contextualize the data. The analysis falls in three parts, that in different ways focuses on how the participants construct understandings of issues of work and family life coherence. The findings from the analysis will be discussed continuously throughout the chapter. In *chapter seven*, I discuss the findings outlined in chapter five and chapter six in relation to the research question. This section also includes a comparison of various constructions of issues of work and family life coherence relevant to this thesis. In *chapter eight*, I present my final remarks by returning to issues of representation of social categories. In chapter nine, I summarize the findings of the thesis in my conclusion.

Enjoy your reading.

2. Introduction of the case

With approximately 300.000 members, 3F is the largest worker's union in Denmark. Their members are trained workers or unskilled laborers that are employed in many different sectors including the industrial and construction sector, the hotel and restaurant area and the public sector (www.3f.dk). Although Danish unions have had significant impact on the organization of the Danish labor market, unions in Denmark, as elsewhere, are facing steady decline in both power and membership (Ledwith 2012). In Denmark, the labor market is regulated through collective agreements between worker and employers organizations. Wages, working hours and conditions are some of the areas that are regulated through these agreements, and not by law. The unions are represented at most workplaces in Denmark by local shop stewards who liaises between members of the union, the local union departments and the national union organization.

Many 3F members are employed in the industrial sector, and the speeding technological development constitutes a big change in working conditions for many 3F workers, which affects their family life (3F 2015). Furthermore, approximately half of 3F's members work irregular hours, which also challenge the coherence between work life and family. As such, 3F addresses issues of work and family life coherence as class, but also a gender related issues, since men and women respond differently to these challenges. The aim of the project is to facilitate debate and encourage local union representative to bring family friendly suggestions to the table when the collective agreements are up for negotiation in 2017. The educational project has a clear aim of improving social realities for its members, which are central to strategies for critical education.

The theatre group Rejsescenen have developed a play called "Do you care for life?" (Alle har ret til at holde af hverdagen) based on the background material provided by 3F. The theatre group was hired to perform the play and facilitate discussions of issues of work and family life coherence. The full educational project consists of ten events of approximately three hours, at ten different locations in Denmark. The events include the play "Do you care for life?" and a facilitated discussion. I participated in four events. These events took place in mid-sized cities with good geographical spreading. Two in the Danish region Zealand, one in mid part of the region Jutland and one in the north part of Jutland. I have decided not to mention the cities by name to protect the anonymity of the participants, and throughout the four events will be referred to as Zealand 1, Zealand 2, Mid Jutland and North Jutland.

I got in contact with the theatre group through a work relation. In 2015, I interned at an organization called FIU-Equality¹ (FIU-Ligestilling), in which I am currently employed. During my internship, I came to know the facilitator of the theatre group, and we began discussing the possibility for me to do research on their next project. The theatre group consists of the facilitator, three professional actors and a musician, who is also responsible for logistics. The group was informed about my presence by their facilitator, and agreed without any reservations to my presence.

The case of this consists of participant observation at the four events including the performance of “Do you care for life?” and the discussions that followed the performance. The background material provided by 3F and participant observation of the development of the play constitute additional empirical material.

3. Theoretical framework

I now proceed to outline the theoretical framework of this thesis. The framework elaborates on understandings of concepts that are used throughout the analysis and the discussion in chapter 5, 6 and 7. The concepts include *gender* and *class* along with the concept of *critical education*.

3.1 Conceptualizing critical education

I begin by developing the concept that I have referred to as *critical education*. Through a conversation between different pedagogical and educational scholars and theorists, my object is to identify strategies for critical educational practices. Since the educational project itself seeks to address gender and class inequality issues I commence by examining what purposes critical educational practices might have.

Brazilian educator Paulo Freire is known as the founder of critical pedagogy. In *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1996 [1970]) he launched a fundamental critique of dominating modes of education which he characterized as “the banking system of education”. Through this method, marginalized peoples were maintained passive and blind to the oppressive structures in which they were located. Instead, Freire suggested thinking of education as “the practice of freedom”. By placing problem-posing in the heart of educational practices, learners would be

¹ FIU-Equality is a partnership between three Danish worker’s unions, including 3F, that specializes in educational projects on ethnic and gender inequality issues.

taught to engage critically in their surroundings and societies, ultimately leading to *conscientization*. Conscientization can only be facilitated through free and open dialogue, which necessitates a break with the power relations between teacher and students that dominates the banking system of education. Freire's ideas of education as the practice of freedom were based on an understanding of the dialectic relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed. He has later been criticized for being too simplistic in his understanding of how power works, since it ignores how oppression come into play within groups of students or within communities of oppressed peoples (See for example Ellsworth (1989)). However, Freire's critical pedagogy places challenging dominating and harmful norms in the center of critical education and it suggests to stay constantly critical to how and what is being taught in educational practices. Similarly, US-American educational scholar Kevin Kumashiro (2015, [2004]) argues, that oppression unfolds in various ways in educational systems. Oppression does not only come to show as demeaning comments or actions between students or between students and teachers in class. It is often embedded in the very structure of the educational system, in the institutions, teaching practices and curriculums (ibid.). Therefore, Kumashiro argues, "the process of teaching involves not only what we do, but also what we do not do, what we say as well as what we do not say, what we include as well as what we do not include... "(2015: 37). According to Kumashiro, critical, anti-oppressive education is about constantly pointing to the margins and asking, what is problematic about a given educational practice and who is being excluded? Where Freire was preoccupied with criticizing specifically what he called the banking system of education, Kumashiro argues that discrimination and oppression are inherent in all forms of education. To Freire, critical pedagogy was a tool for achieving more just and equal societies, but his dialectic understanding of the oppressor/oppressed left him blind to the inequalities that might exist within classrooms and even in attempted anti-oppressive teaching strategies. However, his idea of problem-posing can be applied to teaching strategies instead and serve to make unintended effects visible of critical teaching strategies. Kumashiro suggests to ask: "when we challenge racism, what approaches to challenge sexism (including sexism among people of color) get silenced? When we challenge sexism, what approaches to challenging classism get excluded? When we challenge classism, what approaches to challenging racism get subsumed?" (2015: 54).

In her critique of critical pedagogy, Elizabeth Ellsworth (1989) has pointed toward how oppression works within classrooms. She argues, that critical educators must acknowledge that the classroom cannot see itself free from the structures of domination (racism, sexism, and

classism) that dominates society. To Freire, the classroom of critical pedagogy is characterized by students and teachers' mutual engagement in dialogue: "Finding itself upon love, humility, and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence" (Freire 1996: 72). According to Freire, dialogue as a method in itself, will result in anti-oppressive relations in the classroom. However, Ellsworth suggests that instead of defining pedagogical practice through abstract concepts such as "dialogue", we should ground critical pedagogy in praxis. She suggests moving away from "the literature's highly abstract language ("myths") of what we "should" be, and what "should" be happening in our classrooms, and into classroom practices that were context specific..." (Ellsworth 1989: 299). Examining how oppression plays out in educational practices demands sensitivity toward categories of gender, class, race and other categories that determine structures of domination. However, following Kumashiro, examining the categories already present in the classroom is not enough. The critical educator must also ask who is being excluded from the educational space. Engaging students and teachers in their own exclusionary practices can help them to understand their various ways that oppression plays out, but it can also help to create more inclusive classrooms.

Based on the above brief assessment of Freire, Kumashiro and Ellsworth's notions of critical pedagogy and education I suggest a concept of critical education with purpose of making visible and challenging oppressive norms both outside and inside classrooms. This includes staying aware of the unintended consequences that one's teaching practice might have.

3.2 Strategies for critical education

If the purpose of critical education is to address structures of oppression both inside and outside the classroom, what pedagogical strategies are then available for educators who wish practice critical education? The above assessment has already covered some of the strategies available. Freire suggests placing problem-posing in the center of critical pedagogy, while Kumashiro urges educators to draw attention to what is not included or present in the classroom. In the following, I suggest a more practical perspective on what it means to practice critical education.

As a method for problem-posing and for facilitating conscientization Freire suggests to make use of what he calls generative themes:

"...appropriate for the methodology of thematic investigation and for problem-posing education is the effort to present significant dimensions of individual's contextual reality,

the analysis of which will make possible for him to recognize the interaction of the various components.” (Freire 1996: 85).

The content of education must thus be recognizable for the students as something familiar to their own life. Similarly, McKenzie & Bieler (2016) suggest that critical education should take its starting point in everyday experiences and practices of students’ lives. They argue, that “[i]nstead of seeing education as a vehicle for the transfer of knowledge, critical educators have tended to engage students in disrupting harmful social norms, often through the introduction of alternative discourses (McKenzie & Bieler 2016: 39). Examining everyday practices of students, including those happening in the classroom, with the purpose of identifying problematic discursive practices opens up the possibility to challenge oppression by introducing alternative ways of acting. Especially narration becomes a site where alternative discourses can be introduced, because it is through narrative practices that people establish relationships with communities, cultures and each other (Ibid.: 31). bell hooks (1994) also argues, that the sharing of confessional narratives can result in a common commitment to learning among students. However, while this might seem like a straightforward process, Kumashiro argues that this is easier said than done:

“Challenging oppression requires more than becoming aware of oppression, and this is because people are often invested in status quo, as people desire repeating what have become normalized in our lives [...] And for those who are favored by or benefit from the status quo, change may be even difficult since it requires interrupting one’s own privilege” (2015: 54)

According to Kumashiro, people might resist engaging in disrupting harmful social norms for various reasons. Thus, acknowledging one’s own role in maintaining oppressive structures might be a painful experience that lead to resistance as well (Kumashiro 2000.). Based on the ways people might resist in critical education, Kumashiro suggests for critical educators to specifically seek out the moments when people become uncomfortable (2015): The moment when what is normal is disrupted; when status quo is shaken. It is the question of why we get uncomfortable that should center the investigation of critical education, because it is exactly when we become to understand our normative positions and privileges. This strategy of course involves some degree of uncertainty, because all students are different and will react differently to different topics or stories. However, this is another important aspect of critical education according to Kumashiro: That there is always a gap between what is intended with a teaching practice and what students actually learn. In this sense, teaching always entails hidden lessons, and these are what should be examined in critical education: “... the goal is to conscientiously make visible these hidden lessons and the various lenses that students use to make sense of

them. After all, our hidden lessons demonstrate how it is that oppression can pay out in our lives unnoticed and unchallenged...” (Kumashiro 2015: 41).

Based on the above assessment I identify four main strategies for engaging in critical educational practices:

1. **Everyday experiences** of students should be placed in the center on critical education in order for students and teachers to engage critically in oppressive norms and structures.
2. **Narration** should be used as a strategy for mobilizing new alternative discourses.
3. Critical education should acknowledge the gaps between intentions of teaching and learning and instead focus on making visible the **hidden lessons** of teaching practices.
4. Acknowledge teaching and education as a **performative act**, which means that educational practices cannot be seen as detached from realities outside the classroom. Therefore, critical educators need also to examine how oppression plays out in the classroom.

The above developed framework and strategies will be used in the analysis to examine 3F's educational project through the lense of critical education.

3.3 Conceptualization of gender and class

In the background material, *gender* and *class* are presented as categories that determine 3F members' experiences of work and family life coherence. I therefore now turn to develop a theoretical framework of these categories that will be used throughout the thesis.

3.3.1 Gender as performative

As a researcher in gender and education, who is interested in how gender is produced and reproduced in educational settings, I take theoretical departure in de/constructionist (Lykke 2010) theories of gender. Moving from the important insights of Judith Butler (2007[1990]) I define gender as *performative*. Butler's conceptualization of gender as a doing, rather than a being, is a disposal of gender as a natural and fixed identity.

Notions of gender become meaningful through discursive, social practices, which make specific gendered expressions possible while it excludes others. Butler uses the concept of the heterosexual matrix to describe the frame in which we are compelled to make ourselves understandable:

“I use the term heterosexual matrix [...] to designate that grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders and desires are naturalized [...] to characterize a hegemonic

discursive/epistemic model of gender intelligibility that assumes that for bodies to cohere and make sense there must be a stable sex expressed through a stable gender (masculine expresses male, feminine expresses female) that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality” (Butler 2007: 208)

According to Butler, the construction of gender, sexuality, and bodies happens continuously and simultaneously. The heterosexual matrix refers to the institutionalized perception of heterosexuality as the natural and normal sexuality, which allow bodies to become meaningful only through a binary conception of gender: male bodies are expected to express masculinity and desire female bodies, and reversely for female bodies.

Butler describes the performance of gender as a “stylized repetition of acts” (1988: 519). It is the continuous citation of dominating norms, that lets gender present itself as a core identity, rather than a social construct: “Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural source of being” (Butler 2007: 45). Understanding gender in this perspective, we come to understand discourses as a materializing process. Butler’s concept of gender as performative is concerned with the relationship between discourse and materiality. In Butler’s universe, sex is not to be understood as a prediscursive fact. Rather, bodies come into being first through discursive naming of the body (man or woman) and then through the repetitious gendered acts, that make bodies appear socially and culturally recognizable. From this standpoint it follows, that the ways in which we speak about “men” and “women” and the characteristics we attribute to those categories will materialize as individual acts, since these are the acts, that constitutes gendered identities.

3.3.2 The question of agency

It is within the understanding of gender as a continuous citational practice, that we find the possibility for transforming gendered discourses in Butler’s theory. Dominating discourses are dependent on subjects to continuously cite the normative prescriptions, and thus we might come to imagine something different in the interstice between the citations. Butler writes:

“If the ground of gender identity is stylized repetition of acts through time, and not a seemingly seamless identity, then the possibilities of gender transformation are to be found in the arbitrary relation between such acts, in the possibility of a different sort of repeating, in the breaking or subversive repetitions of that style” (Butler 1988: 520).

Agency is to be found in the possibility of doing gender differently. Danish social and educational psychologist Dorte Staunæs (2003) has explored how subjects negotiate

discourses in their everyday lives. She argues, those subjects are not fully constrained by discourses, but do in fact engage in meaning-making processes in their everyday lives. Staunæs argues that “people are actively engaged in their lives - but there are discourses that constrain what can be thought, said and done” (Staunæs 2003: 103) and what is experienced as normal or deviant behavior, one could add. An example of how subjects might negotiate dominating discourses can be found in the ways LGBT people around the world has changed the meaning of being *queer*. “Many queers have supplemented the term “queer” in such a way that, though it still cites a deviation from the norm, when used with other queers, rather than carrying a hateful sentiment it often carries a feeling of self-empowerment” (Kumarshiro 2000: 42). Queer activists are inducing new meaning into the term queer by shifting the focus to what we consider normal as problematic and oppressive. In that sense, the possibility for agency, in the sense of imagining new realities, persist in shifting the gaze to what we consider normal, and thus are rarely called into question. Butler writes “In this sense, discourse is the horizon of “agency”, but also performativity is to be rethought as resignification” (1995: 135). While normative discourses might be problematic in terms of oppressive gender structures, we must look to the limits of the same discourse, to mobilize for more inclusive practices.

Discursive practices become an important focus point when examining an educational practice that seeks to address oppression in terms of gender inequality on the labor market. Based on the above outline I suggest for the analysis of this thesis to examine what gendered discursive practices the educational practice of 3F subscribe to, and how the participants negotiate different subject positions within that discursive frame.

3.3.3 Intersecting class and gender

In this section, I relate the discursive theories outlined above more specifically to the empirical case of this thesis. By exploring an educational practice among Danish workers, I wish to intersect the category of *class* with the theoretical framework outlined above.

In the following, I therefore elaborate on the concept of gender as *intersectional*. Critical race scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) first introduced the concept of intersectionality. It refers to the ways in which various social identities are related to different structures of oppression. Social categories such as race (which was central to Crenshaw), gender, sexuality, age, bodie ableness, class and so on, should be understood as inextricably bound in understanding individual experiences of oppression.

Joan Acker (2000) and Beverly Skeggs (2002) both argue that class influence constructions of gender. Class does not only determine economic resources that might enable or restrain individuals in their lives, class also shape, and is shaped by categories of race and gender (Acker 2000). However:

“Class, race and gender patterns are not just the shards of history, but are continually created and re-created in today’s organizations, as people are hired, promoted or fired as wages are set, as managers, supervisors, and workers organize and execute their daily tasks” (Acker 2000: 198).

Acker suggest that intersections of class and gender (and race) can be examined through the everyday practices of organizations, such as workplaces and unions. Therefore, it becomes an important task in the analysis to stay aware of the how changes in productions and workplaces affect the different ways in which people live their lives. Class is also an influential factor in the construction of masculinity and femininity and Acker argues, that (white) working class masculinity has been shaped around the male breadwinner model; “earning a living wage, putting in a fair day’s labor, and supporting one’s family” (ibid: 198). In addition, working class solidarity and male bonding have been important aspects of the working class masculinity (ibid.). Skeggs argue that class influence women and notions of femininity different from the ways it contributes to shaping masculinity (2002). She argues that since the working class does not offer the same possibility of identification for women as it does for men, working class women come to shape their identity in relation to other standards. “Class was central to the young women's subjectivities. It was not spoken of in the traditional sense of recognition – I am working class – but rather, was displayed in their multitudinous efforts *not to be* recognized as working class” (ibid: 74). Thus we see how class, directly and indirectly come to affect how gender is performed, and what notions of masculinity and femininity that dominates a local context.

In the section above, I have used Acker (2000) and Skeggs (2002) to intersect the concept of class to Butler’s (2007) concept of gender as performative. It should be mentioned, that there are considerable differences in these scholars’ theoretical foundations. Butler represents a philosophical standpoint, and her concepts of gender is developed as a theory in itself. In contrast, Acker, and especially Skeggs, ground their work in empirical research. Skeggs has a background in cultural studies (Lykke 2010), and she has conducted a gendered analysis of creation of working-class identities amongst women in England. Acker’s project is to make feminist interventions to Marxists theories of class. Where language and discourse is

central to Butler's attempt to challenge binary categories, both Skeggs and Acker build their work in the category of "women". Skeggs in her empirical study of working-class *women*, and Acker in attempting to make visible *women's* vulnerable position within a class system. Despite these differences, I find it possible draw on both Butler's concept of gender and Acker's and Skeggs' understanding of class. Butler's theory of gender has a fundamentally different purpose than the work of Acker and Skeggs. Butler is preoccupied with deconstructing problematic categories such as "woman", but "Obviously, the political task is not to refuse representational politics - as if we could " (Butler 2007: 7). Rather than abandon social categories altogether, we must stay aware of the exclusive mechanisms that follows the demarcation in constructing categories of gender. Lykke suggests

"Therefore, feminists cannot leave the category 'women' behind just like that [...] current meanings of 'women' must be taken into account. From their different localizations within the here-and-now, feminists must, Butler argues, reflect upon their political core category and not just consider it as an a priori given (2010: 33).

From this perspective, the task of this thesis becomes to critically examine what meaning is attached to social categories such as "man" and "woman", rather than accepting them as stable categories.

The above chapter has outlined a theoretical framework that I find suitable for examining how understandings of issues of work and family life coherence is constructed in the educational project. I have developed a concept of critical education that can be used to examine 3F's educational strategies for addressing social inequality. I have further outlined the intersectional social categories of gender and class that are central in the educational project.

4. Methodology & Methods

4.1 Methodological approach

This thesis critically explores how meaning and understandings of issues of work and family life coherence is constructed within a concrete educational project. Departing from the theoretical standpoint of de/constructionism (Lykke 2010) I focus on how social realities are constructed through language. As the theoretical framework suggests language as a discursive practice simultaneously produces and is produced by reality, and the analysis will therefore focus on how discursive constructions of gender and class produces material effects in regards to work and family life issues. However, language and discourse cannot be seen as detached

from the world that it names, and this thesis must therefore be considered part of a constant and fluid process of meaning-making in relation to the topic in questions (ibid.). From this de/constructionist standpoint follows that the researcher is always embedded in the social realities which they explore and that empirical data is constructed, rather than collected through researchers' engagement in the fields of study (Ramazanoglu & Holland 2002).

The theoretical standpoint of this thesis encourages for a critique of hegemonic discourses and to be aware of the ways that power works in oppressive ways. However, it also attempts to show how subject agency and resistance against hegemonic discourses plays out in localized contexts (Lykke 2010). Examining processes of meaning making and negotiation of normative discourses requires deep insight to the local contexts. In order to meet these requirements, I have conducted a qualitative case study. Conducting a case study allows me to clearly delimit the objects of analysis in a bounded system (Merriam 2009) and critically explore how issues of work and family life coherence are constructed within this bounded system. The case consists of the background material provided by 3F, the play "Do you care for life?" and the performance of the play and following participant discussion at four educational events. The methods used for constructing the data include participant observation at four events and document analysis of the background material provided by 3F.

4.2 Method: Participant observation

The primary data of this case study was constructed through participant observation at four events. The empirical data consist of transcribed recordings of the discussions that followed the play. The discussions were facilitated by members of the theatre group. I found that the participants' discussion was where I would get most insight to the participants' perception and understandings of work and family life coherence, and I therefore chose to focus on that part of the events. In addition, the participant observational study contributed with knowledge of the structure of the events, the atmosphere in the room and information about who the participants in the study were. In the following I describe the process of constructing the data of this thesis.

I arrived with the theatre group approximately one hour before the event was scheduled to begin. I helped the theatre with setting up the stage and other practical tasks and introduced myself to the host of the event (I return this in the next section). The audience started to arrive approximately 20-10 minutes to five.

The events began with a brief welcome and introduction to the programme of the event along with a presentation of the theatre group. I was presented in continuation of the theatre group by the facilitator. I placed myself on the outskirts of the audience from where I could watch both the performance and the audience without being too separated from the rest of the audience. When the play ended, I turned on the audio recorder and placed it at a suitable place in front of the audience. I chose not to record the performance of the play, since I am in possession of the manuscript (Appendix A) and because the performance was without audience involvement. Instead, I took notes on reactions from the audience, such as laughter, small comments and other expressions that I found noteworthy. In general the audience's reactions during the performance, was very quiet and similar at all four locations, which meant that I took very few notes during the events. The discussion that followed the play included the audience, the actors and the facilitator. During the discussions, the actors 'went back into' the different characters and the audience was given opportunity to ask questions to the characters. I recorded the facilitated discussions that immediately followed the performance. The discussions lasted 45-60 minutes. The discussion was followed by a light meal where the talk about the play at some events continued, but in a more casual and conversational way. This part I did not record.

4.2.1 Transcription of participant discussions & analytical strategy

In the case of all four events I listened through the recording the following day. I transcribed the parts of the recording that I found relevant within the broad frame of this thesis. These included direct or indirect discussions of gendered issues, incidents where participants immediately connected the play to their own experiences, moments of narration and most of the questions asked to the characters in the play. Already during this process interesting patterns began to emerge. When I had collected all the data, I transcribed all four debates in their full length. During the second round of listening and transcribing I discovered new dimensions of the patterns that I had already identified. Thus listening and transcribing is not just practical tasks but entails interpretation as well (Merriam 2009).

Many, though not all audience members, participated in the discussions, which took place in a big room. This made it difficult to record all vocal contributions in a decent quality. The relatively large number of participants also made voice recognition difficult. Whenever I could recognize a voice, I marked the participant voices with a number, but this was not possible at all times.

I began the analytical process by identifying units of data that could be of potential interest for the thesis. I marked the sections or quotes that I found interesting in the material into different categories such as “Gender”, “Participant narration”, “Responses to characters” and other categories that I found relevant to my research questions. During this process, I aimed to stay open to anything in the material that might be of interest (Merriam 2009). I continued this process throughout all four transcripts. The second time I went through the transcripts I began to look for similarities and differences between the different events. All events were structured in very similar ways, which made comparisons easier. The third time I went through the material I began to compare the content of the transcripts with the content of the background material in terms of how class and gender influenced how issues of work and family life coherence were put forward. Ultimately, I ended up with three categories or themes that will be subject to further analysis in chapter 6. The categories are “Participant narration and immediate responses”, “Reactions to the characters Annita and Martin” and “Reactions to the characters Tinna and Brian”.

4.3 Method: Document analysis of the background material

One of the characteristics of conducting qualitative research is that you stay open to where the empirical material might lead you (Merriam 2009). Initially I had not planned to conduct a document analysis of the background material provided by 3F, but the observational study invited to do so. The background material consists of the publication “Family and everyday life – a qualitative study among 3F members” (3F 2015a, Familie og hverdag – Den skæve balance mellem arbejdsliv og familieliv) which is based on an interview study conducted among 41 members of 3F in 2014. The background material also includes a speech given by the vice-president of 3F Jane Korczak on the 8th march 2016.

The material was intended to provide the theatre group with an understanding of 3F’s stance on issues of work and family life coherence and to give insight to 3F member’s experience of these issues. The author of the documents is 3F and I approached them as cultural documents, since they seek to inform, and to some extent persuade, the reader about the need to improve conditions of work and family life coherence for 3F’s members (Merriam 2009). In the document, I look at the “ideological and cultural work done by a text, without necessarily offering any detailed taxonomic analysis of textual materials themselves” (Freebody 2003: 180) and I approach them as objects that reflect and construct 3F’s account of issues of work and family life coherence.

The document analysis was interpretive from the beginning. I began the analysis by specifically looking for how categories of “gender”, “class”, “family” and “work” was constructed in order to uncover the social structures that underpins these understandings. I focused on the interview transcripts in the material to examine how men and women were represented and what characteristics they were attributed with in relation to work and family in order to pinpoint what messages about gender that are distributed in the material. However, it proved difficult to apply the intersectional gender concept outlined in chapter 3 on the background material. Categories such as sexuality and race was completely invisible in the material, and the document analysis thus included a focus on what or who is not represented in the material.

4.4 Ethical consideration

In the following section I elaborate on some ethical considerations and thoughts on representation that emerged when asking the participants for consent. The section ends with a final note on translation.

4.4.1 Asking for consent, informing about study and questions of representation

When I arrived at the events I approached the local host right away, to ask for permission to conduct my research project. I told the host, that I was writing my thesis on 3F’s educational project on experiences of work/family life coherence from a gender perspective, and that I was following Rejsescenen around to different events. I handed them a letter with information about the research project and contact information (Appendix B). I explained how I wished to audio record the discussions that followed the performance of the play and that I would speak to every member of the audience to ask for permission from everyone. At all four events, the host allowed me to proceed. When the audience started to arrive at the events, I approached them as they gathered in smaller groups of 2-4 people. Since I did not have the opportunity to contact the participants prior to the event, I found this the best way to ask for permission, in case any of them felt uncomfortable with the situation or wanted to ask questions. I informed them about my presence and my research project as I had done to the host of the event. I also emphasized that all participants in the study would be non-identifiable. I also mentioned that I am employed in the union’s movement, working on different gender equality issues including issues of work/family life coherence. Certainly, my position as a union employee affected the responses. No one, in all four event expressed resistance nor skepticism of my presence or the research project. Most participants seemed like they were not too interested in the project but was fine

with participating. A few participants asked further into my studies; what was I studying and where, when would I be finished and what would my title then be? Others made jokes about not saying something stupid now that it would be recorded. Those participants all participated in the debate. However, several participants also expressed how finally someone took an interest in their (the members) opinions. These comments made me realize, that the fact that I might be perceived as a 3F representative, could affect how the participants experienced the educational project. I wondered if my presence would contribute to an experience of the educational project as top-down by the participants, or if my employment in the union's movement would make participants fear for repercussions if they did not wish to participate in the study. On the other hand, my employment in the union's movement could possibly contribute to greater acceptance of my presence than had I just been an academic 'outsider'.

Although my interaction with the participants was limited, reflecting upon my presence in the field has led to important considerations on representation in this thesis. When I initially heard about the project, I was sympathetic and positive towards it. I thought of the educational project as unique and democratic, and I supported the gender equality message behind it. However, the reactions from the participants when I introduced myself made me wonder about possible discrepancies and the power dynamics at stake in the relation between cosigner of the educational project, 3F, and the audiences. It emphasized the need to represent the participants as active negotiators in the educational setting and it made me more critical towards the educational project than had I initially been. As the analytical work began, I came to struggle with finding ways of being supportive toward 3F while simultaneously criticizing its educational practices (Madison 2005). I have decided to make this critique central in this thesis in an attempt to make visible some of the challenges that 3F faces in its own institutional practices, in order to more successfully address (gender) inequality issues.

4.4.2 A note on translation

The background material provided by 3F along with all the empirical material is in Danish. Quotes from the empirical material and the background material that appears in the main text is translated into English by me. The original quotes from the background material will be accessible in footnotes². I mention this here, because translation always requires some level of

² For detailed information about transcriptions of discussions please e-mail annaberg@gmail.com.

interpretation (Widerberg 1998), and therefore I find it important to secure as much transparency as possible.

5. Analysis part 1: Class and gender in the background material

In this chapter, I proceed to the analysis of the background material. The analysis aims to uncover how gender and class is constructed, particularly through narration. The analysis of the documents will show, that the background material submits to stereotypic norms of gender, while social categories such as race and sexuality are rendered completely invisible in the material. I argue that this becomes problematic in relation to critical education.

5.1 What is family?

I begin by examining *whom* the material refers to when it addresses issues of work and family life coherence. *Family* in the background material is represented by two-gender couples or single parents with children. The material is thus not preoccupied with the issues that childless couples or singles without children might face in relation to coherence between work and family life. Further, the gender inequality issues are connected directly to the moment of family extension. On international women's day 2016, 3F's vice president Korczak gave a speech about issues of work and family life coherence. She argued that childbirth is in fact a watershed when it comes to gender inequality.

“The balance in the family – and thereby work life, is determined the day our families have their first child. Until that day, we see families that are characterized by high levels of equal worth and equality. However, the expansion of the family challenges this balance in unpredictable ways. I perceive it as a gender equality issue when the women again and again adjust their work life to meet the needs of children, while the men does not. And I perceive it as a welfare issue when our families do not thrive” (Speech 8th of March)³

With no knowledge of the definitions of “equal worth and equality” that is stated as a condition for 3F couples prior to family extension, I instead turn to examine the possible consequences of the assumed heterosexuality that characterizes the above statement and the background material in general. Although homosexual couples principally could be included in the above

³ Original quote: ”Balancen i familien – og dermed på arbejdsmarkedet afgøres den dag familien får deres første barn. Indtil den dag oplever vi familier der lever i og med høj grad af ligestilling og ligeværdighed. Familieførelsen udfordre balancen på en måde, ingen havde forestillet sig! Jeg ser det som et ligestillingsproblem, hvis kvinder igen og igen indretter deres arbejdsliv efter børnenes behov, imens mændene ikke gør. Og jeg ser det som et velfærdsproblem når familier mistrives”

quote, all further examples and cases referred to in both the speech and the publication are of heterosexual couples, which leads to suggest that heterosexuality is assumed. Butler (2007) suggests, that the general and institutionalized assumption of heterosexuality determines the ways gendered norms are shaped and thus we cannot examine how gender inequality comes to exist without also considering the role of (hetero)sexuality. By assuming heterosexuality, 3F not only contributes to the normalization of heterosexuality but also limits its own possibility to battle gender inequality. Australian sociologist Raewyn Connell (2005) defines gender as “a way in which social practice is ordered. In gender processes, the everyday conduct of life is organized in relation to a reproductive arena, defined by bodily structures and processes of human reproduction” (71). According to Connell, gender inequalities are to be understood in relation to reproduction, but not in the bare meaning of childbirth, as 3F suggests. Rather reproduction represents an organizing principle that reaches into all life spheres long before we establish families.

5.2 Class as main category

In the background material, 3F members are clearly located within a class structure. In her speech, Korczak makes class visible in relation to previous public debates on work/family life coherence:

“Therefore it is really annoying, when the debate, all the way back to the previous minister of gender equality, revolves around whether you have time to make paleo bread or not! This cannot be further away from our members! It is in many ways an expression of acquaintance - and maybe contempt - for our member’s lives” (Speech 8th of March 2016)⁴

Korczak finds that the debate ignores how challenges in relation to work/family life coherence are dependent on class. For the members of 3F, she argues, it is not a question of being the perfect, healthy, energetic parent - it is simply about making the ends meet in family. The issues that 3F families face are thus more pressing. It is about the time to take care of sick children, about being able to pick them up from kindergarten before closing time, and making it to parent

⁴ Original quote: “Det er derfor godt gedigent trælst, når debatten tilbage til den forrige ligestillingsminister, tager afsæt i hvorvidt man har tid til at bage speltboller eller ej. Det kan ikke komme længere væk fra vores medlemmer! Og det er på mange måder udtryk for et ukendskab til – og måske ringeagt for – vores medlemmers levede liv.”

teacher meetings: “3F members don’t ask for luxury, just for time for solicitude”⁵ (3F 2015a: 6).

5.2.1 Changes in work condition affects class relations

Various factors have resulted in changed working conditions for 3F members, which has negative influence on the possibility for coherence between work and family life.

According to the material, some of the main concerns of 3F workers is the increasing workload and the lack of influence on the organizing of work. Members describe how working hours can suddenly change and unplanned overtime is not uncommon (3F 2015). The workload has also increased. When companies purchase new technology and factory inventory, some 3F members experience increased workload, because of the company trying to break even the expenditures (ibid.). On top of that, they have to do the same amount of work, but with fewer hands. When employees retire, new ones are not hired, and temporary workers are rarely used when the workload is extra heavy or when colleagues are sick (ibid.).

From the above descriptions it becomes clear, how the deteriorated work conditions affect changes in class conditions. The environment for many workers has clearly come to be more exploitative, which according to Acker (2000) is what determines class-relations. Workers have to work longer and harder, and under worsened conditions. Acker argues, that changes in technology and production not only foster changes in class relations, but also in gendered relations, such as when women more often than men choose to cut back on paid working hours in order to attend to unpaid work in the homes. It is not childbirth alone, but also changes in production that might result in increased gender inequality. From this perspective, 3F uses a troubling gender neutral language for describing the changed conditions for its members. The effects of the worsened conditions are not considered gendered by 3F, until the woman in the family sacrifice her work life in order for the family to function. This stance is problematic because it renders invisible all the other gendered (and racialized) effects that changed class relations foster.

Class is central and very visible in the background material and the issues that members face according to the background material is constructed directly in relation to their class location. But another factor such as gender is not included in the structures that affects class. In

⁵ Original quote: ”3F’erne beder ikke om luksus, bare tid til omsorg”

the following, I further examine the role of class in the background material, but I focus on how class is narrated in the material.

5.3 Narration of class and gender

Narration is central in the background material provided by 3F. Both the publication and the speech are organized around quotes from the interview study, which tells specific stories of both class and gender. The latter however, is hidden in the more dominant working class narrative I shall present.

The narratives in the background materials are all of course in relation to work and family life. However, it is worth noting, how the narration in relation to work is often infused with something heroic and proud but insufficient and sad in relation to family. I begin by examining the narration of work through the following example from Korczak's speech:

“Lets look at Alice. She is 29 years old, and has a two year old and a seven year old with her boyfriend Jimmy. Alice is working on a fish cannery, and is educating herself to become an industrial operator. She works everyday from 6.00 am to 3.30 pm. She characterizes her job as rough and in a constantly high work tempo. You stand at the same workstation for 3-4 days in a row [...] the day has 3 X 15 min. breaks, so as Alice says: “*You learn to eat quickly*”” (Speech, 8th of march, Original emphasis)⁶

Alice is situated in a clear working class narrative, and the description of work lead our thoughts back to romantic ideas of manual labor as tough and demanding work with raw materials that require mental and physical bravery (Ledwith 2012). However, the working class narrative is also infused with qualities presented as masculine; the work is rough, but it is attended to with pride, despite the troubling work conditions. The factories today are often characterized by high levels of technology and do not demand the same physical strength as was required in the industrial era. However, Ledwith suggests that even

“...in highly mechanized factories with mixed sex forces, where the awkwardness of the physical task has long since been reduced, ‘the metaphoric figures of strength and bravery worked

⁶ Original quote:”Det drejer sig om ”Alice” som er 29 år og sammen med kæresten, Jimmy har to børn på to og syv år. Alice arbejder på en fiskekonserves-fabrik – og er ved at uddanne sig til industrioperatør. Hun har en daglig arbejdstid fra seks til halv fire. Hun karakterer arbejdet som rigtigt hårdt og i konstant højt tempo. Man står ved samme arbejdsproces 3-4 dage ad gangen.... *Men så kommer der også en ergoterapeut en gang om året og checker arbejdsstillingerne*, som Alice siger i interviewet..... Dagen har 3 x 15 min. pause! ”*Man lærer at spise hurtigst*”, siger hun.”

through masculinity, still move beneath the more varied, visible forms of workplace culture' and influence the form of trade union struggles in the most profound ways" (2012: 192).

Following Ledwith, the working class narrative is a masculinized narrative. Maybe because of this, Alice is first and foremost mentioned as a mother, which becomes central when turning to discuss issues of work/family life coherence. It is an interesting paradox that emerges when two divergent discourses on *worker identity* loaded with masculine characteristics and motherhood as the ultimate feminine trait appear in the same narrative. However, the *mothering* of female union members is inherent in all the background material and often done by the women themselves. The following is a quote from a female union member who went from full to part time work:

"You are just done when you get home, and that means that everything is a mess, because you dont have the time to fix all the things that needs to be done at home. Then it all blows up because of a stupid job (...) well, I dont have the hard work, as I used to, so I am not exhausted in the same way. And because I only work the hours that I do, I have time to lie down for a bit when I get home" (3F 2015: 8)⁷

This woman clearly feels greater responsibility towards the home compared to the "stupid job". The paradoxical and almost impossible position of both a mother and a worker come to show in the feeling of inadequacy that is expressed in relation to the home and the family. She constructs her experience of issues of work and family life coherence primarily in relation to family. The following is a quote from a male union member:

"Man: It became a huge source of irritation, whether my child was sick, or if I were sick, or of the wife was sick, I have a broken leg or I car crashed or something, then it would instinctively be perceived as truancy

Interviewer: How does that feel?

Man: Terrible! It is terrible, that you find yourself in a situation as father or husband, where you just have to leave work to take care of other things. That you are not met in these situations, that it is considered a problem and as truancy. It is really something that hurts your self confidence and moral.. Then you just want to quit!" (3F 2015: 18)⁸

⁷ Original quote: "Man er jo færdig når man kommer hjem og det gør jo bare, at herhjemme så falder tingene til jorden, og man får ikke lavet de ting derhjemme, man skal. Så det hele det ender jo i en spids på grund af et åndsvagt arbejde (...) Nu har jeg jo ikke det hårde arbejde som jeg havde før, og jeg er ikke brugt på samme måde. Og fordi jeg kun har de timer, jeg har, så når jeg kommer hjem, så har jeg stadigvæk mulighed for lige at lægge mig en time.

⁸ Original quote: "Manden: det bliver et kæmpe irritationsmoment, om mit barn var syg, eller om jeg var syg, eller om konen var syg, jeg har brækket benet eller kørt galt i en bil eller et eller andet, så vil det nærmest instinktivt blive betragtet som pjæk.

Interviewer: Hvordan føles det?

Manden: forfærdeligt. Det er forfærdeligt, at man står der som far eller som ægtemand i en situation, hvor man bare bliver nødt til at skride fra det arbejde for at passe nogle andre ting. At man ikke bliver tilgodeset i den

This man is frustrated with the ways his identity as a worker is threatened when he turns to take care of his family. In this case, it not so much the job that seems to be the problem, but to a greater extent the needs of the family that threatens his status at work or worker-identity. These two quotes are symptomatic for how the men and women are presented to construct issues of work/family life coherence in the background material. Women primarily formulate their issues in relation to work, and their expressions of responsibility are toward the family, while the men primarily express frustration and concerns in relation to the family because it complicates work. Skeggs similarly found, that “[w]hereas working-class men can use class as a positive source of identity, a way of including themselves in a positively valorized social category [...] this does not apply for working-class women” (2002: 74). This can be explained by the masculinized work narrative. Women however, must turn elsewhere for a positive source of identification, which in many cases becomes the family and the home. When women are constantly named (and name themselves) as mothers and domestic laborers, it is a citational practice that makes motherhood the socially and culturally recognizable way of performing “woman”. Norms of gender thus come to have significant impact on the choices that men and women make in regards to both work and family.

5.4 Findings: The background material retells traditional stories of gender and class.

The document analysis show, that the narratives of class and work in the background material has an implicit gendered character that draws on stereotypic notions of gender. The notions of gender connect motherhood and domestic work to women and paid work to men. As the quotes from the background material also suggests, these stereotypic norms in fact lead men and women to make different choices in relation to family leading women toward sacrificing work in order to take care of the family. The identified gendered patterns are not problematized or even recognized in the background material. Rather these stereotypic gender norms are reproduced in the material that maintain a highly masculinized work narrative. The lack of sensitivity to the gendered narratives in the background material renders invisible explanations of the gendered aspects of work and family life coherence that 3F seek to address.

situation, og at det ses som et problem, og at det bliver tolket som pjæk. Det er jo virkelig noget der giver et hak i selvtilliden og moralen, så er det sgu lige før man ikke gider mere.”

Comparing these findings with the strategies for practicing critical education outlined in chapter 3.2 the gendered character of the narratives presented in the material can be characterized as what Kumashiro calls the hidden lessons of teaching (2015). The material does not invite us to question the stereotypic norms that are being distributed, and neither encourages us to examine who is left out of the material. The gendered representation in the material falls short in introducing alternative discourses (McKenzie & Bieler 2016), by simply re-telling stories of traditional division of labor that connects women to unpaid domestic work, and men to paid work. Ultimately, it should be problematized, how the background material frames issues of work and family life coherence as a common experience of oppression for all 3F member, and thus fails to recognize how the effects of power dynamics are experienced differently according to gender (race, sexuality and others).

5.5 Presentation of the characters in “Do you care for life?”

“Do you care for life?” was developed for the educational project based on the background material. In the following I provide a brief overview of the main characters in “Do you care for life?” in order to discuss how gender and class are portrayed in the play. As we shall see, the play is developed with greater sensitivity towards norms of gender, than was the case in the background material.

5.5.1 Three little kids playing

This short, recurring scene of three little kids playing house serves as shift between the main scenes in the play. The actors enters the stage as three kids looking curious and playful.

“Girl1: What do you want to play?

Boy: House?

All: Yes!

Girl1: But I don't want to be the dad..

Girl2: But you have too!

Girl1: No! Then I'll rather be the dog!

Boy: No.. you have to be the dad - it's your turn!

Girl1: Well.. But then I go to work.. Bye

Girl2+boy: Goodbye dad!

Girl2: Okay.. Then we said, that I was the mum, and you were the boy..

Boy: Mommy! I wanna go to the swimmingpool!

Girl2: You know I would like to do that, but dinner won't prepare itself..

Boy: You said that yesterday too?

Girl2: Stop nagging! Daddy is at work, and baby is sleeping. Be a good boy and go play with your iPad.” (Appendix A)

The last remark is said in a peevish tone, and the kids look out at the audience with a combined scared and teasing look. The scene occur three times with minor variations and intends to mirror the gendered structures of the average home and family.

5.5.2 Cecilie

The emphasis on the interests of children in issues of work/family life coherence was portrayed through a scene called *Cecilie*. Cecilie is a four-year-old girl with divorced parents. Cecilie's parents are always busy and usually late - and therefore so is she. The purpose of the scene is to illustrate, by using humor, the damaging impact that parents busy lives have on children. Cecilie is dragged around to kindergarten, then gymnastics, to the supermarket and back home. Every time they arrive somewhere, Cecilie is being pulled out - and then back in - of her jumpsuit. Cecilie do not really care about all the activities she has to do. She would much rather sit in a puddle by herself and dream about the ocean.

5.5.3 Brian and Tinna

Brian and Tinna are married with three children of ages of 3, 5 and 7. Tinna is employed at an industrial factory, and works both day and evening hours. Brian works night shifts at a road construction site. Brian and Tinna's main issue is when the kids get sick, and one of them has to stay home from work to take care of them. He often ends up leaving the responsibility of the family to Tinna, prioritizing his own work. The theatre group's intention with this couple was to portray both Tinna and Brian as caring parents, loving spouses and solid workers. The theatre group wished both Brian's and Tinna's behavior to reflect dominating norms of masculinity and femininity; his primary identification as a worker and hers as a mother. However, Tinna feels as much as a worker as Brian, but her primary position as parent stems from her taking all maternity leave and thereby being more connected to the children. The purpose was to portray the unequal and unfair individual behavior as a result of structural systems of gender.

5.5.4 Annita and Martin

Annita and Martin are colleagues of Tinna. We meet them at the factory where they work, discussing whether to work overtime, now that Tinna has called in sick - again. Annita is 59 years old; she is married to Bent, and has grown kids. Annita always work overtime if needed although her body suffers from the tarring industrial work. Annita's predominant motive for working overtime is fear of being fired. Martin is younger. He is healthy, childless and 'just dating' a girl named Sandra. He refuses to work overtime, to solve what he calls "managerial

problems” and urges Annita to take her own health into consideration. The intention from the theatre group was to trigger discussion about how unions and workplaces can engage in improving work environment for both employers with and without children.

5.5.5 The construction of gender in the play

In chapter 5.1-5.4, I examined how gender and class are produced in the background material provided by 3F and I now turn to examine how those categories are constructed in the play. I argue that norms of gender play a more central role in the play than it did in the background material.

The characters in “Do you care for life?” reflects assumptions of heterosexuality and stereotypic gender expressions similar to what I found in the background material. One could argue, that this is due to the fact, that the theatre group developed the play based on the background material. However, there are also elements in which the theatre group’s interpretation of the background material deepens the gendered aspects of work and family, and ways in which the heteronormative discourses come to show its workings in precarious ways. The latter is evident in the heterosexual coupling in the play. It is not only Tinna and Brian who appear in this constellation. Annita and Martin, despite only being friends, represent the binary gender category, and by both being in heterosexual relationships with respectively Bent and Sandra. The theatre group deepens the gendered aspects of work and family life in particularly two instances; through the double pressure, that Tinna is exposed to and through the three little kids mirroring the division of work within the home. The interpretation of “mum” in the children’s game draws attention to how women are often primarily responsible for domestic labor (cleaning, cooking, and childraising). This dimension is not touched upon in the material provided by 3F. The theatre group also portrayed the double pressure that many women are exposed to as they function both as primary carers and are expected to participate fully in the labor force. Tinna’s guilty conscience when calling in sick at work is intended to display how the equal rights does not resolve in equal opportunities.

When I have chosen to examine the background material in length and focus the development of specific narratives it is because “Do you care for life?” comes to serve as a form of curriculum for the educational project, and thus constitutes the starting point from which issues of work/family life coherence will be discussed at the events. From the perspective of critical education, the play centers narration everyday experiences of work and family life coherence, which was one of the strategies developed in chapter 3.2. Compared to the

background material, the gendered aspects of work and family life coherence issues are presented from different point of views, including Annita and Martin, and Tinna, who gets to air her frustration with the unequal division of domestic labor between Brian and herself. But despite the various views on issues of work and family life coherence presented in the scenes, both the play as well as the background material, are engaged in reproducing stereotypic gendered discourses. This becomes problematic when considering that “teaching is not a representational act, an unproblematic transmission of knowledge about the world to the student, but is a performative act, constituting reality as it names it” (Kumashiro 2000: 46). Portraying issues of work and family life coherence, does not happen detached from the world that is being portrayed. Rather such a portrayal is part of the repetitious acts that according to Butler (2007), congeals normative discourses. As a possible way of interrupting the citation of norms, new ways of acting could have been introduced in the play (McKenzie & Bieler 2016).

6. Analysis part 2: Audience understandings of work and family life coherence

I now turn to the analysis of the audience’s discussions that followed the play at the four events. In this analysis, I examine how the participants construct understandings of issues of work and family life coherence in relation to the play. The analysis falls in three parts. First, I analyze the immediate responses from the audience. This is to understand how the participants relate to the broad theme of work and family life, and to make room for various interpretations of the play. This part will point to the pedagogical effects of placing everyday narration in the center of educational practices. Second, I discuss the participant’s reactions to the characters Annita and Martin. In three out of four cases the reactions from the audience was rather different than what the theatre group had expected, and I argue, that the reactions reveal a great deal about the current state of the Danish labor market. Ultimately, I turn to examine what role gender play in the audience understandings of work and family life coherence. I do so by exploring the audience responses to the characters Tinna and Brian. I argue, that the participants are one step ahead of 3F in their strategy for dealing with the gender equality issues of work and family life coherence and further that the unions movement itself might constitute an obstacle for achieving gender equality. But before I begin, I briefly introduce the participants in order to provide a more thorough understanding on the educational context.

6.1 Presentation of participants

The events had between 9 and 26 participants, but most events had more than 15 participants. People were invited through an open invitation and membership of 3F was not a requirement to attend the events. The participants primarily consisted of 3F members, their spouses and members of other trade unions. Some participants were union representatives or shop Stewards and several participants were retired. One event stood out because most participants were members of the board of the local 3F department. Two events had a relatively equal gender ratio since many came as two-gender couples. At the other two events, the majority of the participants were men. The fact that the participants represented various unions and professions did not seem to affect whether they found the play relevant. The average age of the participants were (relatively) high, my guess is above 50 and ethnic Danes made up the vast majority of the participants.

6.2 Audience responses: Sharing or “talking back”?

After the performance, the facilitator asked the audience to speak with each other for a couple of minutes and then share what they had seen on stage. The participants read, “Do you care for life?” as as a realistic and reliable mirroring of the issues and dilemmas that many working families face today. “Ordinary family life” (Zealand 1), “Today’s Denmark” (North Jutland), “everyday problems” (Mid Jutland) and “it hasn’t changed at all...” (Zealand 2), were some of the immediate responses to the performance.

In the following, I examine the immediate reactions to the performance and suggest, that the use of theatre and the portraying of everyday life, invited the audience to connect to issues of work/family life coherence through personal narration and confession. hooks (1994) argue, that the sharing of experiences and confessional narratives can help establish a communal commitment to learning. Similar McKenzie & Bieler suggest that the sharing of narrative facilitate social bonding:

“These narrative practices can facilitate social bonding in friendship, peer groups, activist circles, or other social formations. Under the right circumstances, these kind of narrative-inspired social bonds can help support individual difference, as well as shared projects in new forms of active relational solidarity that can enable emergent culture” (2016: 31)

According to the above mentioned scholars, the creation of a space that allows for sharing of personal stories are necessary for critical educational practices, that wish to challenge dominating social norms. In the following, I examine the ways in which the audience connected

to the play through narration. As emphasized earlier I suggest, that theatre as a medium of communication and form of narration encourage for this way of connecting.

At all four events, the audience reacted strongly to the story of Cecilie. Most participants seemed to immediately recognize how the busy lives of parents affects children in a damaging way.

“You know.. I have friends whose kids goes to 2,3,4 after school activities, and jesus christ stop it, these kids get stressed out! Why is it so important? Is it because they need to compensate for the parents not having the energy? Then it becomes justifiable to send them away? You know.. So when we don’t have the time at home, we send them to music classes, then to sports and this and that.. I am thinking those poor kids, they never get peace!” (Zealand 2).

This female participant seeks out an explanation to the busy lives of many children. She suggests that parents themselves have become too busy to spend time with their children. She clearly oppose to this strategy, and suggests for parents to prioritize differently and spend more time with their family, thereby also initiating that this option is available for the parents. At another event, a female participant responded differently to the scene:

“It’s more that it is an expectation. Because otherwise you feel as a parent, that you are not preparing your children properly for the future right? It’s that constant guilty conscience when you leave them in the kindergarten... I know it all... so... And now I sit here, as the older generation watching my grandchildren... I am not getting my early retirement pension when I expected to, and that means that all that guilty conscience that is.. Well, before I could say, at least when I become a grandmother I can help my grandchildren.. Well, that opportunity is gone too.. They say 70, but I will be worn out by then, I cannot deliver what my grandparents delivered.. I am not getting the space and time I need.. It is.. I feel deceived! (North Jutland).

According to this participant, it is not so much a choice as it is an expectation to have your children attending multiple after school activities. However, her narrative quickly evolves from a matter of music and sports classes, to a narrative of lack of time with children at all. The quote is very personal, and the confessional element becomes clear through the narrative of the guilty conscience this participant has felt, and continues to feel, toward her children and grandchildren. It becomes a narrative about a work life that does not allow for time with family and which continues to demand both her time and body. Choice or expectation, the standards of parenthood has not been reachable for this participant. A male participant also expressed frustration with the multi-faceted demands he experiences in relation to both work and life in general.

“We have thousands of opportunities, but no one is giving us credit when we have done something good or right.. We need to go out and assert ourselves all the time... If we cannot do

it in one place, there is always a new place to go to and we run around all day long... It's about saying to oneself "What do I want?", and then just accept, that that has to be good enough, and that is just really difficult because the whole world thinks... not that you should measure yourself, but that you set up some goals like.. This how I want to organize my life, because you don't want to be like those who have their big smile on all the time you know? It is so important that we set our own goals, and stick to them, so that we are not told what is right and wrong" (Mid Jutland)

This statement is similar confessional and tells a story of a struggle to find his personal stance in life with the multiple opportunities he is constantly offered. McKenzie & Bieler argues, that examining practices of narration "allow us insight into the juncture between individual lived experiences and cultural change: between narratives of the self or identity and the larger feelings, meanings and values of particular dominant, residual, or emergent cultures" (2016: 93). The quotes above uncover important knowledge about how work and culture in general are experienced as demanding, limiting, and superficial sometimes even unattainable for these participants. While the participants are clear about the damaging and stressful effects these norms and structures have on their lives, they do not seem able to challenge nor reject them. Class becomes central, since the material realities of the participants come to determine their possible ways of acting against these standards. In the case of the second quote, the participant is limited in a very physical sense; she was *forced to leave* the kids at the kindergarten, and she will be *worn out*, by the time she can retire. In the case of the second participant, class manifests in a more precarious way. Skeggs argue, that working class come to bear meaning measured against other classes:

"Class operated in a dialogic manner: in every judgement of themselves [working class women in England] a measurement was made against others. In this process the designated 'other' (based on representations and imaginings of the respectable and judgemental middle class) was constructed as the standard to/from which they measured themselves." (2002: 74).

According to Skeggs, class, came to show through the women's rejection of being working-class and in their attempt to live up to middle-class standards of becoming respectable (2002). The participants quoted above, who in contrast to Skeggs' findings include both men and women, do not seem to identify with the standards of child raising or self-assertion they experience from society and they clearly oppose to these standards. The resistance to the cultural norms from the male participant in particular is clear, but he cannot seem to shake them off. Rather than a confession, we can view these forms of narration as resistance. Ellsworth argues, that marginalized groups

“... do not just speak of the oppressive formations that condition their lives in the spirit of “sharing”. Rather, the speech of oppositional groups is a “talking back”, a “defiant speech” that is constructed within communities of resistance and is a condition for survival” (Ellsworth 1989: 310).

Understanding the participant’s narratives as an act of resistance the educational space becomes a setting where participants can share stories that challenge oppressive power dynamics in order to mobilize change. The common opposing to dominating norms can work as a starting point for introducing alternative discourses. Perceiving the participants narratives as “talking back” as Ellsworth suggests, also urges us to remain conscious of the fact, that the learning space (at the particular events) are not free or outside of the structures of domination. Differences in class between the participants and the theatre group, differences in gendered identities, differences in positions of power within the union hierarchies, might invite for ways of talking back as a way addressing oppressive structures.

6.2.1 Findings: Participation through narration

As the above excerpt of the immediate responses to “Do you care for life?” show, the play opened up for a variety of responses to the different stories in the play. The inherent narrating character of theatre thus seemed to invite the audience to relate to issues of work and family life coherence through narration. Visual representation can, according to McKenzie and Bieler, access forms of knowledge that are based in everyday life and “allow different insights into the social and material realities that affect [participants] lives” (2016: 97). By placing everyday experiences in the center of the educational practice, the theatre group opened up for various expression of resistance toward structures of domination. As the analysis will show, it was not solely in relation workplaces and national labor market politics the participant objected against, but also the unions themselves. The immediate responses to the play further revealed how several participants experience lack of work and family life coherence as determined by external factors on which they have little or no influence. Lack of work and family life coherence is thus created as a result of the participants class location which restrain them in setting more acceptable standards for their own lives.

6.3 Annita & Martin: Who is a better colleague?

In the following, I turn to discuss the audience's reactions more specifically in relation to the characters Annita and Martin. This analysis will show a discrepancy between the traditional

ways of working for the union movement (represented by the theatre group) and the realities of the participants.

In three out of four cases, the audience reactions to Annita and Martin were very different from what the theatre group had expected. Martin was intended to represent the traditional union position by refusing to accept the increasingly exploitative work conditions. Annita is driven by her fear of losing her job. Annita's fear is recognized by the theatre group as a condition for many workers in today's labor market, but it also represent a threat to the workplace, to the unions. It is selfish and shameful and therefore she covers it up with her fake smile. However, the audience immediately sympathized with Annita. She was characterized as "a good colleague, that shows up when someone needs it, no matter if it's hard and inconvenient" (North Jutland), "a well-liked employee at the company" (Mid Jutland), and "She might be a little older, the older generations so she says, well the job has to be done" (Mid Jutland). In contrast, the audience perception of Martin can be summarized in the following quotation from one of the events:

"Man1: Maybe he doesn't take his toll compared to his colleagues... among other things.. And then he doesn't seem like someone that is a member of a real union⁹, if you ask me...

Laughter

Man1: Njaa you know.. It is this setting yourselves outside the community .. right ... setting yourself before the community...

Man2: And he does not have anything but that girl Sandra on his mind.. And work can just.. You know..." (Mid Jutland).

Martin is read as selfish, disloyal and a threat to the community. Atkinson & Mitchell suggest "that narrative representations that seemingly fail to reach an audience as intended may engage audience in more meaningful ways" (2010: 1), since different responses to such narratives make visible various interpretive frameworks. In a similar way, Kumashiro suggest for critical teaching to make visible the hidden lessons inherent in education and the lenses that students (in this case participants) make sense of them (2015). Instead of viewing the character of Martin as failing its task, one should ask what the reactions to Martin's narrative mean. What cultural, local and social factors are at the heart of these responses? What constitutes the interpretive framework that triggers the above reactions? And what went wrong in the portrayal of the character.

⁹ Many unions in Denmark are significantly challenged by other wage-earner organization, often called the yellow unions. These organizations are not considered part of the traditional unions movement, primarily because they are not part of the collective agreements between traditional unions and the employer's organizations.

Age and gender turned out to be central explanatory categories for how Martin was perceived by the audience.

Facilitator: What happened between the two colleagues? [Annita and Martin]

Man: We got to see some prejudice one could say... and eh.. And we were presented with some gender roles right?

Facilitator: What are you thinking, where did you see prejudices?

Man: you know prejudice eh.. Like normativity ... you know, there were pretty extreme eh.. The male colleague, more than imply ... that three children is more than enough and.. That that is something that is taken out on us and everything, where the older colleague understands and tries to smooth out and defend it a little.. And besides is there with support when the community needs it... Where the other one [Martin] is more like: take care of yourself but I am out! That was you know very stereotypical or whatever you call it..” (North Jutland)

What is normative according to this participant is the stereotypic gender roles that Martin and Annita is playing out. From this interpretive framework, Martin appears as a selfish young man with no solidarity, who refuses to help his two colleagues. It is a different kind of masculinity, than the one entailed in the working class narrative. Proud and hardworking has been exchanged with lazy and selfish. A female participant gets increasingly frustrated with the character Martin:

Woman: Instead of being so busy showing yourself of as a man with you girlfriend Sandra at night, you should try and act like a man in front of your colleague and take some of her shifts.

Martin: No! Damn it no!... and I say that because I am trying to put the foot down here..

Other audience: hmmm

Martin: I think we are being pressured way to much.. I ... Tinna is sick, that can happen. Or her children are sick, I don't care, but why is that my problem? Or Annita's problem? I look at a colleague that is being torn down. I am really afraid that she will break really soon! And i think..

Women: She will if you are not helping her..

Martin: I think we need to stand together and put a stop to this..

(One audience laugh a little)

Woman: So you want to put a stop to it for your own sake?

Martin: jaaee.. Partly. Yes..

Woman: you could take one of her hours?

Martin: I could, but should I? Is it really fair.. That's my question? I mean, they could hire in extra workers or whatever, but there has to be other solutions than us being torn down.. Especially when you have a date (smiles)

Facilitator: anymore questions to Martin?

Woman: I am not getting anywhere with this...(North Jutland)

The female participant consistently takes Annita's side, and continue to question Martin's worries for Annita and his suggestions for how to solve the problem. During this event, the

atmosphere got rather intense, several participants got frustrated and angry, raising their voices and shaking their heads. There was no mutual understanding.

At every event, other participants had characterized the labor market as increasingly exploitative: “Right now the market really favors the employers. They get to control everything, because they know we are under pressure, because it can be difficult to find another job” (Woman, Zealand 2). Or as this male participant puts it: “If you are not on the labor market, you are looked down upon... and you might also be afraid of losing your job, so when they say, now you have to work irregular hours, then you just do it, because you are afraid you cannot find anything else...” (Man, Mid Jutland). Even the unions themselves are at the employer's beck and call: “the collective agreement on the industrial area leaves the employers to decide how things should be at the workplaces”. (Man, Mid Jutland). The fear of losing one's job, is a constant present on today's labor market according to the participants.

Skeggs (2002) found, that class is often experienced as exclusion. In the case above, class is experienced as threat of exclusion, the threat of losing one's job. “The exclusions occur because the women do not have *access* to economic resources and cultural ways to be anything other than working class” (Skeggs 2002: 74). This argument became even more evident at an event, where the facilitator asked the audience, what they thought Annita was thinking about when deciding to work over time. A male participant said: “well, I think she is happy with her job, because the alternative is, to not have a job at all. She is not going to complain or anything... they tell her to work more -fine - she does it... She puts up with a lot.. I think...” (Zealand 1). Another male participant puts it this way: “Hmmmm I think she thinks about the fact that she does not have many working-years left ... she can finally see the end!” (ibid.). There is a long way from the no-pity narrative put forward by 3F, and the way the participants relates to Annita's situation. The reactions quoted above reveals a lot about the participants own experience of their class position.

The theatre group had a clear intention with Annita and Martin, and wanted the audience to solve the conflict between the two colleagues. After being given the opportunity to ask the two characters questions, Annita and Martin engaged in a mutual conversation where the audience contributed with suggestions to each character about how to approach or respond to the other, in order to come closer to a mutual understanding. The intentional goal of the theatre group was clear; they wanted Martin to convince Annita to go to their local shop steward and

thereby solve the problem of the increasing workload on managerial level. This happened at every event. A female participant explains:

“Woman: I think Martin is ehh... the bad guy here. But I actually think that you [Martin] have a point. Because this is unsolvable unless a third party is involved, because what you [Martin] are saying is, who needs to take responsibility for the fact, that Tinna is absent? It is neither Annita nor Martin... It is fundamentally a managerial responsibility...

Others: hmmm

Man: that is right..

Woman: They are not responsible for Tinna not being at work right? And I know that there is all sorts of .. Its also because he is a man, that we are alerted right away, because of all the pre-understandings that follows” (North Jutland)

The theatre group’s intentions were met. Yet I still find it important to bring forward the reactions from the audience as an expression of what matters to them. The discussions centered around Martin and Annita uncovers how insecurity has become a fundamental factor in the participants work life. The negative, almost hostile reactions toward Martin reveals what is expected of a young, childless, male, which again points to what constitute masculine norms. It is not Martin’s sex alone that triggers the reaction; it is in the intersection with his young age, and his annoyance with Tinna’s sick children, which is read as a rejection of family values that affect how the audience perceives Martin. It is a young, selfish, save-yourself masculinity. Annita however is assumed to feel sympathy for Tinna. She understands motherhood, and is therefore willing to cover for Tinna, because she recognizes the vulnerable position that she is in, due to all her sick leave. Annita’s handling of the problem might represent a more shortsighted solution in contrast to Martin’s suggestion to go to the manager. But Annita’s ways of acting becomes legitimate within the social and cultural conditions of the labor market.

The unexpected reactions from the audiences at the three events illustrates the degree of uncertainty and unknowability that is always inherent in education:

“There is always a space between the teaching and the learning, and rather than try to close that space (and control where and how the student is changed), the teacher should work within that space, embrace that paradox, and explore the possibilities of disruptions and change that reside with the unknown” (Kumashiro 2000: 46)

Above I have explored what is to be found in that space between the theatre group’s intentions and the audience’s reactions, and suggested that current labor market conditions has affected the lenses or interpretive frameworks which the audience used to make sense of the play with, which challenge the traditional ways in which unions work. From this perspective, the audience reactions can also be understood as a “talking back” to the message of the play, refusing to

simply receive and accept the solutions put forward by the actors. This perspective draws attention to class differences between the actors and the audience. Could some of the resistance toward the character of Martin be rooted in an urban, middle and creative class actor that “claims” to have the right solution? At several occasions, audience members “revealed” the actors as middle class, by commenting on how tools used in the play was not adjusted in accordance with standards for good work environment, or asked questions about technical details in the collective agreement, that could only be known by someone who had been working with them for years. As mentioned in chapter 6.2 the audience received the play as realistic, and thus I do not question the ability of the actors to perform the stories of the play. Rather I view these incidents as moments when the audience claimed their positions as knowers of the conditions of the labor market, and as an expression of agency, that troubles the idea of students as passive recipients of knowledge.

6.3.1 Findings: Making visible the hidden lessons of teaching

The discrepancies between the theatre group’s intentions with Annita and Martin and the audience reactions uncovered an important element in the participant’s experience of issues of work and family life coherence. The traditional ways in which workers, through unions could object to deteriorated work conditions are no longer right at hand. The labor market is characterized by higher levels of insecurity, which restrain workers in their ability to act. Besides being a characteristic of the working class (Skeggs 2002), threat of exclusion from the labor market becomes an important factor in how understandings of work and family life coherence are constructed by the participants. Losing one’s job and thereby an income is a threat to the family, but so is the mere fear of being fired, because it seems to consume both time, energy and physical wellbeing that could have been spent on family.

From a critical educational perspective, it is discrepancies such as those outlined above that deserve special attention. It is in these gaps between teaching and learning, that the possibility for new imagining emerges, because common understandings are disrupted. The fact that the audience insisted on talking back, emphasizes an approach to education as a dialogical space that entails a degree of unknowability and uncertainty. The discrepancies between the audience and the actors should thus be viewed as a strength of the educational project, rather than a failure, because it allowed the participants (both actors and audience) to question what they had thought of as common sense. The audience’s rejection of the character Martin as

representing the ‘right’ solution, also draws attention to how power differentials such as class, might play out in educational spaces.

6.4 Tinna & Brian - Why is it so funny?

In this section, I turn to examine the audience’s reactions to the characters Brian and Tinna. It was in relation to the characters of Tinna and Brian, that gender became an influential factor in the audience discussion both as a topic for discussion and as a marker of disagreements between audience members. I begin by examining the audience reactions to Brian and their questions for Tinna. Then I take a closer look at the explanations that the audience provided for the gender inequalities of work and family life coherence and argue that the participants are one step ahead of 3F in their explanations. Finally, I examine the union movement’s own role in maintaining gender inequality - a topic that was also put forward by the participants.

At all four events, the audience primary response to Brian was laughter. The audience laughed, sometimes loud, sometimes while shaking their heads indicating familiarity with the situation and rejection of Brian’s behavior. Brian’s behavior was never questioned as unrealistic. At one event, Brian was called “manipulative” (Mid Jutland) and when the facilitator asked if he was an unrealistic character, everyone agreed that he was indeed very realistic. So why did they laugh?

Portraying the relationship between Tinna and Brian was meant as a critique of the gendered structures that can be difficult to pinpoint in our everyday lives. But when we see them acted out on stage, it might serve as mirror that display how our actions subscribe to structures of oppression. According to Kumashiro, learning about one self, and one’s own implicitness in oppressive structures are necessary for acting against oppression (2000). Scholars have argued that this kind of self-learning can result in powerful feelings (Turner in Madison 2005), painful experiences (Tofteng & Husted 2010) or even crises (Kumashiro 2015), but that facilitating this process is not necessarily the best strategy. Rather than motivating people to examine their own engagement in oppression, this strategy of learning through crises might lead to resistance. I suggest perceiving the laughter as a strategy for maintaining distance to what Brian represented - to something uncomfortable. Watching Brian’s behavior on stage was indeed embarrassing and uncomfortable, but it is nonetheless these feelings, that critical educators, according to Kumashiro (2015) should make object of primary investigation. The feeling of uncomfortableness emerges from realizing our own normative positions and

privileges that might have been invisible until this moment. From a critical educational perspective, these moments hold great potentials for transforming social reality.

Despite the audience attempt to distance themselves from Brian, other responses from the discussion indicates how the norms that Brian represented were still present among the participants. This became evident especially in relation to the audience questions for Tinna.

6.4.1 Questions for Tinna

Several audience, both men and women, asked Tinna if she was afraid to get fired from all the sick leave she takes to care for her children. Again, the fear of losing one's job is articulated as a fundamental aspect of Tinna's situation. But it was also in the questions for Tinna, that differences in the audience construction of work and family life coherence came to show. Several questions for Tinna initiated, that she was responsible for the situation she was in: "You have a problem in regards to your colleagues" (Mid Jutland), "Why don't you say no to your husband?" (Zealand 1), "Why do you choose to compromise to.. It is you who have to turn in sick everytime..." (Zealand 1), "What can you do about it?" (North Jutland). In these cases, Tinna's struggle is primarily interpreted as an individual problem that *she* is responsible for solving, rather than a gendered and structural issues. The perception of Tinna's issue as an individual problem can be understood by examining the perception of gender equality in Denmark. Borchorst & Siim (2008) places the Danish perception of gender equality within a model that assumes gender equality to be achieved when men and women has equal opportunities. Instead of focusing on changing traditionally and historically male dominated areas, such as the work place, in a more inclusive direction, attempts were made to secure women equal *access*. This was done through welfare state arrangements such as expansive daycare possibilities and maternal leave. However, men and women are still making different choices in relation to work life, hence the purpose of 3F's educational project. But when equal opportunities are assumed on the basis of equal rights, these different behavioral patterns come to present themselves as result of free individual choices, and not as a consequence of masculinized workplace culture. But instead of seeing men and women's different behavior as free individual choices, Butler (2007) suggest to look at these differences as the ways in which gender is performed. From this perspective, men and women's different behavior constitute what becomes culturally and socially recognizable for men and women to do. So while the choices both appear and feel personal for those who make them, they are nonetheless influenced by powerful gendered discourses that are being reconstituted and congealed by these actions.

At several other times during the events, the dismissal of the gender equality aspect occurred, and the problems were instead framed as family issues. Here is an example:

“Man: I have a colleague who had to accept the consequences of this, and she went home to her husband and said “I can't do this!”, and then he said, he is from the countryside, well, then you just have to find another job, where you have the time to come home. She wouldn't do that, but then she said to my boss: so, this is not working, you have two options: either I cut back to 32 hours a week or I find another job. And she was lucky that the boss liked her, so now she is down on 32 hours. And it works now, because she has the time to.. Take care of things at home ... you can say it's not the perfect solution, but it is a possibility at least..

Facilitator: What you are describing is that one parent cuts back on working hours to get the family to cohere. And in this case it is the woman who does so..

Man: it could just as well have been him.. That's not what I meant.” (Zealand 1)

This male participant rejects the facilitators attempt to make gender visible in the story about his colleague and the last comment suggests that the colleague's decision was an individual choice. Smithson & Stokoe (2005) argue, that by applying a gender neutral language on issues of work/family life coherence, one risk reproducing structures of domination and encourage gendered structures in both work and family life. In the quote above we see how a non-questioning of the gendered aspect affects changes in family structures that result in a backlash for societal gender equality. Women are slowly forced back into the homes as responsible for family maintenance while the men return to their duties as traditional breadwinners providing economically for the family.

The above examples illustrates how gendered aspects of issues of work and family life coherence is perceived as an individual choice that delimits the possible ways in which these issues can be addressed. From a critical educational perspective, it becomes interesting, that male participants only represented this standpoint. In the next section, I examine a different standpoint to the gendered issues of work and family life coherence, put forward by female participants.

6.4.2 Structural explanations for inequality in work/family life coherence

In their responses to Tinna and Brian, several female participants pointed to dominating norms of masculinity and work as an explanation for the gender inequality in the families. The explanation put forward by these participants further suggests a strategy for improving gender equality quite different from the solutions put forward by male participants.

In their questions for Brian, several women asked about Brian's workplace to comprehend his difficulties in prioritizing his family.

“Woman: Is it a typical male workplace you work at?

Brian: Yes, yes it definitely is..

Woman: Do you have mutual conversations about how each other feel at work? Because I think, it must be something about that it is not so masculine to be on sick leave? (Zealand 2)

This participant immediately identifies norms of masculinity at workplaces dominated by men as a challenge for achieving more equality within the families. Yet she recognizes, how masculinity can be a delimiting straight jacket for men by implying that men in fact, do want to participate more in family life. Another woman similarly identifies with the argument between Tinna and Brian:

“Woman: But I think this conflict exists.. Uhhmm.. I think it is a man-gene right?
Laughter

Woman: Yeahh sorry, but I think ... I think it is something with the generation and the gender equality right, and this and that. It happens at work right, it's not just your own husband.. You know... what his gang is saying right “what the heck! Why can't your wife do this and that..” You know, that is a lot of pressure on the men... but we made it work, but we had that argument, I remember that vividly” (North Jutland)

These participants suggest cultural explanations to the individual problems portrayed in “Do you care for life?” which was one of the primary aims of the play. The female participants points to how masculine work culture might restrain men from being more responsible toward their families. Several female participants seemed to know what is presumably at stake for the men/fathers that might prioritize family over work. One participant asked if Brian feared to be bullied, if he stayed home with a sick child (North Jutland). In some social settings *worker* and *father* are apparently so incompatible that it poses a threat to the dominating notion of masculinity. Butler writes, “[p]erforming one's gender wrong initiates a set of punishments both obvious and indirect, and performing it well provides the reassurance that there is an essentialism of gender identity after all” (Butler 1988: 528). The female participants seem well aware of the social sanctions that are expected to be put in place, when gendered performances are not in line with dominant social norms. The assumption is, that the men will be punished, bullied, possibly excluded from the work gang if dominating norms of masculinity are challenged. Instead, the gendered identity is confirmed and essentialized as the “man-gene”.

The participants quoted above drew attention to the gendered culture of work that was rendered invisible in the material provided by 3F. The purpose of the educational project as initiated by 3F was to shed light on the different issues relating work and family life coherence. But the participants, who live out these issues everyday provided a more thorough explanatory framework for understanding the mechanisms at stake when talking about gender and work,

and gender and family. The different responses and disagreements in the audience thus showed the events as spaces where cultural norms are negotiated and the examples also illustrates Staunæs's (2003) argument that subjects are actively engage in meaning-making processes from within the limits of normative discourses. But it also illustrate the previous mentioned critique of Freire's simplistic conceptualization of the relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed.

Both Butler (2007) and Kumashiro (2000, 2015) suggest to point to margins of discourses in order to uncover, which subjects have become excluded. The female participants challenge the discursive practices that problematizes men who engage more in their family life and identify less as workers. This can be seen as an attempt to invite too new citational practices that in time might make fatherhood a more fundamental part of notions of masculinity.

6.4.3 Unions as obstacles

As mentioned previously, many of the participants were active in their union, as either shop stewards or local board members. At one event, participants brought forward how their own ability to make family and work life cohere was complicated by the fact that they were union activists. In this section, I explore how unions themselves become obstacles for improving gender equality based on how participants problematized the practices of unions.

A male participant asked the character of Brian about his role as the local shop steward:

“Man: But that was actually in relation to that you have become the local shop stewards.. Then you have to go away on seminars with overnight stays and so on..

Brian: I have done that sometimes yes.. It's very new to me, but yes I have done that.. Yes..

Man: But how.. Doesn't that make things totally crazy at home? (Zealand 1)

This participant points toward how engagement in union activities might complicate relations to family life further. Franzway (2000) suggests thinking of the unions movements as a *greedy institution* that requires full commitment and loyalty from its members. The greediness of unions come to show in the above quote, where the participant points to the considerable amount of time - time away from the family - that activists must invest in unions. Furthermore, being a greedy institution, unions might fail to recruit women activists. Franzway argues that being a greedy institution hampers its ability to engage women in union activism, because unions couple with another greedy institution: the family. According to Franzway, the family only become greedy in relation to women:

“This is a key difference between women and men in the paid workforce. Men generally do not need to meet the main requirement of domestic life, including their own needs for personal care [...] Women are expected to be committed to their work “just like men” at the same time as they are normatively required to give priority to their family” (2000: 259)

The women are exposed to a double pressure, which is intensified when one parent is involved in union activities, since unions as greedy institutions leave little time and energy for other domains of life. Franzway uses this conceptualization to point to the difficulties for women to obtain leading positions within the union’s movement. In this discussion it serves the purpose of pointing to the paradox that emerge when thinking about unions as greedy institutions that at the same time are working toward greater coherence between work and family life. As an extension of Franzway’s argument, Acker argues,

“that organizations are intrinsically gendered and that notions of gender and sexuality permeate their everyday practices to the benefit of certain bodies, notably white, heterosexual men. Consequently, organizations create and recreate inequalities through their structures, practices and culture”. (Acker in Mulinari & Selberg 2013: 88).

The practices and structures of unions are still built around a full commitment to union work which excluded those with family and domestic responsibilities that historically and traditionally have been (and are) women. The participant above exemplified this through the many seminars that unionist have to participate in, and another example could be the educational project studied in this thesis. The events were hosted from five to eight pm, which is not exactly family friendly hours. Hosting an educational event about the difficulties of work/family coherence at a time, when those subjected to those issues, most likely are not able to attend seem somewhat paradoxically. I suggest that this merely confirms the point of the greedy institution and point to “the inequalities caused by male dominance of trade unionism, and the discourses and practices of patriarchal gender relations in both the public and privates sphere” (Franzway 2000: 259). Thus, some participants also constructed their understanding of work and family life coherence in relation to the structures of the unions in which they are engaged. It is an interesting question, how unions might succeed in improving work and family life coherence when they simultaneously reproduce the gendered division of work in their own organizational practices.

The theatre group’s intention was to lead the participants to discuss how unionists and local shop stewards could act in order to improve coherence between work and family life. However, the participant described above connected to Brian as the local shop steward in a different way. This incident is another example of impossibility to predict learning outcomes

of teaching practices. Participants in this study make meaning out the play through individual lenses (Kumashiro 2015). The lenses however are central to uncover, because they show how various forms of oppression might play out in everyday practices. In this case, light was shed on how unions themselves are embedded in and reproducers of structures that are experienced as obstacles to obtain coherence between work and family life.

6.4.4 Findings: Gendered differences and gendered explanations

The participant's reactions to the dilemmas represented in the characters Brian and Tinna showed how the participants constructed issues of work and family life coherence differently. A group of male participants seemed to construct their understanding of the unequal division of labor in the home as a matter of individual choice, which rendered invisible the gendered and structural inequality aspect of issues of work and family life coherence. Another group of female participants pointed to how norms of masculinity at male dominated workplaces contributed to maintain the gendered division of domestic labor. It was in the responses from these participants, that the possibility for change became visible. They emphasized the necessity for men to begin performing their gender differently, by including fatherhood as part of their masculine identity. As such, they suggested how different actions might lead to normalization of more gender equal norms. The different standpoints put forward by the participants have further illustrated how the events functioned as a place where norms are negotiated by participants, and made visible the various ways that participants exercise agency within the discursive frame in which they are embedded. Ultimately the latter chapter of the analysis showed, how making visible the personal lenses and hidden lessons of teaching practices might lead to important new insights for the various ways in which oppression plays out. This insight is equally relevant to students/participants as teachers/union/theatre group.

7. Discussion

In this section, I turn to discuss the findings of the analysis in relation to the research question and overall aim of this thesis. The research question ask how issues of work and family life coherence are constructed in the educational project. The first part of the analysis showed how normative gender discourses was reproduced in the background material. This is problematic because reproduction of stereotypic norms materializes in men and women's different behavior in the labor market and in relation to family, which is part of the issue that 3F wish to address. The construction of work and family life coherence was also constructed in relation to class as

the background material located members of 3F in a clear position of working class, by defining them in opposition to the middle class. The analysis found, that the narrative on class in the material was infused with masculine connotations that contribute to reproduce men as paid labourers and women as unpaid carers. In the play, issues of work and family life coherence were portrayed from multiple perspectives. While many of the same normative discourses was reproduced in the play, other aspects was given more attention. An example of this is the portrayal of the double workload that many women are exposed to, due to the unequal division of domestic labor. The narrative form of theatre invited the participants to engage in the discussion through narration themselves, which according to critical educational strategies holds potential for social change. The analysis of the narratives revealed how the participants construct meaning of work and family life coherence differently. Class manifested both as threat of exclusion of the labor market (the insecure working conditions) and non-ability to set or negotiate the standards which parenthood or social life is measured against. Comparing the first and second part of analysis, I found, that the participants problematize class more, than what is done in the background material. Gender was also manifested as an important category when groups of men and groups of women submitted to different discourses on gender equality. A group of male participants constructed their understanding of the gendered division of domestic labor as a matter of individual choice, while a group of female participants pointed to norms of masculinity in male dominated workplaces as part of the explanation. This analysis show how gender matter in educational contexts. Gender affects the interpretive framework that participants use to make sense of the work and family life issues portrayed in the play and the background material. In this thesis, making those frameworks visible provided new insights and explanations to issues of work and family life coherence. The individualistic discourse rendered the gender invisible in relation to the unequal division of domestic labor, but for the group of female participants, gender was central in their construction of work and family life coherence issues.

Exploring the educational project through the lense of critical education has showed, that the specific ways in which issues of work and family life coherence is constructed, matter when you seek to address inequality. When issues of work and family life coherence is constructed based on binary and stereotypic gender norms, as in the background material, the norms that causes the gendered inequality that 3F seeks to address are reproduced. Strategies of critical education suggest using educational spaces as a place for introducing alternative discourses, something that was done by some of the participants. The group of female

participants suggested for male colleagues to include fatherhood as part of their performance of masculinity at work and thus enabled imagining a different social reality. The use of theatre invited the audience to engage in the discussion through narration that allowed the participant to exercise resistance toward dominating norms and introduce alternative discourses. The play also helped bring forward hidden lessons of teaching. By examining the participants' reactions to the characters in the play new knowledge about issues of work and family life coherence was brought forward.

Examining the educational practice through the lense of critical education has revealed a paradox. In the analysis I have critiqued the background material, including the play, for reproducing normative gender discourses, and argued that this have material consequences. But I have also argued, that the (stereotypic) portrayal of Brian, might have contributed to important insights or realizations for the participants since it triggered the feeling of discomfort. I find it important to make a distinction between *reproductive* portrayal and *critical* portrayal. In the background material, gendered norms were reproduced through the stereotypic portrayal of men and women, which was never called into question. The portrayal of the character of Brian was however meant as a critique of the same gendered norms. Critique needs to move beyond mere "fault-finding" (McKenzie & Bieler 2016: 6), and seek to bring new ideas into life: "I can't help to dream about a criticism that would try not to judge but to bring an oeuvre, a book, a sentence, and idea to life ..." (Foucault in McKenzie & Bieler 2016: 6). The critical portrayal of Brian might have let participants to confront troubling knowledge, and let them on the way to realizing how gender inequality can play out in the interrelated area of work and family life. Kumashiro (2015) argues that these are the first steps in making learning possible, but it also poses a condition that makes learning difficult, and therefore, critical educators need to help students learn through that process.

As a last topic for discussion, I return to the group of female participants who suggested dominating norms of masculinity at workplaces as an explanation for the gendered inequalities in the homes. This explanation suggests that while it is important to examine the cultures that dominate workplaces, we must not forget to examine the cultures at home. Those two spheres has historically and traditionally been defined as oppositions, as a dichotomy similar to the binary gender category; **work/family**, **public/private**, **man/woman**. The analysis of the background material showed, that women are still discursively connected to the private sphere and the domain of the family, while men are associated with paid work through a masculine connotated work narrative. **Work/public/man** is written in bold to emphasize the hierarchy

between the categories, which contributes to maintain women's domestic work in the private as less valorized than men's work in the public. However, the participant's experience these domains as interconnected, questions of what goes on in the private - the domain of the family - are often left untouched in public discussions of work and family life coherence. Maybe because it is exactly private, it is not often spoken about in public. By using theatre in the educational project, it became possible to bring the private, represented by the intimate, relational problems between Tinna and Brian into the public sphere. As such, theatre has the ability to transcend the dichotomy of the public/private by bringing visibility to what usually goes on behind close doors, and making this a matter of public interest.

8. A final remark

As a final remark before I conclude this thesis, I return to the issues of representation and the use of social categories. The de/constructionist foundation of this thesis is preoccupied with uncovering the exclusive mechanisms of social categories. It argues, that the binary gender category, assumed whiteness, heterosexuality and alike, marginalizes subjects that do not fit within these discursive categories. However, in the empirical material of this thesis, gender has been reproduced as a binary category while sexuality and race has been completely invisible. In this section I wish to bring forward reflections on, how one as a researcher can handle this dilemma. How do I avoid reproducing whiteness and assumed sexuality, when race and sexuality are un-named in the material? How do I challenge the binary gender category, when the empirical data only speak of men and women? And how do I work to transcend the public/private, work/family dichotomies when the object of study is named work and family life coherence? I have attempted to overcome this dilemma by naming (some of) the social categories that was rendered invisible. By pointing out, that the categories of race and sexuality was missing, it is immediately brought into the discourse and thus made visible. I have critically examined how certain characteristics become attributed with men and women in a discursive practice and thus emphasized how these differences are neither static nor natural. Kumashiro (2014) argues, that critical education, as other forms of activism that seeks social change, involves a discursive paradox because naming what or whom you are fighting for, inevitably involves exclusion of others. This paradox necessitates a continuous reflection on how social categories are used, reproduced and/or rendered invisible.

9. Conclusion

In this thesis I have found, that issues of work and family life coherence are constructed differently by the various actors in the educational project. The social categories of class and gender were central components in the construction of these issues in the background material, in the play, and by the participants. By examining the construction and negotiation of work and family life coherence through the lens of critical education, I found, that specific constructions matter, when 3F seeks to challenge class and gender inequality. The analysis has made visible how normative discourses of gender and class are reproduced in the background material and in the play, which I have argued delimits 3F's possibility to address the gendered inequality aspects of work and family life coherence. However, the analysis of the audience responses showed how the participants engaged more critically in discourses of class and gender. I found, that the use of theatre served as a meaningful tool to uncover how participants make meaning of work and family life coherence and further engaged the participants in negotiating normative discourses of class and gender. For educational programs that aim to challenge inequality, this is an important process, because it allows insight into how oppression plays out in people's everyday lives. Examining this process brought forward new perspectives and new knowledge about issues of work and family life coherence that was not included in the background material. I found, that the participants were one step ahead of 3F in their explanation of issues of work and family life coherence, when they pointed to the masculinized work culture at male dominated workplaces as part of the issue of work and family life coherence. These insights provide important suggestions for how 3F can advance their strategy to improve coherence between work and family life. Ultimately, I conclude, that the use of theatre in the educational project invited the participants to engage in the discussions through personal narration. This form of participation both uncovered how meaning in relation to issues of work and family life are constructed, but also allowed the participants to "talk back", exercising resistance and introducing alternative discourses that are key in the mobilization for social change.

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Appendix A

Manuscript "Do you care for life?"

PROLOG

INTERMEZZO 1: far, mor og børn

3 børn kigger ud på publikum – længe

RIKKE-BARNET: hvad skal vi lege?

Det ved de ikke

Morten-barnet: Far, mor og børn

RIKKE-BARNET: Jeg vil ikke være faderen

MARIA-BARNET: Jamen det skal du

RIKKE-BARNET: Så vil jeg hellere være hund

MORTEN-BARNET Det er din tur til at være far

RIKKE-BARNET: Nå, men så farvel – jeg går på arbejde

MORTEN-BARNET+MARIA-BARNET: Farvel, far

MARIA-BARNET: Så sagde vi at jeg var moderen og du var drengen

MORTEN-BARNET Moar, jeg vil gerne i svømmehallen

MARIA-BARNET: Det ved du godt, jeg rigtig gerne ville, men maden laver jo ikke sig selv

MORTEN-BARNET Det sagde du også i går

MARIA-BARNET: Nu må du holde op med at plage. Far er på arbejde, og lille er syg, så nu må du være en stor dreng og gå ud og lege!

SCENE 1 - en monolog: Den gode mor (Rikke/Ulla, Maria/chefen)

Ulla er rengøringsassistent og enlig mor til to

ULLA:

(Ind med svaber DS - kigger på uret – går i gang)

ULLAS CHEF:

(Ind KS) Ulla, du var sent på den igen i dag?!

ULLA:

Ja, det må du undskylde, den lille ville ikke rigtig slippe mig i vuggestuen, og så er der det der vejarbejde, så jeg skal cykle en anden vej.. det tager bare lidt længere tid

CHEF:

Du må nok tage lidt tidligere hjemmefra, du går jo glip af morgenbriefing, og så skal jeg gøre dobbelt arbejde, ikke. Men altså efter de her gulve, skal der gøres rent på lageret – hvis du gider tage det

ULLA:

Selvfølgelig (chef ud)

ULLA:

(monolog)

Det er når jeg har børnene, så kommer jeg for sent hver dag, stort set. Det gør jeg. Jeg kan simpelthen ikke få det til at hænge sammen. Og den mindste, han har haft et langt forløb med mellemørebetændelse. Så det der med at sove om natten, det har jeg ikke gjort, det har været helt fuldstændigt sindssygt, efter jeg er startet på arbejde... når uret ringer om morgenen, jeg kan næsten ikke komme op, jeg er så træt, at jeg næsten ikke kan komme op.

Når man kommer hjem, så er man i dårligt humør, og man er brugt fuldstændig.

Man vil jo også gerne være en god mor, også selv om man er alene med dem. Man vil jo stadig gerne der har tid til at hjælpe den store med lektier og bare hygge med spil og sådan.. sådan en mor, der ind imellem havde tid til at bage boller med ungerne, når de var der. Eller sige, okay, når I kommer hjem fra skole, så drikker vi en kop kakao. At de ikke skal af sted kvart over seks om morgenen. At de ikke skal være nogle af de sidste, der bliver hentet.

(Svaber ud af scenen KS) (Tinna ind DS)

SCENE 2: CECILIE'S DAG (Karl Emil) (Alle: Rikke/Cecilie, Morten og Maria/resten)

En kvinde Lea råber på sin dreng. Hun har en stor flyverdragt i hånden. Voksen spiller barn. Musik i mellem lokaliteter, for bl.a. at angive at der er gået tid

MOR (LEA).

CECILIE. KOM NU ! MOR HAR TRAVLT. SKYND DIG NU.

Cecilie på ca. 3 år kommer ind på scenen spisende et brød.

MOR (LEA)

Du må spise resten af morgen maden på vejen.

Giver pigen flyverdragt på mens hun snakker.

MOR (LEA)

Ahr, den er ved at være for lille til dig. Jeg må se at få tid til at købe en ny til dig...Det må blive engang, når...ja, når jeg får tid...Det er far, der henter dig i børnehaven, ikke ? Det er fars tur til at have dig, ved du godt, ikke ?...Sådan. Åh, nej jeg kommer for sent igen. Nej, nu må vi altså skynde os. Kom nu.....

I børnehaven. En pædagog tager i mod.

MOR (LEA)

Kan du se. Der er Thomas. Din yndlingspædagog...

PÆDAGOG

Hej Cecilie. Du skal skynde dig at have flyverdragten af. Vi skal nå en hel masse i dag. Og de andre børn er kommet og venter på dig....

MOR

Ja, undskyld, vi kommer for sent igen. Men min cykel punkterede, og så måtte vi tage en taxa det sidste stykke og....Nej, jeg må løbe. Jeg er allerede alt for sent på den. Det er Cecilies far der henter hende i dag. Hej hej.

Moren ud. Pædagogen har efterhånden fået bakset pigen ud af flyverdragten.

PÆDAGOGEN

Kom Cecilie. Vi skal skynde os ind til de andre.

PÆDAGOG 2

(I telefonen) Ja, jeg ved det godt... men det er hende der... hun er igen ikke blevet hentet... så jeg ved ikke...

De ud. Faren ind.

FAR

Undskyld jeg kommer for sent. Er Cecilie igen den sidste ?

PÆDAGOEN

(En anelse forarget) Ja, og hun keder sig jo lidt, når de andre for længst er blevet hentet. Og VI vil jo også gerne hjem.

Faren hjælper Cecilie i flyverdragten.

FAR

Ja...ja, undskyld. Vi skal skynde os Cecilie. Vi skal lige nå ud at handle, inden du skal til gymnastik, ikke ? Så vi har travlt. Kan du selv hjælpe lidt til ? Ahr...Den er jo alt for lille til dig. Hvorfor har Mor ikke købt en ny til dig. Du må sige til Mor, du skal have en ny, ikke. Det kan jo ikke nytte noget det her. Det tager alt for lang tid....Så.... Ja, så siger vi farvel og tak for i dag. Nu skal vi to have det lange ben foran.....

Faren og pige ud.

PÆDAGOGEN

(råber) Husk vi skal en hel masse i morgen, Cecilie ! Så kom til tiden !

Gymnastiklæreren tager imod.

FAREN

Der har vi jo din gymnastiklærer.

GYMNASTIKLÆREREN

Skynd dig at få tøjet af. De andre er begyndt.

Både faren og gymnastiklærer flår flyverdragten af pigen.

FAREN

Ja, undskyld, vi kommer for sent, men du ved hvordan det er at handle ind med børn. Og så valgte jeg selvfølgelig den forkerte kø, og....

GYMNASTIKLÆREREN

Ja...jo, men vi har et skrappt program, vi skal nå i dag. Vi skal jo snart have opvisning, og Cecilie halter lidt bagud, fordi han er kommet så meget for sent. Ikke også, Cecilie. Men nu skynder vi os bare ind til de andre, ikke. Så kan Far nå en hel masse inden han skal hente dig igen. Hej så længe..

Gymnastiklærer og pigen ud.

FAR

Hej så længe, Cecilie....Og god fornøjelse !....Jeg henter dig om en time !...Nå, ja om tre kvarter !.....Hej.....

Faren ud. Musik til lidt gymnastik og lille meget enkel sang.

CECILIE

Der er godt nok mange aktiviteter
For sådan én som mig på bare fire år
Nu kan jeg snart løbe en hel kilometer
Men jeg har også meget ondt i mine lår

Og jeg vil meget hellere sidde i en vandpyt
Bare ligeså stil´ og plaske lidt med vand
Og drømme at jeg sejler i en båd med kahyt
På det store, store hav og meget langt fra land

Men Mor og far de synes jeg skal aktiveres
Og de skal jo også en hel masse selv
De skal tjene penge for der skal renoveres
Og så har de vist nok noget de kalder gæld

Men jeg vil meget hellere sidde i en vandpyt
Bare ligeså stil og plaske lidt med vand

Og drømme at jeg sejler i en båd med kahyt
På det store, store hav og meget langt fra land

Gymnastiklæreren hjælper pigen i flyverdragten.

GYMNASTIKLÆREREN

Nu hjælper jeg dig lige i den her, og så er din Far her sikkert om et øjeblik. Så kan du vente herude, indtil... Den er da vist alt for lille til dig, eller er det mig, der ikke kan finde ud af det... og det næste hold venter jo på mig, ved du, så jeg bliver nødt til at skynde mig ind. Er det okay? Så må du hilse din Far. Hej så længe Cecilie. Kan du have det godt.

Han ud. Og faren kommer forpustet ind.

FAR

Undskyld... Undskyld Cecilie. Har du ventet længe? Det er jeg altså ked af, men jeg sad fast i trafikken og.... Nå. Nu skynder vi os hjem og hygger os.... ikke?

De skynder sig ud. Og ind igen.

FAR

SÅ er vi hjemme. Ah, det var godt, hva? Og så skal vi lige have den her flyverdragt af.... (Af med flyverdragten) Og så om lidt så skynder vi os at spise, og så er det ellers på hovedet i seng Og så skal vi skynde os at sove, for i morgen skal vi nå en hel masse. Ikke også Cecilie..... Cecilie?.....

Cecilie er faldet stående i søvn. Faren sukker og kysser hende på panden. Så løfter han hende op og bærer hende ud. Ja, han gør.

SCENE 3 – en monolog: Skifteholdsarbejde (Maria/Tinna)

Tinna er industriarbejder, og gift med Brian og mor til tre

Tinna ind på scenen. Med beskyttelses-hårnet + forklæde el kittel. Taler i telefon

TINNA:

(venter på nogen svarer, mens hun trykker på nogle usynlig knapper der sætter hendes ”maskine/bånd i gang) Hej Bjørn! Hvorfor tager du Brians telefon? Nåhh, ok (griner) ja, det er hver mands ret, ikke – så længe I ikke tager avisen eller iPad’en med der ud! Vil du ikke bede ham ringe til mig? Tak.. hej hej. (Går i gang med ensidigt-gentagede-bevægelser ved ”samlebåndet, samtidig med hun snakker videre ud til publikum – griner lidt)
Ja, vi snakker mere i telefon end vi ses.. når jeg for eksempel som nu er på eftermiddag, ikke, og han er på nat – så er der altid lige noget man ikke har fået aftalt. Ja, det er jo ikke kun mig, mit skifteholdsarbejde rammer. Det er især mine børn og min mand. Og selvfølgelig er det hårdt ind imellem... men man må jo tage det sure med det søde, ikke? (smiler)... men altså, vi

kan tydeligt mærke en forskel, og det kan de også oppe i børnehaven hvor de to mindste går. De siger, at når jeg har aften... hvor jeg ikke ser børnene i så og så mange dage, så skal vi sige det i børnehaven, fordi de kan mærke, at Camilla, hun er meget mere pirrelig og pjevset og tisser mere i bukserne end normalt. Og min dreng Michael, han hænger også rigtig meget på pædagogerne.

Og når man så går, ikke, så sidder ens tre unger der, og de skal bare vente indtil man kommer hjem igen klokken fem om eftermiddagen, ikke. Og så er alle trætte og sultne – og så er det bare mad og putning...

(hendes telefon ringer, hun tager den)

Hej Brian, det var bare lige i forhold til i aften.. *(ud, talende)*

SCENE 4: en monolog: familien kommer først.. hvis altså... (Morten/Brian)

Brian arbejder med vejarbejde, han har tre børn sammen med Tinna

Ind i arbejdstøj og sikkerhedshjelm, og med en madpakke og termokande. Snakker i telefon med TINNA:

(I telefonen): ...ja, hvad med da?... Jamen for fa'en Tinna, det kan vi sgu da ikke blive ved med at køre rundt i! Jeg kan jo ikke gøre for, jeg har natarbejde! ... Ja, fordi jeg bare lige kan skifte fra nat til dag, ikke?! Og jeg går ned i løn, det ved du jo godt og hvordan skulle vi klare det?.... Men det er fint, jeg køber ind i morgen eftermiddag til weekenden, og kan I så ikke bare tage rugbrød i aften? ... Jamen skide nu være med de gulve, dem skal jeg nok vaske i morgen formiddag. ... Ja, selvfølgelig kommer jeg ind i hjørnerne, altså helt ærligt! Ja, vi ses, skat. Hej

(Til publikum) Jeg ville jo *selv* ønske, at jeg kunne lægge mere energi i mit familieliv. Og det er jo ind imellem svært med det natarbejde... men det er jo sådan vi har valgt det, og det er egentlig ikke sådan, at jeg er ked af mit arbejde. Jeg kan sgu meget godt lide at arbejde om natten, der er lidt mere ro og ikke nogen boss på nakken af os

Men det er da familien, der er det vigtigste. Altså mine børn er jo vigtigere, at de får den omsorg og kærlighed, de har brug for, ikke. Og det er da et kæmpe irritationsmoment, hvis nogen af ungerne er syge, eller jeg er syg, eller konen er syg. Om så jeg har brækket benet eller er kørt galt i en bil eller et eller andet, så vil det nærmest instinktivt blive tolket som pjæk. Og det er da forfærdeligt, at man står der som far eller som ægteemand i en situation, og at det så bliver tolket som pjæk! Det er jo virkelig noget, der kan give et hak i selvtilliden og moralen, så er det sgu lige før, man ikke gider mere.

SCENE 5: FAR, MOR OG BØRN

3 børn kigger ud på publikum

Rikke-barnet: hvad skal vi lege?

Det ved de ikke

MARIA-BARNET: far, mor og børn?

RIKKE-BARNET: Jeg vil ikke være far

MORTEN-BARNET: Jamen det er din tur

RIKKE-BARNET: Jeg var også far sidste gang

MARIA-BARNET: Nej, det er din tur. Du er faderen

RIKKE-BARNET: Jamen så går jeg på arbejde

MORTEN-BARNET: Så sagde vi at jeg var moderen, og så siger vi, at vi var i supermarkedet, og du vil have chokolade

MARIA-BARNET: (GLAD) chokolade

MORTEN-BARNET: Nej, blev der sagt!

SCENE 5: KALENDERØVELSE HJEMME HOS TINNA OG BRIAN (Maria og Morten + Rikke som mor Alice og lillepigen Camilla)

Tinna sidder med sin kalender og bladrer koncentreret i den

TINNA:

(Kalder) Brian

BRIAN:

(udefra) Ja

TINNA:

Tager du ikke lige din vagtplan med ind

BRIAN:

(ude fra) Jo – hun har stadig feber - 38,9

TINNA:

Ja, jeg vidste det!

BRIAN:

(Ind med sin kalender) Og Michael virker også noget sløj, synes jeg, han lyder ikke så godt

TINNA:

Nej, jeg er bange for, det er ved at sætte sig igen. Kan du tage første sygedag nu?

BRIAN:

NU?!

TINNA:

JA.. så du kan sove i nat, så jeg kan komme af sted i morgen?

BRIAN:

Nej, jeg kan sgu ikke ringe nu, og så den her uge, vi er helt vildt pressede

TINNA:

Jamen jeg kan jo ikke blive ved at blive hjemme, jeg havde første sygedag i går, og i sidste uge

BRIAN:

Jaman de kan jo ikke nå at finde en anden nu, og vi skal være færdige med den strækning inden fredag

TINNA:

Jamen så må jeg jo melde mig selv syg

BRIAN:

Der er jo ikke noget at gøre ved det

TINNA:

Så står mine kolleger dér igen!

BRIAN:

Du gør det jo ikke for at genere nogen

TINNA:

Nej, det kan du jo sagtens sige! Og hvad med onsdag? Hun er jo ikke rask på onsdag, med Maja tog det næsten en uge

BRIAN:

Hvor *er* Maja for resten?

TINNA:

Ovre og lege med Susan. Hvad med din mor, mon hun er ved at være oven på igen?

BRIAN:

Ja, måske - jeg prøver og ringe og høre om hun kan stå stand by onsdag (han ringer op)

ALICE:

(Ind med telefon- i telefonen) Hej Brian

BRIAN:

Hej mor – hvordan går det med dig?

ALICE:

Jooo, det er blevet lidt bedre. En dag ad gangen

BRIAN:

Du er på medhør her, mor – så Tinna også lige kan høre, hvordan det går.

ALICE:

Ok, hej Tinna

TINNA:
Hejsa Alice

BRIAN:
Og hvad med operationen?

ALICE:
Nej, lægen mener stadig jeg kan undgå det, men han siger han ikke vil sende mig tilbage på arbejde foreløbig (Tinna og Brian mimer ”pyha, sikke en lettelse”) og han tror ikke på jeg kan holde til at arbejde fuld tid længere...måske deltid.. eller et fleksjob...

BRIAN:
Sikke noget, mor.. det går godt nok op og ned. I februar havde du det jo rigtig fint

ALICE:
Ja, men jeg skal blive ved at passe på mig selv, det bliver lægen ved med at præke. Hvordan går det ellers hos jer?

BRIAN:
Jo, det går ok. Maja er frisk igen

ALICE:
Nå, det er jeg glad for at høre

BRIAN:
men nu ligger Camilla med 38,9

ALICE:
Åh, nej

BRIAN:
Jo. Og Tinna melder sig syg i morgen, så den har vi løst ... men ville du kunne stå stand by til onsdag?

ALICE:
(pause) Øh, ja.. måske.. altså det er fordi, der skal jeg faktisk på bustur sammen med Lone og Eva til Tyskland, hvis jeg var blevet frisk til det, og det er jeg jo sådan set

BRIAN:
Ja... det kan jeg selvfølgelig godt se...

ALICE:
...men selvfølgelig, hvis I ikke kan gøre noget andet..

BRIAN:
Ja, vi ved faktisk ikke...

TINNA:

(Afbryder) Nej, Alice – selvfølgelig skal du på den tur. Det ku da bare lige mangle! Vi finder på noget

ALICE:

Ok, ellers må I ringe, det er jo ikke fordi jeg ikke gerne vil hjælpe jer, det vil jeg rigtig gerne

BRIAN:

Det er fint, mor. Vi kigger på det. Hej, hej

TINNA:

Hej, hej (Brian lægger på) og god bedring til ungerne

BRIAN:

Hvad har du så tænkt vi skal gøre?!

TINNA:

Vi kunne da ikke bede din mor om at blive hjemme, vel?! Hun har jo også et liv

BRIAN:

Jo, men det er jo bare den her uge der er helt håbløs

TINNA:

Ja, og det var sidste uge jo også, ikke?! Og hvad med de gulve du lovede at tage i dag – de ligner jo stadig lort

BRIAN:

Det var jo lige som der var andet og se til, ikke! Tinna, hør nu... vi skal jo bare løse det. Jeg kan tage hele weekenden og mandag/tirsdag

TINNA:

Super – så må vi jo håbe de stadig er syge der!!

BRIAN:

Det var sgu da noget åndssvagt pis at sige

CAMILLA:

(Ind med sut og nattøj) jeg har det dårligt...Jeg skal kaste op...

TINNA:

(styrter op) Kom min skat – ud på badeværelset (ude fra, til Brian) Du skal endelig ikke rejse dig!

BRIAN:

Jeg kan jo ikke nå det, vel! Før du er styrtet af sted... jeg smører mad, jeg skal snart gå.. (ud)

SCENE 6: SYGEMELDINGEN (Maria/Tinna, Rikke/chefen) (chefen ude fra)

Tinna ringer til sin chef og melder barns første sygedag. Hun møder en ”forstående” chef, der siger det rigtige, men også er træt af det. (vi improviserer den) Men chefen ender med at sige: Godt, jamen jeg må høre hvem af dine kolleger, der kan blive lidt længere i dag.

SCENE 7: ØV; OVERARBEJDE IGEN (Morten og Rikke)

Vi møder Tinnas to kolleger Martin og Annita, de står og laver samme bevægelse som Tinna tidligere

ANNITA:

Kan du så blive længere i dag?

MARTIN:

Nej, det kan jeg sgu ikke. Bente har vagt, så jeg skal hjem og lave mad. Ungerne sidder alene nu, og i går blev det jo også sent. Hvad med dig?

ANNITA:

Jo, jeg tager nogen timer. Der er jo ingen børn der kalder..

MARTIN:

Neej, men alligevel – det er jo hele tiden det her

ANNITA:

(smiler) Ja, jeg kan også godt mærke det i min ryg – men man må jo hvile når man bliver gammel

MARTIN:

Det er da også meget med Tinna

ANNITA:

(smiler) Ja, det er noget værre noget... men hun bliver nok også smittet af børnene

MARTIN:

Tre børn, det er også meget, ikke? Jeg har sgu rigeligt i de to – så jeg har fået klippet snoren!

ANNITA:

(smiler) Jeg synes, det var nemmere da mine unger var små. At vi bedre vi kunne få det til at hænge sammen.

MARTIN:

Jeg forstår det heller ikke – sidst jeg så efter stod der altså ikke noget om akkord i vores overenskomst, og det her føles sgu sådan

ANNITA:

Da jeg startede for 12 år siden, tror jeg, vi skulle nå halvdelen af det vi skal i dag. Men altså, vi skal jo være glade for at være fastansatte. Jeg har en veninde, hun blev fyret, og så fik hun at vide, at hun kunne tilmelde sig et vikarbureau og søge sit egent job!

MARTIN:

Ja. Jeg har en nabo – han sidder fra tidlig morgen og stirrer på sin telefon og håber den ringer

ANNITA:

Ja, det er nye tider

MARTIN:

Ja, men helt ærligt – hvad tænker de også på! De sætter os op til 111 – og så løber vi lige lidt hurtigere og når de så ser, at det kan vi godt, så sætter de os da bare lige op til 114!! Det er fandme ikke i orden

ANNITA:

(smiler) Næh.. det er ikke sådan..

MARTIN:

Jamen altså - det er jo en helt vanvittig tilgang til arbejdsmiljø og sikkerhed og det hele. Det er sgu da ikke så underligt vi bliver syge

ANNITA:

(smiler) Nej, det er noget værre noget.

MARTIN:

Og Lars der er blevet langtidssygemeldt... han blev kaldt ind til Karen, og fik at vide at han skulle oppe sig

ANNITA:

Ja, Lars er jo sådan meget rolig i det – og ikke så hurtig - han har altså svært ved det tempo

MARTIN:

Han blev kaldt ind til Karen om tirsdagen, og så sygemeldte han sig om fredagen. Det siger alt, synes jeg!

ANNITA:

Ja, det er noget værre noget

MARTIN:

Nå, men jeg bliver nødt til at løbe. Pas nu på dig selv – vi ses i morgen

ANNITA:

(smiler) Hav en rigtig dejlig aften

Musikalsk intermezzo som rytmisk passer til det arbejde Anita laver.

ET DIGT (Rikke)

ANNITA: **SMIL**

Jeg blev født med et vræl

skrålende modtog jeg dåben
tudede når jeg blev tævet
skreg når bier stak mig
men blev gradvis mere dansk
lærte at smile til verden
til fotografen
til læger
betjente og lokkere
blev borger i smilets land
smil holder fluerne borte og sindet rent
og tænderne har godt af lys og luft
Kommer du for sent
går du fallit
blir du kørt over
bare smil
turister strømmer til
for at se smilende trafikofre
klukkende husvilde
kaglende efterladte

jeg kan ikke få mit smil af
undertiden vil jeg græde
eller bare hænge med skuffen
eller protestere mod andre smil
der dækker over raddenskab og blodtørst
men mit eget smil er i vejen
rager ud som en kofanger
river hatte og briller af folk
jeg bærer med smil mit smil

mit halvmåneåg
hvorpå man hænger bekymringer til tørre
jeg må lægge hodet på siden
når jeg skal gennem en dør
jeg er borger i smilets land
det er ikke spor morsomt.

INTERMEZZO 3: far, mor og børn

3 børn kigger ud på publikum

RIKKE-BARNET: hvad skal vi lege?

Det ved de ikke

MORTEN-BARNET: far, mor og børn?

RIKKE-BARNET: Jeg vil ikke være far

MARIA-BARNET: Jamen det er din tur

RIKKE-BARNET: Jamen jeg gider ikke bare være på arbejde

MORTEN-BARNET: Så siger vi at du kom hjem fra natarbejde, og så skulle du ind og sove

RIKKE-BARNET: jamen så går jeg ind og sover, jeg er rigtig træt, det var så hårdt på arbejde i dag

Morten og Maria-barnet: Godnat, far

MARIA-BARNET: Så sagde vi at jeg var moderen, og så siger vi at du kom ind i stuen med din fodbold

MORTEN-BARNET (spiller med sin bold)

MARIA-BARNET: Hvor mange gange har jeg ikke sagt du ikke må spille med den bold herinde, du vækker din far!

SLUTSANG

Appendix B -Information of study

Forsker

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Undersøgelsens navn

Narratives in Critical Education (Fortællinger i kritisk uddannelse).

Undersøgelsens formål

Formålet med projektet er at undersøge hvordan teater, som pædagogisk metode i uddannelse- og debatforløb, kan bidrage med viden om sammenhængen mellem arbejdsliv og familieliv blandt 3F familier. Projektet har til formål at bidrage med viden om, hvilke udfordringer 3F's medlemmer oplever omkring sammenhæng mellem arbejdsliv og familieliv.

Undersøgelsens metode

Undersøgelsen bygger på observationsstudier af spillet ”Alle har ret til at holde af hverdagen – Eller?” samt den efterfølgende diskussion af spillet med deltagerne. Undertegnede ønsker således at optage Rejsescenens diskussion med deltagerne på en diktafon. At deltage i projektet indebære *ikke* at skulle svare på særlige spørgsmål eller deltage i yderligere aktiviteter, men blot at du deltager i arrangementet på sædvanlig vis.

Anonymitet

Alle deltagere blandt publikum vil blive fuldt anonymiseret i undersøgelsen. På intet tidspunkt i det skrevne materiale, vil personer blive omtalt med deres rigtige navn. Materialet, bestående af noter fra observation, lyd optagelser og transskribering af lydoptagelser, vil blive opbevaret fortroligt og destrueret når det ikke længere skal bruges i undersøgelsen. Materialet vil naturligvis blive behandlet professionelt og i overensstemmelse med etiske retningslinjer for indsamling af empiri til videnskabelig brug.

Deltagelse i studiet er frivilligt

Din deltagelse i studiet er fuldt og helt frivilligt. Du kan afvise at deltage i projektet og til enhver tid også afbryde din deltagelse.

Jeg kan desværre ikke kompensere dig for din deltagelse i projektet men skal det understreges, at din deltagelse er af afgørende værdi.

Du har til enhver tid ret til at stille og få besvaret spørgsmål vedrørende undersøgelsen.

Du kan kontakte undertegnede via telefon eller e-mail. Kontaktoplysningerne findes øverst på dette dokument.

Undersøgelsen vil udmunde i en rapport. Rapporten er skrevet på engelsk og vil være til online tilgængelig via Lund Universitets hjemmeside.

Tak for din deltagelse

Anna Berg

København den 18. april 2016

