

History

Today the department is located at the Engelska parken campus and is one of the largest within the faculty of social sciences. The beginning on the other hand was very modest...

The first sociology department in Sweden was created in 1947 at Uppsala University. Torgny Segerstedt professor in moral philosophy at Uppsala University became the first professor in sociology. When earlier Swedish sociologists concentrated on the theoretical part of the subject Torgny Segerstedt looked at both the theoretical and empirical aspects of sociology.

Torgny Segerstedts first students also adopted this approach and studied both the theoretical and empirical part of sociology. These students were Georg Karlsson, whom opened for new perspectives at the department with the book *Social Mechanisms*. Agne Lundquist with a doctorate thesis about collective mentalists', social satisfaction and work satisfaction. Bengt Rundblad with an UNESCO financed culturalanthropological study about a village in northern Sweden. Birger Lindskog with his critical analysis on the litterateur about Leopard-men in Sierra Leone. Adam Heymowski with a historical and genealogical study of the so called Tattarna. And Bo Andersson whom in his work looked on the theoretical and methodological aspects of sociological studies.

While most of the above mentioned students followed Torgny Segerstedt from the department of moral-philosophy to the new sociology department, Ulf Himmelstrand was one of the first new students at the new department. Himmelstrands empirical studies focused on the social psychological aspects of personal ideologies and political attitudes and the contradictions between declared attitudes and political actions. After some time Hans Zetterberg came to the department. Zetterberg had studied at Columbia University in New York. His well known book *On Theory and Verification in Sociological Research* was a result of his work and education at both Columbia and Uppsala University. Another well known sociologist is Joachim Israel that worked several years at the department during the 60th. Amongst other he studied film censure, the sexlife among youth and so on. 1996 Ulf Himmelstrand succeeded Torgny Segerstedt and became the new head professor in sociology in Uppsala.

In the 50th the department of Sociology had only five employees (one professor, one senior lecturer, two assistants and one secretary) and was located in a flat. The interest in sociology increased steadily during the 60th and formally exploded in the end of the decade in the shadow of the Vietnam War and the intense ideological and political radicalization of the youth and especially the university students. Students were vertically crammed in to the lectures. Some of the lectures were held in the university assembly hall so that hundreds and sometimes thousands of students

could attend. The sociology subject became trendy and on several occasions the department had to move to bigger premises.

During this time and especially in the beginning of the 70th the sociology discipline went through a series of hard conflicts about its context and methods. In the end of the decade the conflicts had subsided at the same time as the number of students. From the 80th and forward the departments students, researchers and lectures are working to overcome the differences between the theoretical and metrological traditions.

The sociology department has during its 60 years been in the frontline for many areas of the Swedish sociology research and its employees have in several cases formulated new interesting ideas and methods when they have expanded the departments area for research. Sten Johansson (later at the institute for social research (SOFI)), started the first research about Swedish living standards in the beginning of the 70th. Björn Eriksson (later professor at Örebro University) initiated a series of theoretical and methodological studies about knowledge sociology. At the end of the 70th and the beginning of the 80th several young sociologists, as Kaj Håkanson and Göran Ahrne, and even Ulf Himmelstrand of the older generation developed an interest for both the theoretical and empirical aspects of the historic materialism. One result of this interest was the book *Beyond Welfare Capitalism* by Himmelstrand, Ahrne and others.

Except for this interest in common problems in the field of sociology there have also been a development of a series of specialties over the years. Examples of this are, housing- and urban research initiated by Mats Franzén and Eva Sandstedt; and –already in the beginning of the 70th- an interest for media and communication (Peder Hård av Segerstad and Lowe Hedman) that later gave rise to a media- and communications-part of the department. This branch left the department in March 1998 and became a part of the newly formed department of information science.

A number of professor posts have been created through the years. The first professor in the second professor chair in sociology was Tom R. Burns, originally from Stanford University. He created and held the Uppsala Theory Circle. During the 90th four new professor chairs were established, these were oriented towards specific areas of research: Mårten Söder oriented towards disability studies, Eva Lundgren oriented towards women research and especially the relationship between power and gender in family and society and also violence against women. Lars Tornstam oriented towards social gerontology and Jim Kemeny oriented towards housing- and urban sociology.

Beside the professors area of research several other areas have been established under the years, to name a few: Family sociology (Jan Trost); Medical sociology (Sonja Calais van Stokkom); The philosophical, theoretical, practical and existential opportunities and consequences when the separation between subject and object is given up (Kaj Håkanson); The relation between generations, values and value change (Gunhild Hammarström); Disaster studies (Jan Trost and Örjan Hultåker, later at Scandinavian Opinion Research SKOP); Sexology (Jan Trost and Bo Lewin); Sociological critics of public choice and mainstream national economics (Ulf Himmelstrand and Lars Udén, later at Stockholm University); Methodology, Theory construction, meta theory and theory critics (Peter Ekegren, Pablo Suárez and Peter Solberg, later at Stockholm University); and development sociology (Mercuria Bulcha, Beth Ahlberg, Jorge Calbucura and Ulf Himmelstrand).

Professor Jukka Gronow, the former holder of the chair, has cultural sociology and especially consumption as his primary research field. Other dominating research areas at the department at the present are: disability studies, social gerontology, gender research, housing- and urban sociology, research about ethnicity, and organization, working-life research, education-sociology and sociology of childhood and youth.

Patrik Aspers is the current (2012-) holder of the chair in sociology at the Department of Sociology. His research focuses on economic sociology and theory, and empirical, he has studied fashion production.

Torgny Segerstedt approach towards philosophy and social psychology are still a big part of the sociology in Uppsala. This is shown amongst others though that social psychology is a parallel subject to sociology at the department and that the doctoral dissertations at the department spans over a wide area both theoretically and empirically, and several of the later have an social psychological approach.