

Speaker: *Michaela Hautamäki Bengtsson*

Presentation title: "Our default mode is always with a smile": a study of emotional labour and impression management among police working with youth cases in external service

Most occupations in contemporary society requires that employees manage their own, and others', emotions. This includes the police working in external service with youth cases, which this study focuses on. The main guidelines for police work with youth cases are Polislagen (SFS 1984:387), and the law (SFS 1967:167) with special provisions for young offenders. However, there are no explicit rules for how the police should manage their own, or others', emotions in their work with young people. Thus, the aim for this study is to investigate implicit rules for emotion management among the police working with youth cases in external service. This study has a phenomenological approach and empirical focus. The data on experiences of the police are collected through four qualitative semi-structured interviews, with a local police group focusing on youth cases, in a medium sized city in Sweden. The collected data is analysed on the foundation of previous studies on police culture, police work with young people, and emotional labour within different professions. The framework for the analysis is theories and concepts by Hochschild (1983/2012) and Goffman (1959/2014). The result of the analysis shows that the local police group regulates who is employed on the basis on whether they fit the group's profile. Implicit rules for what emotional labour is expected to be performed in the work is taught through socialization between senior police to the newly employed police. Furthermore, rules for emotional labour differentiates dependent on situation. When the police sometimes are not able to evoke these emotions, they turn to their colleagues for support or suppress the improper emotions. Finally, the result shows that a vital part of the polices' emotional labour is connected to their uniform.