

# From the Editors

## DEAR READERS,

As we are putting the final touches on this issue of *lambda nordica*, news have reached us of the arrest of LGBTQ rights activists who dared to protest Russia's repressive laws in both St Petersburg and Moscow during this year's Olympic games in Sotji. In Uganda the president Museveni has just signed a law concerning homosexuality, which stipulates imprisonment up to life for out gays and lesbians, and also significant jail time for anyone helping them. Among the international activists who have actively worked in solidarity with both of these cases is Ulrika Westerlund, the president of Sweden's national LGBTQ rights organization RFSL. While RFSL has long been engaged in international solidarity work, it is under Westerlund's leadership that the organization has more actively began addressing the demands and situations not only of 'L', 'G' and 'B' identified folks but also, specifically began focusing on transgender rights. Indeed, Westerlund has put the 'T' at the centre of RFSL's agenda, and along with other activists, successfully challenged Sweden's law on enforced sterilizations of trans\* people, ensuring that this violation has received both significant media attention and become a subject of policy revision.

Devoted readers are well aware that *lambda nordica* continues to strive to recruit and encourage scholarship on crucial issues for the LGBTQ community in the Nordic region and beyond and to bring scholarship into dialogue with activism and policy making. As editors we are particularly delighted to announce that you are currently reading the first issue of a Nordic journal entirely dedicated to transgender studies, and more specifically, to issues of transgender health. As guest editors of this

special issue, Ulrica Engdahl and Katherine Harrison contend, the normative power of health care is particularly pertinent in the case of trans health care. In addition to offering a substantive introduction to the topic at hand, our guest editors have selected a set of papers by scholars and activists that address a range of topics within the diverse and urgent field. Josephine Krieg examines how the medical pathologization of trans functions simultaneously as a discursive and literal denigration of trans subjectivities, while also serving as a political tool to access rights and (medical) services. Challenging individual pathologization and analyzing recent policy, Krieg's argument questions societal limits of gender expression. Damien Riggs and Clemence Due focus on Australian trans men's encounters with health care and stress the significance of trans knowledge and experience in ensuring effective treatment and attentive health care providers. Trazcyk, Wurm and Ahonen's article, which is in Swedish, centers on how subjective assumptions about gender norms and ideals among psychologists affect their approach to patients; again stressing the urgent need for improved trans cultural competence. Axel and Adrian Repka's article focuses on a radio program about self-administration of hormones and how it constructs such practices as irresponsible and its deployers as impatient and thus at times resulting in denial of care. The final article by Lotta Kähkönen reads trans livelihood through Jackie Kay's novel *Trumpet* in order to raise questions about the possibility of transgender ethics. As leading transgender studies scholar Susan Stryker notes in the essay that completes the special issue, Nordic scholarship is unique in the sense that it tends to be more closely connected to national-level policy and law than elsewhere. It is our sincere hope that this rich set of articles, derived from the first conference on transgender health in the Nordic region, along with reviews of recent literature in the broader field of transgender studies, will be of use not only to scholars and students, but also to health care professionals and activists across the Nordic region and beyond.

As some readers will know, the state and future of academic journals in Sweden and the Nordic countries more broadly, has been intensely debated in recent months, in part due to the decision of the scientific

council of Sweden (Vetenskapsrådet) to cut back funding to independent journals. These news comes at a peculiar point in time for *lambda nordica*, since we have not only received generous continued funding from Stiftelsen Torsten Amundsons fond, at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, but also for the first time applied for and successfully received funding from Vetenskapsrådet. It is our deep conviction that the production of high-quality scientific journals requires financial support. As we have noted in several editorials, the work of editors, guest editors, peer-reviewers, and others who help to ensure the scientific merits of articles and journals is often done above and beyond the more than full time workload of active academics. We see the support of Vetenskapsrådet as a marker of the quality of work that the journal has published in recent years and look forward to continuing on this path. That said, above all, it is with the support of authors and readers that we continue to ensure that the Nordic region has its own journal of LGBTQ studies and that this journal reaches readers across the world. Thus, while we firmly believe in the importance of open access and are proud that readers can access the work of dedicated scholars free of charge, we also continue to rely on the support of subscribers and members. Please consider your continued support of the journal by subscribing, teaching, reading and circulating these pieces.

Now we roll up our editorial sleeves and continue working with our forthcoming issues: in the pipeline at the moment are, among other things, a special issue on LGBTQ activism in Southern Europe, and one on queer kinship and assisted reproduction. As always, we welcome articles, proposals for special issues and feedback on issues already in print.

Enjoy your reading!

**JENNY BJÖRKLUND** *and*  
**ULRIKA DAHL, SENIOR EDITORS**