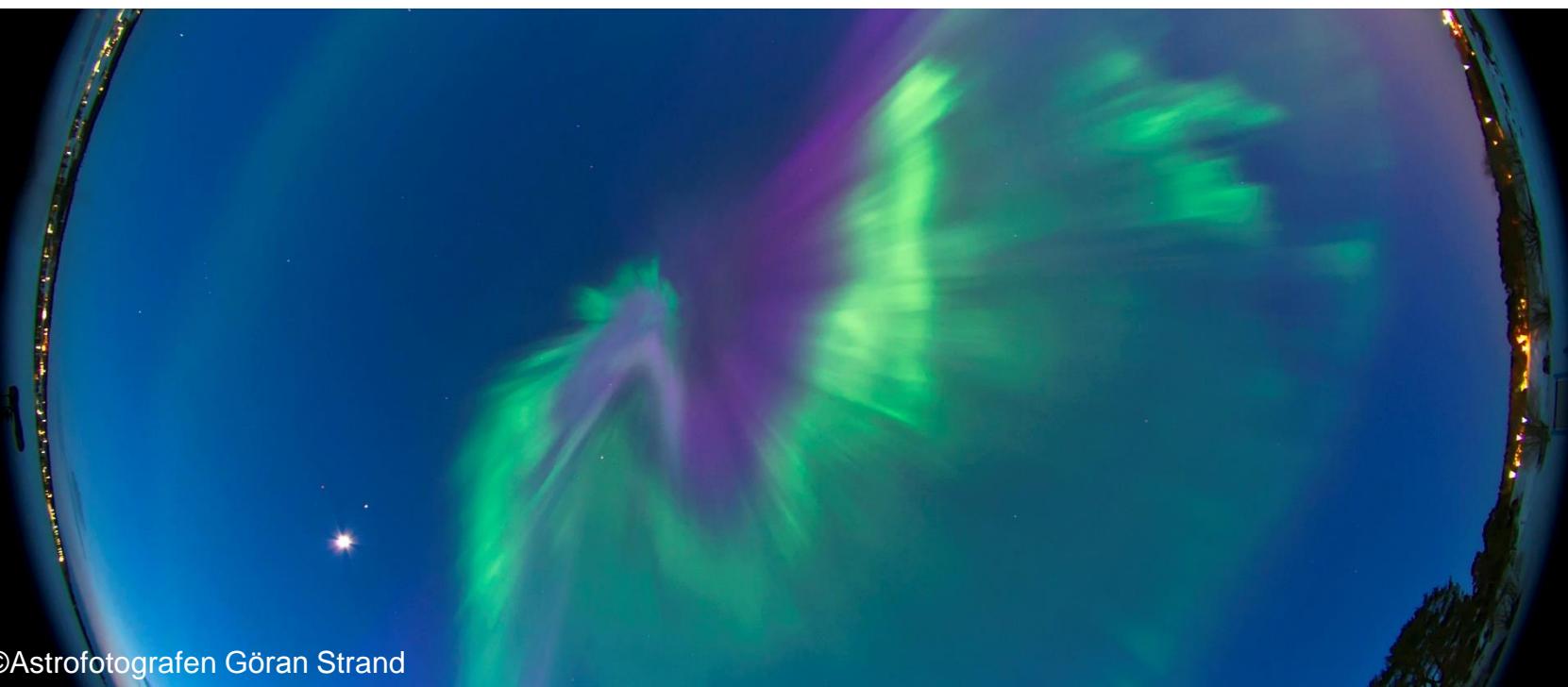


# Is risk analysis always for the good?

## A critical perspective on risk and risk research

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Risk and Crisis Research Centre

The illustrations in the presentation in Vilnius was made by Emma Hanquist, <http://www.emmahan.com/>



## Risk, uncertainty and power

- We live in a time of constant flow of possible risks and uncertainties
- Risk has become a way of thinking, acting and governing
- We pre-empty uncertain futures by stating risk
- To speak of risk is to exercise power
  - All talk is based on particular interests, norms and ideologies
  - The language of risk influence perception, behavior and policy

## A critical perspective of risk

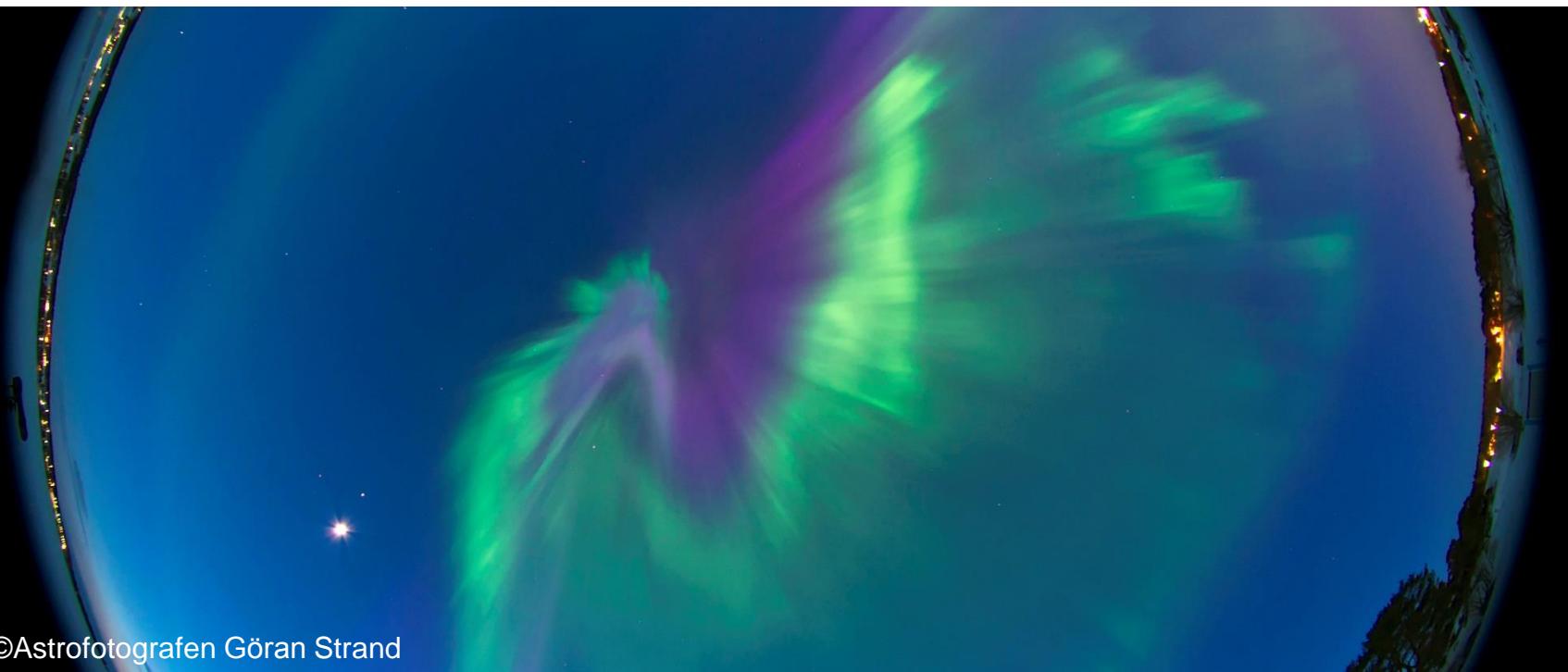
Risk is understood and (re)produced in hierarchical power relationships such as gender, race, class, sexuality and their intersections

Within a regime of risk analysis, all differences and the inequalities that result from them are often concealed

Risk analysis constructs some as normal and others as ‘at risk’ or even ‘risky’

Risk contributes to the constitution of inequality, and inequality constitutes risk (Therborn 2015)

# Risks to Regions or The Risk of Regions?



# Media Portrayals of Unaccompanied Child Refugees

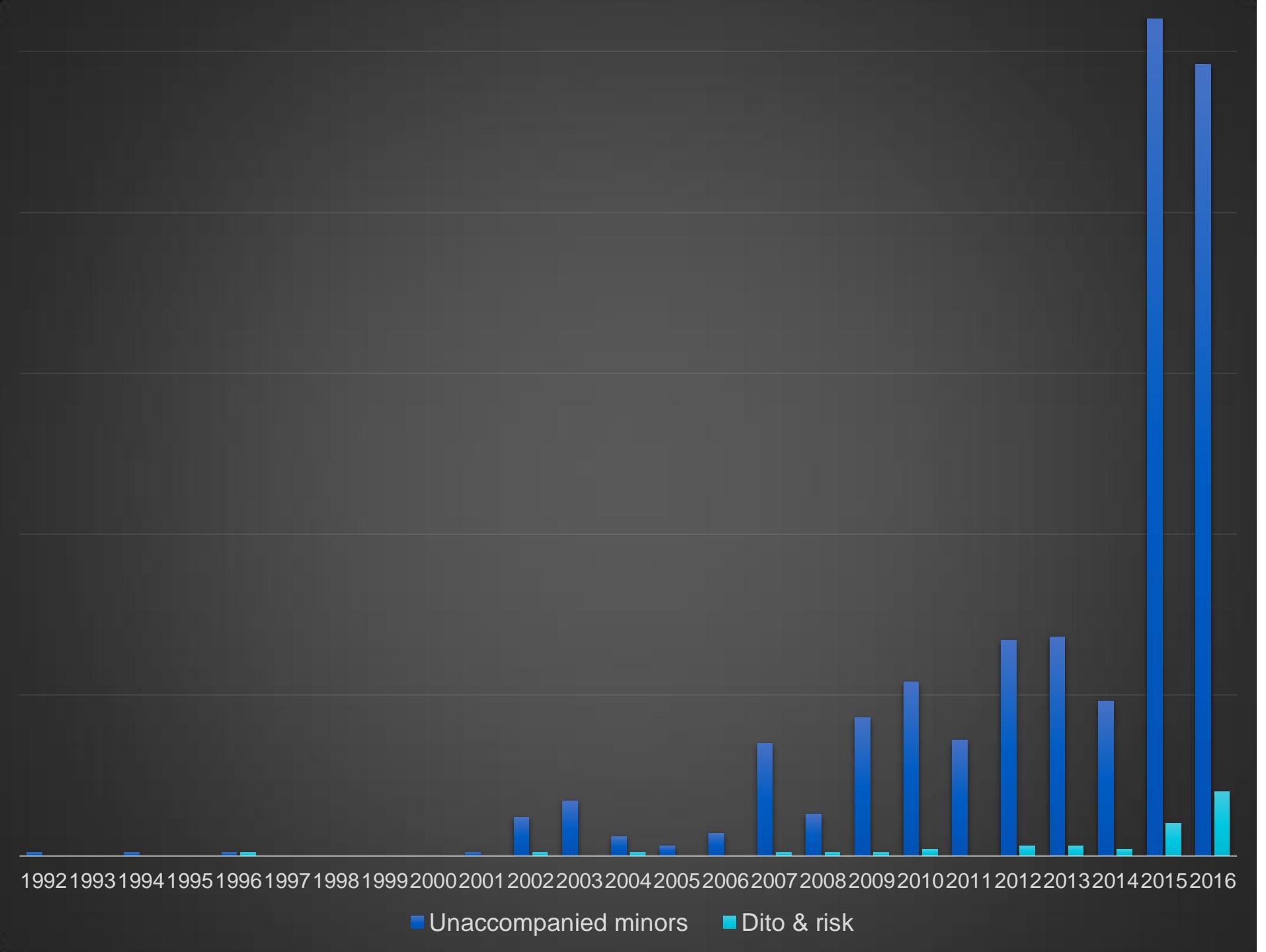
Exploring migration through the gendering and racialization of risks in Sweden

Search on *unaccompanied --2016*

in all print media >58,000 hits

in Dagens Nyheter 248 hits

(including ‘risk’ 46 hits)



## Children at risk on the migration market

Private companies are taking care of some of Stockholm's most vulnerable children when the need of 'emergency families' is too big for the city to handle. Who is responsible for the children is described as a "gray area". According to information provided to DN there are also "fortune-hunters" among the actors—and the bill ends on millions.

Dagens Nyheter November 21, 2013

## Alone coming ‘boys’ posing risk

Only last week, local residents received information that the villa that had been vacant for a year would be accommodation for a dozen of unaccompanied teenaged boys. The municipality sent a letter to the most concerned neighbors and invited to tour the house. It was then that the turbulence spread in the neighborhood.

- There was outrage, I can tell. Most were worried about their children, they would not dare let them go alone to school anymore. Many felt that the war-wounded refugees increases the risk of assault and everything else, says one of the neighbors on the street.

Neither he nor the handful of neighbors we face in the area want to give their names. The topic is charged, not least since it appeared an anonymous letter in everyone's mailboxes last week. The letter listed a large number of violent incidents in different types of accommodation for asylum seekers around the country. The sender was unknown.

Dagens Nyheter December 15, 2015

## Risk, nationalism and sexism

Gendered figurations of immigrant youth, entangled with racialization and logics of risk:

- The at risk child/girl in need of protection
- The risky ‘boy/man’ to be protected against

This shift from humanitarian concerns to security is enabled through risk discourses

In this way articulations of risk make new policies possible that close borders and are directed toward young men, stripped off their human rights as children, who are deported to war and uncertainty.

But it also makes resistance possible among those who see beyond risk discourse and cherish solidary and human rights

## Concluding remarks

Risk is a normative power that constitute hegemonic structures in and through everyday-life

Risk intersects with hierarchical relations of power such as gender, race, class, sexuality, etc. and (re)create these relations

To use the word ‘risk’ in association with someone or something opens up for risk management through everything from policy and legislation, to sexism and racism

To be for the good, in risk analyses we need to critically reflect upon which norms, who’s interests, that are invested in the process

# Thank you for your attention!

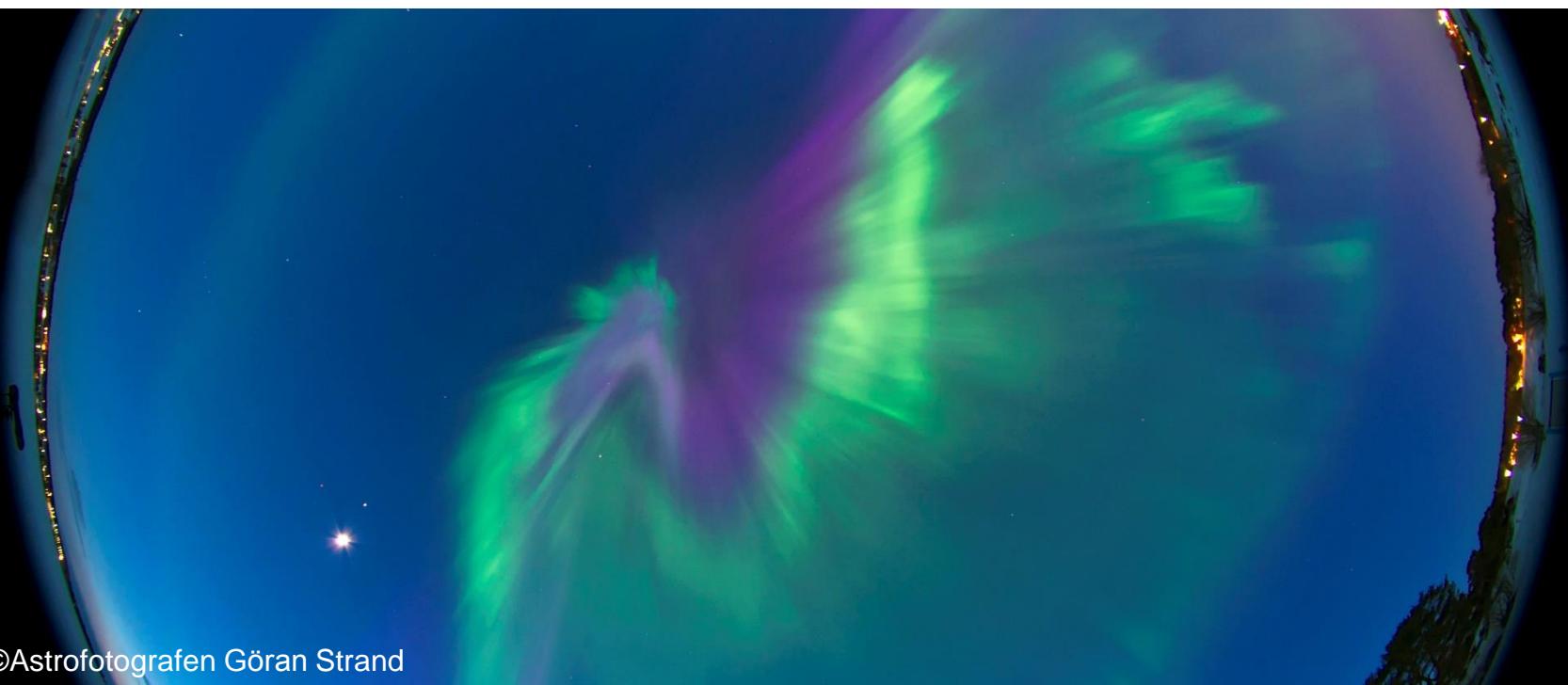
## Questions and comments?

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# Risk & Uncertainty

## – From Critical Thinking to Practical Impact

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 7 February

Notification of acceptance: 16 March

[www.miun.se/SRAE2018](http://www.miun.se/SRAE2018)



# Core topics

- Risk communication in 'post-fact' times
- Practical impact of risk perception research
- Risk and inequality
- Risk and decision analysis in critical infrastructure
- Theoretical advancements in risk studies
- Risk in everyday life
- Methods and methodologies in risk research
- The new landscape of social media and risk
- Collaborative governance and networked practice
- Experimental design and integration of labs in research and education
- The unrecognized risk and crisis management
- Uncertainty in governance of migration and integration policy
- Risk management education and practice



Photo: Hanna Liljendahl

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