



Invitation to Contribute to a
Workshop on Categories and Concepts in
Health, Medicine and Society
Umeå, 15–17 March 2012

**A workshop organised by The Nordic Research Network for Medical History
(NordForsk)**

Categories and concepts play a central role in our everyday life. They are results of a specific way of understanding the world and simultaneously shape our perspectives and thereby limit the range of plausible explanations. Classifications, categorisations and concepts relating to health and disease, and social categories such as class, race, ethnicity, gender and age are constantly contested in medical and social science.

We invite participants to address different types of concepts and categories, the role of categories, and different theoretical approaches to the study of concepts and categories, in the context of medical research and health policy. Topic examples include (but are not limited to): change and continuity in social categories in epidemiological research; comparisons of the uses of race and ethnicity classifications in different countries; inclusion/exclusion of populations; the evolution of new concepts and categories; effects on health policy of categories used; and how categories are shaped and how they shape those categorised.

Papers can be both on categorisations made by others and on categorisations made by the researchers themselves.

Keynote speaker: Professor Eviatar Zerubavel, Department of Sociology, Rutgers University. Professor Zerubavel has analysed categorisation in numerous ways. His

extensive scholarship includes *Social Mindscales: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology* (Harvard University Press, 1999); *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (University of Chicago Press, 2003); 'Lumping and splitting: Notes on social classification', *Sociological Forum* (1996, 11/3). Forthcoming in the autumn of 2011 is *Ancestors and Relatives: Genealogy, Identity, and Community* (Oxford University Press).

Abstracts: Scholars interested in participating in the workshop are asked to send a 500-word-maximum abstract (in English) and a short CV no later than 15 September 2011 to Dr Per Axelsson: per.axelsson@cesam.umu.se.

Formalities: Up to 14 papers will be accepted. Final papers (12–15 pages, fully footnoted) are due 1 February 2012, and will be available to conference participants only. To facilitate scholarly interchange, accepted papers will be circulated 30 days before the workshop. All participants are expected to have read all papers prior to the workshop. During the workshop, each presenter will give a brief oral summary of their work, allowing maximum time for discussion.

The Nordic research network for medical history will cover accommodation and conference fees. Travel expenses will be covered for members of the network. We are investigating the possibility of having a selection of the papers published in a special issue of a peer-reviewed journal. More information to follow.

Further questions: If you have questions please contact the organisers, Dr Per Axelsson (per.axelsson@cesam.umu.se) or Professor Signild Vallgård (siva@sund.ku.dk).