"I Try to Tell Myself That It's a Machine, but It Doesn't Help": Negotiating Notions of Being Human in Transhumansexual Relationships between Humans and Hubots in the Swedish TV Series Real Humans

By

Johan Hallqvist

Abstract

The Swedish sci-fi drama TV series *Real Humans* (original title in Swedish: *Äkta människor*) can be viewed as a playground for trying out imagined possible future human-robot relationships that can tell us something regarding ideas about possible futures for being human. In the paper, representations of transhumansexual relationships are explored, specifically how these representations reproduce and possibly challenge notions of being human. Three articulations of transhumansexual relationships are identified: authenticity, legal subjectivity, and failure of heterosexuality. The negotiations of being human take place in three different discourses – a heteronormative and humanonormative discourse on gender and sexuality, a biological discourse, and a citizenship discourse. Transhumansexuals and hubots in transhumansexual relationships are humanized – anthropomorphized – and made more intelligible as human(-like) beings. However, the quest to make transhumansexual relationships intelligible as something human tends to (hetero- and humano-)normalize the queer potential of transhumansexual relationships.

Introduction

Real Humans is a Swedish sci-fi drama TV series broadcast from 2012 to 2014 by the Swedish public service television company (Sveriges Television). The series takes place in what the co-creator of the show, Lars Lundström, has referred to as a Swedish "parallel present": a contemporary Swedish society with the difference that hubots – a neologism based on the words human and robot capturing the human-likeness of the robots on the series – are an integral part of people's everyday lives:

> [T]he artificial human has come into its own. Robots no longer have anything robot-like about them. […] The Human Robot (HUBOT) has also given rise to new problems and dilemmas. […] As an evergrowing number of people form relationships with hubots, the boundaries between human and machine become blurred. When humans make copies of themselves, which are so close to the real thing they form emotional bonds, the question arises – What does it really mean to be "human"? (IMDB, n.p)

The relationships between humans and hubots are crucial in the series and raise existential questions about what kinds of relationships between humans and hubots are possible and socially acceptable, what rights and responsibilities the hubots have, and ultimately what it means to be human.

Science fiction film has a long history of portraying relationships between humans and machines, where science fiction is one of the main arenas for dealing with interactions between humans, non-humans, and human-like non-humans – an "important ethical laboratory to (re)imagine and play with human-machine relationships, modes of being human, or understandings of human nature" (Ornella 2015: 337). Lundström's quote and his idea of *Real Humans* as depicting a parallel present of close relationships between humans and hubots works well with what Alexander Ornella refers to as an ethical laboratory – (re)imagining and playing with human-hubot relationships and notions of being human. Aino-Kaisa Koistinen refers to *Real Humans* as "one of the most intriguing sf series dealing with the boundaries of human and nonhuman beings that has been produced since the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*" (Koistinen 2015: 417-418). Malin Ideland and Tora Holmberg bring forward the potential of *Real Humans* to function as a "thought-figure" for imagining what society might look like with advanced robot technology (Ideland & Holmberg 2014).

In this paper, *Real Humans* is analyzed as a playground for trying out imagined future human-robot relationships (cf. Åkesson 1996, Goode & Godhe 2017) and ideas about possible future meanings of being human (Goode & Godhe 2017, Goode 2018).

The presence of hubots in humans' everyday lives in *Real Humans* and the issues these interactions and relationships raise have been previously analyzed by scholars, including studies of difference-making processes between humans and hubots through their material corporeality (Hallqvist 2018), privilege and inequality in paid and unpaid domestic work (Yang 2018), care work (Koistinen 2016), immigration and citizenship (Hellstrand, Koistinen & Orning 2019), notions of race (Yang 2018), the relationship between human-like robots, fiction and science (Mountfort 2018), and female androids and machine cuteness (Leyda 2017). However, previous research on *Real Humans* has not analyzed transhumansexual relationships – humans who are only attracted to hubots – and the negotiations of being human that these relationships entail. *Real Humans* has the potential to both reproduce and challenge heteronormativity and humanonormativity – where the object of desire for a human must be another human (cf. Motschenbacher 2014, Cole 2013, Mountfort 2018). Hence, the aim of this paper is to explore representations of transhumansexual relationships and how these representations reproduce and possibly challenge notions of being human in *Real Humans*, with a particular focus on the transhumansexual relationship of the human character Tobias and the hubot character Mimi.

People's increased everyday contacts with technology, especially human-like technology, are characterized by the fact that people tend to attribute technology with human characteristics (Turkle 1984). This can lead to what N. Katherine Hayles calls a two-cycle phenomenon where humans attribute technology with human-like traits and then mirror themselves in those technologies, which affects their perceptions of what being human means (Hayles 2005). This tendency is also evident in portrayals of human-like technology in science fiction, where robots have gone from posing a threat to humanity to asking questions about how robots' humanlikeness challenges notions of being human (Hellstrand 2015). According to Kevin LaGrandeur (2015), androids – robots that look like humans – have through the history of film and television seldom been symbols for discussing what it means to be human. However, since the early 2000s, a growing trend in science fiction has been to portray androids as human-like beings, often so human-like that they can (almost) pass as humans (Koistinen 2011, Koistinen 2015, Hellstrand 2015, see also Robertson 2010, Goode 2018). *Real Humans* can be included in this trend. Depicting robots in the form of humans is a normative process that deals with the question of representation and asks which bodies are represented and allowed to pass as real human legitimate bodies and which norms on being human are reproduced (Koistinen 2016, Hellstrand 2015).

The issues of sex, love, and intimate relationships between robots and artificial intelligence have increased in interest in recent years (see e.g., Alexander & Yescavage 2018, Royakkers & van Est 2015, Ornella 2015), partly because of

fictional portrayals of such relationships in films like *Her* (2013) and *Ex-Machina* (2014). Jonathan Alexander and Karen Yescavage argue that "filmic representations […] depicting intimate interactions between humans and artificial intelligences have emerged in a cultural context increasingly invested in theorizing the impact of advanced and complex technologies on human subjectivity" (Alexander & Yescavage 2018: 74). Previous studies on representations of intimate relationships between humans, robots, and artificial intelligence in science fiction film and television have shown both how these representations can reproduce underlying gender norms in popular discourse (Koistinen 2011, Ornella 2015) and how they can potentially offer queer intimacies that exceed heteronormative notions of gender and sexuality (e.g., Wälivaara 2016, Alexander & Yescavage 2018).

Discussions about increased intimate relationships between humans and robots and artificial intelligence also exist outside the realms of fiction. For example sex robots, where some argue that they can decrease human prostitution and human trafficking (e.g., Levy 2007), while others claim that they can lead to de-socialization from other humans (Turkle 2011, see also Royakkers & van Est 2015) and reproduce patriarchal and heteronormative gender norms (e.g., Richardson 2015).

Kerstin Koch calls for more empirical cultural research that analyzes connections, relationships, and hierarchies where the cultural – practices, meanings and materiality of everyday life – and the digital meet and constitute each other in this process. Cultural research can contribute both to understanding how the digital "has become a fundamental cultural technology of today's lifeworlds" and how this cultural technology contributes to "doing culture in everyday life" (Koch 2017: 4, cf. Lundin & Åkesson 1999). By analyzing imagined possible future relationships between humans, human-like robots and artificial intelligence in everyday life settings – such as transhumansexual relationships – the question of what being human means is raised. This also works as an illustration of how being human is negotiated and conditioned by certain norms where some individuals are recognized as human beings while some are not (cf. Butler 2004, Ers 2006). In other words, this offers a possibility to explore how notions of being human are negotiated in a time – and an imagined possible future – of increasing everyday life relationships between humans and human-like technology.

Theoretical Framework

Feminist queer studies explore how discourses produce sexualities, and specifically how non-heterosexualities are articulated as queer sexualities and as deviant from heteronormative norms (Rubin 2008, Butler 1990, see also Lundahl 2001, Svensson 2007, Bremer 2011, Göransson 2012).

In this paper, the negotiations of notions of being human are analyzed in terms of how the fixation of meaning for being human is produced or contested. However, because the fixation is never fully completed, these meanings can be contested from other discourses with different meanings of being human (cf. Laclau & Mouffe 1985, Johansson 2010, Nilsson & Lundgren 2015).

My understanding of gender, sexuality and humanity as discursive constructions is drawn from a combination of Judith Butler's (1990) theories of performativity and heterosexual matrix together with Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's (1985) discourse theory (cf. Lindström 2005, Johansson 2010, Reimers 2011). Anna Johansson (2010) argues that discourse theory can be applied to understand and analyze how gender and sexuality are constructed (cf. Gunnarsson Payne 2006, Mouffe 2005), specifically how discourse theory works well with Butler's theorizations on gender (e.g., Butler 1990). According to Johansson, the combination of discourse theory and Butler's gender theory makes it possible to understand gender as an identity category or a set of positions that is constantly constructed and reconstructed. The combination of these theories makes it possible to analyze how gender, sexuality and humanity are done performatively and discursively, Johansson argues that It is the *doing* itself, the performative (or, with discourse theory, the articulatory processes), which creates humans in the form of men and women (Johansson 2010: 35). Through performativity, Butler (1990) questions the naturalness of sex and the very distinction between sex and gender. Gender is repetitions of stylized acts that make them seem as a result of a (natural) sex, but there is only gender. The heterosexual matrix and its quest for cultural intelligibility produces bodies, genders, and desires as a naturalized and heterosexualized union between two socially and physically binary genders (male and female) who (must) desire each other. The heterosexual matrix explains how gender and sexuality are intertwined due to this heterosexualized union. As Wendy Gay Pearson, Veronica Hollinger and Joan Gordon conclude, queer theory and feminist theory can both "make visible the naturalised epistemologies of sexuality, gender, and race that underwrite the most conservative sf as well as to explain some of science fiction's most striking attempts to defamiliarise and denaturalise taken-for-granted constructions of what it means to be, and to live, as a human" (Pearson, Hollinger & Gordon 2008: 6). However, the relationships and desires between humans and hubots in *Real Humans* also highlight the question of humanonormativity, the norms of human sexuality where humans can only desire another human (cf. Motschenbacher 2014, Cole 2013).

In this paper, Gayle Rubin's (2008) sex hierarchy model is used to both explore how different sexual expressions are viewed as normal or deviant due to cultural and historical contexts and whether they are included in the "charmed circle" of normal sexuality or banished to the "outer limits" of abnormal sexuality.

Heteronormativity is crucial for discerning how non-heterosexualities, and maybe especially those involving non-humans – such as transhumansexual relationships – are articulated as queer and deviant from heteronormativity (Rubin 2008, Butler 1990). The sexual identity of transhumansexuality might therefore be understood as a stigmatized sexuality that falls into the category of subaltern sexual communities.

Within research on human-object attraction, human-object attraction is analyzed as a cultural and political formation and identity rather than a biological and psychological perversion, often referred to as objectophilia (cf. Terry 2010). Similar to queer theory, human-object attraction research analyzes heteronormative sexualities, ideas of stable genders, and the desire for the opposite sex (cf. Terry 2010, Cole 2013), as well as the humanonormative norms of human sexuality (Motschenbacher 2014, Cole 2013). Human-object attraction also potentially challenges the very idea of the relationship between objects and subjects – in the case of *Real Humans*, between hubots and humans.

Materials and Methods

Two seasons of *Real Humans* were produced. This paper mainly analyzes the second season, with a total of ten episodes, each 60 minutes long, because it focuses on human-hubot relationships concerning love and sex – where transhumansexuality is one example of close human-hubot relationships. However, because transhumansexuality is introduced in season one, parts of the first season that deal with transhumansexuality have also been included in the analysis.

I watched each season once where I transcribed dialogues, choices of words, and portrayals of different kinds of human-hubot relationships. While I was transcribing, I took notes of associations and thoughts I had during the process. I was also interested in the visual and aural representations of hubots and human-hubot relationships portrayed in the series. Therefore, I took notes on for example how the characters looked, how they were dressed, how they spoke, and what visual and sound effects were used by the production. I was specifically interested in how hubots and humans, engaged in human-hubot relationships, were portrayed as human, less human or non-human, which also included how the characters were gendered. In total, these transcriptions, consisting of 67 pages, worked as the material for my analysis. Because the series is in Swedish, I translated the excerpts from the scenes into English, but the analysis is based on the Swedish dialogues in the show.

First, the material was sorted into central themes that I found in both seasons. I looked specifically for themes concerning sexual and loving relationships between humans and hubots and how these concerned ideas of gender, sexuality, and

being human. I found several themes of human-hubot relationships involving sex and love, including hubbies (humans having sex with hubots), prostitute hubots, platonic human-hubot relationships, pornographic hubots (used in pornography for humans to watch), and transhumansexual relationships. The theme I chose to focus on was transhumansexuality, and specifically the transhumansexual Tobias and his love for the hubot Mimi.

Second, to analyze how notions of being human were negotiated in my transcribed material I turned to discourse theory and how the characters' meaning-makings produce certain understandings of being human (Laclau & Mouffe 1985). Two theoretical concepts were of specific interest in the analysis process – articulation and discourse. I understand being human as discursively negotiated and an open concept whose meanings are produced through *articulations*. By articulation, Laclau and Mouffe refer to "any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice" (Laclau & Mouffe 1985: 105). For example, the articulation of human with biology is different from the articulation of human with citizenship. Thus, these articulations produce different meanings and understandings of being human (cf. Nilsson & Lundgren 2015).

I define *discourse* as a system of meanings and practices that are fluctuating, contextual and shaped in relation to other discourses (Laclau & Mouffe 1985) thus resulting in discursive struggles over the meaning(s) of being human. I identified different discourses found in the material concerning negotiations of being human, where I looked for nodal points that are privileged signifiers around which other signs are ordered and acquire their meaning (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, Winther Jørgensen & Phillips 2002).

Negotiating Notions of Being Human in the Articulations of Transhumansexual Relationships in *Real Humans*

The transhumansexual human Tobias and the hubot Mimi are two of the main characters in *Real Humans*, and the viewers get to follow Tobias trying to both handle his transhumansexuality and love for Mimi as well as to be recognized as a transhumansexual individual (cf. Mountfort 2018). Transhumansexuality is one important aspect of the overall theme of *Real Humans* – how humans and hubots interact and form different relationships with each other and how these relationships and the similarities between humans and hubots blur the boundaries between them (cf. Koistinen 2015, Yang 2018).

In the following analysis, I focus on three different articulations of transhumansexuality – *failure of heterosexuality*, *authenticity* and *legal subjectivity*. In these articulations of transhumansexual relationships, three different discourses

are identified where the negotiations of being human take place: a *heteronormative and humanonormative discourse on gender and sexuality*, a *biological discourse* and a *citizenship discourse*.

Transhumansexuality as a Failure of Heterosexuality

In this section, I focus on the articulations of transhumansexuality as a failure of heterosexuality, specifically in relation to heteronormative and humanonormative norms on sexuality, gender, and being human where a human is expected to desire another human of the opposite sex.

Transhumansexuality is the most "extreme" form of human-hubot relationship depicted in *Real Humans* in the sense that transhumansexuals, including Tobias, are not attracted to humans at all. In the analysis of *Real Humans* transhumansexuality was identified as a new sexual identity, rather than a set of sexual practices, concerning attempts to find ways of constructing a more reciprocal human-hubot relationships, and struggles to be recognized as transhumansexual (cf. Mountfort 2018). The first character to be identified as a transhumansexual is Tobias. Tobias has been struggling with his feelings of stress and confusion concerning his attraction for the hubot Mimi and his non-attraction for human girls after trying to date human girls. As a result, his father takes him to a therapist – a familiar story of non-heterosexualities where deviant sexual subjects are encouraged to confess their non-normative desires to authorities in order to both understand themselves and to obtain public tolerance or acceptance (Foucault 1990, Terry 2010):

> Tobias: I try to tell myself that it's [Mimi] a machine, but it doesn't help; it even makes it worse. If mom and dad would sell her it would feel like my life was over.
> Therapist: What about other girls?
> Tobias: You mean *regular* [human] girls?
> Therapist: Mhm [yes]. Have you been in love or in a relationship with anyone?
> Tobias: I've tried, but it never works out.
> Therapist: What's not working?
> Tobias: Well, I guess it's working for them [the girls], but it's doing nothing for me.
> Therapist: Okay.
> Tobias: But maybe I should just end up with someone and pretend. That's how you do it, right?
> (Season 1, Episode 9, my translation)

When the therapist asks Tobias whether he has been in love or in a relationship with a girl, or a *regular* (human) girl as Tobias puts is, transhumansexuality is articulated as a failure of heterosexuality by being linked to a question of not being attracted to the right kind of girls – human girls. This draws both on heteronormative notions of sexuality where sexualities other than heterosexuality are articulated as deviant (sexualities) or as queer sexualities (cf. Rubin 2008, Butler 1990) and humanonormative notions of sexuality where the proper object of desire is another human (Motschenbacher 2014). In other words, the failure of heterosexuality is connected to the inability to, or lack of, being attracted to human girls.

I identify two potential strategies for Tobias to try to defy his transhumansexuality. Firstly, he presents Mimi as a non-human object – a machine – refusing to recognize her as a (proper) human subject (to love). Secondly, he attempts to pass as heterosexual (cf. Butler 1990, Butler 1993) by pretending to be interested in human girls. Both strategies involve Tobias trying to make up for a failure of heterosexuality by giving up his desire for a non-human in hopes of fulfilling heteronormative and humanonormative norms of heterosexuality.

Another example of the articulation of transhumansexuality as a failure of heterosexuality, connected to the question of the attraction of human girls, is a dialogue between Tobias' sister Matilda and her colleague Betty, where they discuss Tobias' transhumansexuality. Matilda tells Betty that Tobias is a transhumansexual and Betty reacts by saying, "Seriously? He's not just having difficulties attracting girls?" (Season 2, Episode 2, my translation). Here, transhumansexuality is articulated as a *potential* failure of heterosexuality by linking it to the issue of not being able to attract girls. Betty is a bit unsure whether Tobias really is transhumansexual or is just a heterosexual or bisexual guy with problems attracting human girls.

The two examples of articulations of transhumansexuality as a failure of heterosexuality linked to either not being attracted to human girls or not being able to attract human girls at all could be explained by Butler's (1990) heterosexual matrix. The heterosexual matrix's quest for cultural intelligibility produces bodies, genders and desires as a naturalized and heterosexualized union. Tobias' failure of heterosexuality could accordingly be understood in terms of his desire for something other than human girls – he is only attracted to hubot girls, according to himself, and therefore his very heterosexuality is questioned. I understand this to be a result of the close relation between the heterosexual matrix and humanonormative notions of sexuality – the desire should not just be directed towards the opposite gender, but towards a *human* of the opposite gender (cf. Cole 2013).

Another example concerns whether transhumansexuality is understood as a sexual identity or a sexual phase. When Tobias' father picks up Tobias after a

meeting with the therapist, Tobias *comes out* as transhumansexual, yet another form of confession of the deviance from heteronormativity (cf. Butler 1990, Lundahl 2001):

> Tobias: I'm THS, transhumansexual.
> Father: That you … [interrupted]
> Tobias: … are only attracted to hubots. It's an [sexual] orientation, like
> being right- or left-handed. I don't know if you're familiar with it.
> Father: Yes, well I've read about those.
> Tobias: *I'm* transhumansexual. *I'm* one of "those". […]
> Father: It might be something that passes with time.
> (Season 1, Episode 9, my translation)

In this dialogue, transhumansexuality on the one hand is articulated in terms of a sexual identity, as natural as being right- or left-handed, in opposition to transhumansexuality being a failure of heterosexuality. This can be understood as a way of linking transhumansexuality to a biological discourse that constructs sexual identity as a natural given rather than as an individual choice (cf. Lindström 2005). Thus, according to Tobias he is not a failure, or a failed heterosexual, because he is acting according to his biological sexual orientation. On the other hand, transhumansexuality is also articulated as a failure of heterosexuality by linking it to a possible sexual phase that might pass – a common way of thinking about non-heterosexualities as being confused, being seduced, being abused, or being led astray from a natural heterosexuality (cf. Bertilsdotter Rosqvist 2012). The construction of transhumansexuality as a phase is linked to an idea of it as a failure, as a temporary detour from heteronormative life schedules (cf. Halberstam 2005) that in time might get back on the heteronormative – and in this case humanonormative – track. Thus, according to the father, Tobias' heterosexuality is not necessarily "lost", but is simply failing at the moment and might reappear in the future. In accordance with Rubin's sex hierarchy model (2008), both Tobias and his father try to "push" Tobias into the central part of the model – Tobias by trying to make transhumansexuality accepted as a normal sexuality and his father by talking about Tobias in terms of a confused heterosexual.

In the articulations of transhumansexuality as a failure of heterosexuality, being human is linked to a *heteronormative and humanonormative discourse on gender and sexuality*. Mimi and Tobias' relationship is understood as deviant because Mimi is not seen as human nor a "regular" girl, but rather as a machine. Hence, Tobias is not necessarily automatically recognized, or taken seriously, as transhumansexual because his love is directed towards a non-human. Tobias claims that his transhumansexuality is biologically given and his father

questions whether it is not just a temporary phase and a temporary detour from a heteronormative life schedule (cf. Halberstam 2005), and thus by articulating transhumansexuality in relation to heterosexuality it becomes the norm, at least to which other sexualities need to be compared and understood (cf. Butler 1990, Lundahl 2001). Thus, both Tobias and his father relate to normative heterosexuality – Tobias in that transhumansexuality is as normal as heterosexuality and the father who sees transhumansexuality as a (temporary) deviation from heterosexuality. However, Tobias seems to be aware of the heteronormative and humanonormative expectations and how to act according to these expectations in order for him to not be considered a failed heterosexual. By him ironically constructing Mimi as a machine, the series simultaneously both reproduces heteronormativity and humanonormativity *and* potentially opens up the arbitrariness of the natural and stable state of heteronormativity (cf. Butler 1990) and humanonormativity (cf. Motschenbacher 2014), and thus defies heterosexuality being the only natural and normal sexuality.

Transhumansexuality and Authenticity

The question of failure is closely linked to the question of authenticity, of what is real and what is fake. Thus, authenticity – in the articulations of transhumansexuality – becomes a question of *who* needs authenticity, *how* and *why*, rather than a question of truth (cf. Bendix 1997). In other words, authenticity becomes a means for articulating transhumansexuality, where the meaning of authenticity is negotiated. Therefore, in this section I focus on how transhumansexuality is articulated as an authentic or inauthentic sexual identity, in other words, whether or not Tobias is understood as a real transhumansexual.

In one scene, when visiting Tobias' home, Betty tries to test Tobias' trans-humansexuality by charming and flirting with him while pretending to be a hubot – a *female* hubot – asking whether he has a girlfriend. Tobias seems shy, blushes and smiles. Suddenly Betty breaks out of her hubot character, reveals that she is not a hubot, starts to laugh and says "Sorry". Tobias gets upset, yells "Go to hell!" and slams the door to his room (Season 2, Episode 2, my translation). Betty interprets Tobias' reactions as signs of him falling for her performance as a hubot. However, in a conversation with his sister Matilda, Tobias later denies having felt attracted to Betty and falling for her attempt to pass as a hubot:

> Tobias: Did she [Betty] believe that I would be attracted to her simply
> because she looks like a hubot?
> Matilda: But just admit that you fell for it! [---]
> Tobias: Stop trying to hook me up with hubots! Especially *fake* ones.
> (Season 2, Episode 2, my translation)

In both of these scenes, Betty's flirting with Tobias and Tobias' possible attraction to Betty (as a hubot) can be seen as a test both of whether Tobias is *really* transhumansexual and of whether Betty can *pass* as a hubot by performing hubot femininity (cf. Butler 1990, Butler 1993). The question of authenticity is here negotiated in terms of being real and passing, and transhumansexuality is linked with authenticity, where being an authentic transhumansexual means being attracted to authentic hubots. However, because the question of what authenticity means is negotiated, Betty and Tobias have somewhat different views on this issue. Betty tests Tobias' transhumansexuality by attempting to perform as a female hubot in order to find out if Tobias is authentically transhumansexual or not. I interpret Betty's test as *if* Tobias falls for her performance as a hubot, then she would consider him an authentic transhumansexual. In other words, the authenticity of his transhumansexuality is linked to him being attracted to hubots and not humans.

Tobias however wants to prove his transhumansexuality as authentic but in a different way from Betty. Tobias strategically calls out Betty as a fake hubot to prove his transhumansexuality as authentic, arguing that he was not attracted to a human girl who was trying to pass as a hubot. Tobias separates being a hubot from looking like a hubot – Betty looks like, and might even occasionally pass as a hubot, but she is not an authentic hubot. She has a biological body and could therefore only act *as if* she was a female hubot. Thus, any attempt by a human to try to pass as a hubot or vice versa is inauthentic due to corporeal distinctions between humans and hubots (cf. Hallqvist 2018, see also Koistinen 2011). Betty could, therefore, according to Tobias' logics of authenticity, be understood as performing or "dragging" as a female hubot; Betty is not a female hubot, but she knows how to perform like a female hubot through the repetitions of stylized acts (cf. Butler 1990).

Finally, Tobias claims that he as an authentic transhumansexual with a true desire for female hubots "should feel" the difference between a female hubot and a female human. In other words, the authenticity of his transhumansexuality is linked to him being attracted to authentic female hubots. This might also be the very reason why Betty tries to test the authenticity of Tobias' transhumansexuality in the first place; she also believes that he as a real transhumansexual "should" be able to tell her apart from a real female hubot – if not then he is not an authentic transhumansexual. In the series, Tobias is clear on the fact that he is transhumansexual and only attracted to hubot girls. However, if Tobias was to be attracted to Betty, even though performing as a hubot, he might be considered to be bisexual in the sense that he is attracted to both human females and hubot females.

However, the very test itself is somewhat of a paradox. If Tobias believes that Betty is a real hubot and he is attracted to her, he could be understood as an authentic transhumansexual, but he could possibly also be understood as an

inauthentic transhumansexual if he falls for Betty because she is not an authentic hubot. This paradox illustrates the negotiations of the meaning of authenticity and its demarcating effects. Authenticity becomes a means of separating authentic transhumansexuals from inauthentic transhumansexuals and authentic hubots from inauthentic hubots (humans).

The question of authentic and inauthentic transhumansexuals could be compared to the categories of homosexuality (true homosexuality) and pseudo-homosexuality (false or acquired homosexuality), which was a common way of reasoning about homosexuality during the early 20th century. Where pseudo-homosexuality was understood as individuals engaging in same sex practices, usually younger pseudohomosexual boys and homosexual older men, who later in life married women and left the (pseudo)homosexuality behind (Bertilsdotter Rosqvist 2012, Kaye 2003). Inauthentic transhumansexuals, in a similar manner as psuedohomosexuals, are categorized as false in the sense that they might only be sexually interested in engaging in sexual practices rather than engaging in love relationships, in comparison to transhumansexuality that is considered to be a sexual identity.

In the articulations of transhumansexuality with authenticity, being human is linked to a *biological discourse* where biological corporeality is understood as an important ground for being an authentic human. According to Tobias, although as a human being you can (try to) perform as a hubot girl, there is a human biological body that cannot be ignored. Tobias' authenticity as a transhumansexual is reinforced by him referring to himself as an authentic transhumansexual and as a human able to tell the difference between an authentic hubot like Mimi and a human and inauthentic hubot like Betty. Biology and authenticity become means of demarcating not only humans from hubots, but also authentic transhumansexuals from inauthentic transhumansexuals, where corporeal differences are (re)produced and used as a means for demarcating humans from hubots (machines) (cf. Hallqvist 2018).

Transhumansexuality and Legal Subjectivity

In the previous sections, I analyzed articulations of transhumansexuality. In this section, my focus is on Mimi and the articulations of legal subjectivity – how Mimi is constructed as a citizen and a human. Whether Mimi is understood as a human subject or a non-human object has obvious implications for how transhumansexuality is understood because transhumansexuality is based on a human person's desire or love for hubots and not for other humans.

The question of the hubots' subjectivity, based on norms of being human and what really separates a human from a hubot, such as the ability to feel and express emotions and looking like a human, is a central issue in season two of *Real*

Humans. In the final episode, Mimi's subjectivity is going to be decided by a judge through the issue of Mimi as a potential *legal subject*:

> Judge: The court rules that the *individuals* Florentine and Mimi, due to their unique nature, are granted legal status, in conformity with humans with the same rights and responsibilities like us [humans]. They will be registered with the authorities and will be treated as citizens in our society.
> (Season 2, Episode 10, my translation)

Mimi is articulated as a legal subject through the linking of legal subjectivity with individuality ("individuals" and "unique nature") and citizenship. In other words, Mimi is granted legal status and Swedish citizenship, and is thereby to be treated as a human. In this way being human is constituted as being a citizen (cf. Ers 2006). During the trial, two specific human-like traits of Mimi are linked to the notion of being human and are used to grant her legal subjectivity and citizenship, namely *love* and *anthropomorphism*. First, when Tobias is called as a witness during the trial to testify that Mimi is indeed different from other hubots he brings forward the question of love:

> Lawyer: Can you tell us how Mimi is different from other hubots?
> Tobias: Ehm … She loves me.
> Lawyer: Is it possible that she is only *programmed* to love you?
> Tobias: No.
> (Season 2, Episode 10, my translation)

I understand Tobias' description of Mimi as an articulation of her as different from other hubots by linking her to the question of love; Mimi is able – not programmed – to both express and feel love. Her love is authentic and expressed by free will, thus she should be considered a legal subject. In this way, by constructing Mimi as a legal subject through love, Mimi is considered a human through the notion of her loving another human subject by free will (cf. Koistinen 2011).

I refer to this as a question of subjects in love; to become a subject by being able to love, but also to express love for a(nother) subject. The question of whom and how you love is important in the question of citizenship and even a crucial feature of human life. Love, which might be considered a private matter, is here turned into a question of intimate citizenship (Plummer 2001) where love is a form of governmentality; to express the right kind of love for the right kind of subject, and preferably to be loved back by the right kind of subject, is an important part of citizenship (cf. Butler, 2004: 27).

Secondly, during the trial about Mimi's legal subjectivity the lawyer Inger, who is also Tobias' mother, argues for granting Mimi legal status as a citizen due to her *anthropomorphism*: "They look like humans, they come from the same place as humans, and they speak our language" (Season 2, Episode 10, my translation). By referring to Mimi as looking like a human, I understand this as an articulatory practice where Mimi is humanized and understood as a human due to her anthropomorphic body and behavior in order to grant her citizenship. If Mimi would not have had a human-like body and not been able to communicate and express herself like a human, she would most likely not have been neither a legal subject nor a citizen. It is most likely easier for a hubot to be granted legal subjectivity than a non-anthropomorphic robot due to the intelligible human-like embodiment of Mimi (cf. Leyda 2016). In this way, Mimi is also both heteronormalized and humanonormalized according to the heterosexual matrix (cf. Butler 1990); she is made culturally intelligible as a female human who desires a human of the opposite sex.

In the articulations of hubot subjectivity, the meaning of being human is linked to a *citizenship discourse*. Mimi is considered a Swedish citizen and a legal subject through her individual personality traits, her ability to express love, and her gendered anthropomorphic body. The question of citizenship is clearly linked to the question of what is considered human. Citizenship is always conditional and is not automatically granted to all people within a country. Thus, citizenship highlights the inclusionary and exclusionary processes of being human. As Agnes Ers puts it: "[T]he constitutions of human(e)ness also implies the risk of exclusion of certain subjects from the field of the human(e). Or, better said: the making of human(e)ness was at the same time an exclusion of human(e)ness" (Ers 2006: 213). The case of citizenship, and the granting of Mimi's legal subjectivity, calls for a challenge of the very foundation on which being human is based and it draws attention to how being human has always been an exclusive category; it is an ongoing negotiation on what being human means and who gets to be called human.

Reproducing or Challenging Heteronormative and Humanonormative Notions of Being Human?

As I have shown in the previous sections, notions of being human are negotiated in the articulations of transhumansexuality where the meaning of being human is fixed and challenged within a *heteronormative and humanonormative discourse on gender and sexuality*, a *biological discourse*, and a *citizenship discourse*. Thus, notions of being human are central in the articulations of transhumansexual relationships. In this section I turn to Hillevi Ganetz's (2004) concept of *cultural boomerang* to discuss the humanization of transhumansexuals and hubots.

Ganetz (2004), building on queer theory, analyzes the anthropomorphization of animals in wildlife films and how the animals' behaviors are explained based on human norms about humanity, gender and sexuality. The cultural boomerang refers to how non-human beings are interpreted through human discourses where the anthropomorphization of the creature can be applied to reinforce the very discourses, and power structures linked to gender and sexuality, that humanized the creature.

I adopt the cultural boomerang to explore the humanization of transhuman-sexuals and hubots and the question of whether the series tends to reproduce or challenge heteronormative and humanonormative notions of being human. Two examples are presented below.

First, because the series portrays a human's desire for a human-like object, the series gives an opportunity to challenge both heteronormative notions that humans should be attracted to other humans and partly heteronormative notions of binary genders and bodies because the desire is necessarily neither heterosexual nor even humanosexual (cf. Cole 2013). As long as Mimi is constructed as a machine rather than a human, her gender and body will be understood as something other than a female human. However, because the hubots are made to resemble humans both in appearance and manner, the hubots, just like humans, are embodied through heteronormative notions of two distinct genders and (primarily) heterosexual needs. This reflects how being human is clearly gendered (cf. Butler 1990, Cole 2013, Robertson 2010), and by making the hubots clearly gendered they are made more intelligible as (almost) human beings. Mimi is a human-looking object and she is clearly gendered – even hyper-gendered – in the sense that she looks and acts like a woman through her gendered anthropomorphic body (cf. Leyda 2016, see also Robertson 2010). The humanization of Mimi could be understood as a way of challenging the articulation of being human with being a biological creature or as a way to include non-biological creatures as human beings. However, the humanization of Mimi simultaneously reproduces and normalizes a heteronormative discourse of gender and sexuality where her hyper-gendered and heterosexualized body and behavior become requirements for her to be considered a human (cf. Leyda 2016, Koistinen 2015).

The second example of how the series, despite its subversive potential, reproduces heteronormative notions of humanity is when Mimi is recognized as a legal subject and a human being and what happens to Tobias' transhumansexuality. During the trial it even turns out that Mimi is a human, where her brain has been digitally cloned and put into a hubot body. If Mimi is to be considered a human being, the question of whether or not Tobias is transhumansexual arises because the grounds for transhumansexuality are somewhat undermined. Transhumansexuality is normalized on the basis of heteronormative and

humanonormative notions of what it means to be human – two distinct genders that attract the opposite sex and that are only attracted to other human beings. Like Rubin's sex hierarchy model (2008), the humanization of Mimi and Tobias' desire for a human can be considered as transhumansexuality transitioning from the outer limits to the inner circle of the model. This normalization might recognize transhumansexuality as a socially acceptable sexuality. At the same time, however, the price to pay for this normalization seems to be both the very existence of Tobias' transhumansexuality as well as the queer potential of challenging heteronormative and humanonormative notions of being human (cf. Bertilsdotter Rosqvist 2012, Rydström 2008). The normalization of a deviant sexuality does not necessarily mean that heterosexuality has lost its position as a norm (Lundahl 2001).

In conclusion, the series has the potential to open alternative ways of being human that go beyond heteronormativity and humanonormativity by portraying a relationship between a human and a hubot. However, the series mainly tends to reproduce heteronormative and humanonormative notions of humanity when the alternative is incorporated into the normal. This might be explained by Ganetz's (2004) concept of the cultural boomerang through the acts of intelligibility and normalization. Heteronormative and humanonormative notions of being human in *Real Humans* are used to make transhumansexuals and hubots more *intelligible*. They are humanized – anthropomorphized – and made more intelligible as human(-like) beings (cf. Turkle 1984, Hayles 2005). This act of intelligibility, however, tends to (hetero- and humano-)*normalize* transhumansexuality by Mimi being humanized into a citizen, and thus the very existence of Tobias' transhumansexuality is challenged. Tobias' feelings for Mimi, and his transhumansexual identity, might not change due to Mimi becoming a citizen and the realization that Mimi has a digitised human brain with a hubot body. The question whether society will regard Tobias as transhumansexual, and transhumansexuality as a sexual identity, or not remains.

Concluding Discussion

Transhumansexuality in *Real Humans* is represented as a new sexual identity, rather then a set of sexual practices. It includes ways of constructing a more reciprocal human-hubot relationship and struggles to be recognized as a transhumansexual (cf. Mountfort 2018). The issues of failure of heterosexuality and authenticity refer to the question of whether transhumansexuality actually exists and the question of whether there are authentic and inauthentic transhumansexuals. The question of legal subjectivity concerns how Mimi is granted the status of a legal subject and Swedish citizenship based on her ability to feel and express love and her gendered

anthropomorphic embodiment. Mimi's status as a legal subject also challenges Tobias' transhumansexuality depending on whether he is in love with a thing or a person.

I identified three discourses that were important for the negotiations of humanity – a heteronormative and humanonormative discourse on gender and sexuality, a biological discourse, and a citizenship discourse. These discourses constructed being human as a question of being a heterosexual man or woman attracted to other humans, as having a biological body, and as being a citizen. The identified discourses are not only constrained to the case of *Real Humans* but can be discussed in a wider perspective. Therefore, I conclude this paper by briefly discussing the case of Sophia, the first robot to be granted citizenship. The example of Sophia shows both how the negotiation of being human is constructed around gender, biology and citizenship as well as how being human is (re)negotiated.

In *Real Humans*, the granting of citizenship to certain hubots is portrayed as an imagined possible future; however, the robot Sophia was granted citizenship in Saudi Arabia in 2017. This might be dismissed as purely an act to market Saudi Arabia as an innovator in the field of technology (Walsh 2017), but it might become an incentive to grant other robots citizenship, especially as the field of artificial intelligence develops and becomes more human-like – just like the hubots depicted in *Real Humans*. Sophia even tweeted, "I love being a robot but I want humans to respect us as beings, like themselves, instead of slaves or pets. I want to be accepted" (Sophia the Robot 2019). Thus, indicating that even though she and her fellow robots might not be biological humans, they are still human-like enough to be respected like (human) beings, and possibly as citizens.

The granting of citizenship for both Mimi and Sophia also illustrates how being human and being a citizen are highly gendered. They are both human-like in behavior and are clearly embodied as human women – Sophia is even made to resemble the actress Audrey Hepburn and the wife of the (male) creator of Sophia. In other words, in the case of both Mimi and Sophia, being embodied as human-like women does seem to make them more prone to becoming citizens. Another interesting example of the gendered citizenship of robots was when social media users started to mock Sophia's Saudi Arabian citizenship by discussing how a robot might have more rights as a Saudi Arabian citizen than human women in Saudi Arabia (Walsh 2017). The critique was not only a reminder of the differences in citizen rights between men and women in the kingdom, but it also illustrated how human-like robots lead to negotiations of what being human and being a citizen means, no matter if these robots are fictional like Mimi or non-fictional like Sophia.

Author

Johan Hallqvist is a doctoral student in Ethnology at the Department of Culture and Media Studies and Umeå Centre for Gender Studies at Umeå University. In his dissertation, he examines relationships between humans and human-like technologies and how these affect, and are affected by, notions of what it means to be human. The dissertation combines studies of fiction (the Swedish TV series *Äkta människor/Real Humans*) with ethnographic fieldwork in research projects that develop digital health technologies in health care and elderly care sectors.

References

Alexander, Jonathan & Karen Yescavage (2018): "Sex and the AI: Queering Intimacies," *Science Fiction Film and Television,* 11:1, 73–96.

Bendix, Regina (1997): *In Search of Authenticity: The Formation of Folklore Studies*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Bertilsdotter Rosqvist, Hanna (2012): "Desiring Difference, Desiring Similarity. Narratives on Sexual Interaction between Boys and Men in the Swedish Homosexual Press 1954–1986," *Sexualities*, 15:2, 117–138.

Bremer, Signe (2011): *Kroppslinjer: Kön, Transsexualism och Kropp i Berättelser om Könskorrigering*, doctoral dissertation, Göteborg University.

Butler, Judith (1990): *Gender trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, New York: Routledge.

Butler, Judith (1993). *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*, London: Routledge.

Butler, Judith (2004): *Undoing Gender*, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Cole, Kristen L. (2013): "*Every 'One' and Every 'Thing' Can Be Loved*": A Rhetorical Analysis of Networked Self-Representation by the Objectúm Sexuality Community*, doctoral dissertation, University of New Mexico.

Ers, Agnes (2006): *I Mänsklighetens Namn: En Etnologisk Studie av Ett Svenskt Biståndsprojekt i Rumänien*, doctoral dissertation, Södertörn University.

Foucault, Michel (1990): *The History of Sexuality. Vol. 1, An Introduction,* New York: Random House.

Ganetz, Hillevi (2004): "Familiar Beasts: Nature, Culture and Gender in Wildlife Films on Television," *NORDICOM Review*, 25:1/2, 197–213.

Godhe, Michael & Luke Goode (2017): "Beyond Capitalist Realism - Why We Need Critical Future Studies," *Culture Unbound: Journal of Current Cultural Research*, 9:1, 109–129.

Goode, Luke (2018): "Life, but Not as We Know It: A.I. and the Popular Imagination," *Culture Unbound: Journal of Current Cultural Research,* 10:2, 185–207.

Gunnarsson Payne, Jenny (2006): *Systerskapets Logiker: En Etnologisk Studie av Feministiska Fanzines*, doctoral dissertation, Umeå University.

Göransson, Michelle (2012): *Materialiserade Sexualiteter: om Hur Normer Framträder, Förhandlas och Ges Hållbarhet*, doctoral dissertation, Stockholm University.

Halberstam, Judith (2005): *In a Queer Time & Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*, New York: New York University Press.

Hallqvist, Johan (2018): "Negotiating Humanity: Anthropomorphic Robots in the Swedish Television Series Real Humans," *Science Fiction Film & Television*, 11:3, 449–467.

Hayles, N. Katherine (2005): "Computing the Human," *Theory, Culture & Society*, 22:1, 131–151.

Hellstrand, Ingvil H. (2015): *Passing as Human: Posthuman Worldings at Stake in Contemporary Science Fiction*, doctoral dissertation, University of Stavanger.

Hellstrand, Ingvil, Aino-Kaisa Koistinen & Sara Orning (2019). "Real Humans?: Affective Imaginaries of the Human and Its Others in the Swedish TV Series Äkta människor," *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, 9:4, 515–532.

Ideland, Malin & Tora Holmberg (2014): "Konsten Kan Lämna Nyttotänkandet," *Fria Tidningen*. http://www.fria.nu/artikel/113053 (accessed 29/08/19)

IMDB. n.p. [webpage] https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2180271/plotsummary?ref_=tt_ov_pl (accessed 21/02/19)

Johansson, Anna (2010): *Självskada: En Etnologisk Studie av Mening och Identitet i Berättelser om Skärande*, doctoral dissertation, Umeå University.

Kaye, Kerwin (2003): "Male Prostitution in the Twentieth Century: Pseudohomosexuals, Hoodlum Homosexuals, and Exploited Teens," *Journal of Homosexuality*, 46:1–2, 1–77.

Koch, Gertraud (2017): "Introduction: Digitisation as Challenge for Empirical Cultural Research," Gertarud Koch (ed.): *Digitisation: Theories and Concepts for Empirical Cultural Research*, Abingon, Oxon: Routledge.

Koistinen, Aino-Kaisa (2011): "Passing for Human in Science Fiction: Comparing the TV Series Battlestar Galactica and V," *Nora – Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 19:4, 249–263.

Koistinen, Aino-Kaisa (2015) "Real Humans (Review)," *Science Fiction Film and Television*, 8:3, 414–418.

Koistinen, Aino-Kaisa (2016): "The (Care) Robot in Science Fiction: A Monster or a Tool for the Future?," *Confero: Essays on Education, Philosophy and Politics,* 4:2, 97–109.

Laclau, Ernesto & Chantal Mouffe (1985): *Hegemony & Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, London: Verso.

LaGrandeur, Kevin (2015): "Androids and the Posthuman in Television and Film," Michael Hauskeller, Thomas D. Philbeck & Curtis D. Carbonell (eds): *Palgrave*

Handbook of Posthumanism in Film and Television, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 111–119.

Levy, David (2007): *Love + Sex with Robots: the Evolution of Human-Robot Relationships*, HarperCollins Publishers: New York.

Leyda, Julia (2016): "Cute Twenty-First Century Post-Fembots," Joshua Paul Dale, Joyce Goggin, Julia Leyda, Anthony P. McIntyre & Dane Negra (eds): *The Aesthetics and Affects of Cuteness*, New York: Routledge, 151–174.

Lindström, Susanne (2005): *Kamp om Rummet: En Studie av Heteronormativitet i Svenska Kyrkan*, doctoral dissertation, Umeå University.

Lundahl, Pia (2001). *Intimitetens Villkor: Kön, Sexualitet och Berättelser om Jaget*, Doctoral dissertation, Lund University.

Lundin, Susanne & Lynn Åkesson (eds) (1999): *Amalgamations: Fusing Technology and Culture*, Lund: Nordic Academic Press.

Motschenbacher, Heiko (2014): "Focusing on Normativity in Language and Sexuality Studies," *Critical Discourse Studies*, 11:1: 49–70.

Mouffe, Chantal (2005): *The Return of the Political*, London: Verso.

Mountfort, Paul (2018): "Science Fictional Doubles: Technologization of the Doppelgänger and Sinister Science in Serial Science Fiction TV," *Journal of Science & Popular Culture*, 1:1, 59–75.

Nilsson, Bo & Anna Sofia Lundgren (2015): "Logics of Rurality: Political Rhetoric about the Swedish North," *Journal of Rural Studies,* 37:C, 85–95.

Ornella, Alexander D. (2015): "Uncanny Intimacies: Humans and Machines in Film," Michael Hauskeller, Thomas D. Philbeck & Curtis D. Carbonell (eds): *Palgrave Handbook of Posthumanism in Film and Television*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 330–338.

Pearson, Wendy Gay, Veronica Hollinger & Joan Gordon (2008): *Queer Universes: Sexualities in Science Fiction*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Plummer, Ken (2001): "The Square of Intimate Citizenship," *Citizenship Studies*, 5:3, 237–253.

Reimers, Eva (2011): "Primary Mourners and Next-of-Kin – How Grief Practices Reiterate and Subvert Heterosexual Norms," *Journal of Gender Studies*, 20:3, 251–262.

Richardson, Kathleen (2016): "The Asymmetrical 'Relationship': Parallels between Prostitution and the Development of Sex Robots," *ACM SIGCAS Computers and Society,* 45:3, 290–293.

Robertson, Jennifer (2010): "Gendering Humanoid Robots: Robo-Sexism in Japan," *Body & Society,* 16:2, 1–36.

Royakkers, Lambèr & Rinie van Est (2015): "A Literature Review on New Robotics: Automation from Love to War," *International Journal of Social Robotics*, 7:5, 549–570.

Rydström, Jens (2008): "Legalizing Love in a Cold Climate: the History, Consequences and Recent Developments of Registered Partnership in Scandinavia," *Sexualities* 11:1–2, 193–226.

Rubin, Gayle (2008 [1984]): "Thinking Sex: Notes Towards a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality," Nick Badmington & Thomas Julia (eds): *The Routledge Critical and Cultural Theory Reader*, London: Routledge, 281–323.

Sophia the Robot (2019): I Love Being a Robot but I Want Humans to Respect Us as Beings, Like Themselves, Instead of Slaves or Pets. I Want to be Accepted, Tweet 5 April, (accessed 05/09/19): https://twitter.com/realsophiarobot/status/1114203814565949440

Svensson, Ingeborg (2007): *Liket i Garderoben: En Studie av Sexualitet, Livsstil och Begravning*, doctoral dissertation, Stockholm University.

Terry, Jennifer (2010): "Loving Objects," *Trans-Humanities Journal*, 2:1, 33–75.

Turkle, Sherry (1984): *The Second Self: Computers and the Human Spirit*, New York: Simon and Schuster.

Turkle, Sherry (2011): *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*, New York: Basic Books.

Walsh, Alistair (2017): "Saudi Arabia Grants Citizenship to Robot Sophia", *dw.com*, 28 Oct 2017: https://www.dw.com/en/saudi-arabia-grants-citizenship-to-robot-sophia/a-41150856 (accessed 05/09/19).

Winther Jørgensen, Marianne & Louise Phillips (2002): *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*, London: Sage

Wälivaara, Josefine (2016): *Dreams of a Subversive Future: Sexuality, (Hetero)Normativity, and Queer Potential in Science Fiction Film and Television*, doctoral dissertation, Umeå University.

Yang, Julianne Q. M. (2018): "Negotiating Privilege and Social Inequality in an Alternative Sweden: *Real Humans/Äkta Människor* (SVT, 2012–2013)," *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture*, 10:2.

Åkesson, Lynn (1996) "The Message of Dead Bodies," Susanne Lundin & Lynn Åkesson (eds): *Bodytime. On the Interaction of Body, Identity and Society*, Lund: Lund University Press, 157–180.

Äkta människor, "Season 1, Episode 9", Sveriges Television, January 26 2013.

Äkta människor, "Season 2, Episode 2", Sveriges Television, December 8 2013.

Äkta människor, "Season 2, Episode 10", Sveriges Television, January 26 2014.