Call for articles
Special issue of *Women, Gender & Research*:

**Monstrous Encounters: Nordic Perspectives on Monsters and the Monstrous**

“Monsters do a great deal of cultural work, but they do not do it nicely. They not only challenge and question; they trouble, they worry, they haunt. They break and tear and rend cultures, all the while constructing them and propping them up. They swallow up our cultural more and expectations, and then, becoming what they eat, they reflect back to us our own faces …” (2013: 1). These are the first words of art historian Asa Mittman’s introduction to *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous*. The introduction presents the field of ‘Monster Studies’, which has been developing across academic disciplines since the 1990s, illustrating the productive force of monsters and the monstrous as analytical tools, norm critical notions, and destructive/creative practices. Fittingly, then, not all monster studies come from Monster Studies, and monsters can be encountered in a wide variety of contexts and a multitude of topics.

With the special issue ‘Monstrous Encounters: Nordic Perspectives on Monsters and the Monstrous’, we wish to put a focus on and explore both research and artistic practices related to the subject of monsters and the monstrous within a Nordic context. This means that we welcome both monster studies work from within the Nordic countries, and work that explores the monstrous in a Nordic context. With the recent establishment of a Nordic based Monster Network and an increased attention to the critical and creative potential of monsters and the monstrous within academic and artistic settings (whether based in Nordic countries or related to Nordic issues), the time seems right to invite to a special issue that engages with this Nordic development.

At the same time, we also invite our contributors to question what ‘Nordic’ may mean. Indeed, this issue does not operate with a set understanding of ‘Nordic culture’, ‘Nordic identity’ or similar, but asks contributors to challenge and question, trouble and worry, break and tear at the imaginaries of such constructs. In other words, and regardless of the subject of your contribution, we invite you to do monstrous work that is *not nice*, but critical and challenging in its exploration of what kind of cultural work the figure of the monster can do. As such, we invite contributions that explore new ways of imagining the world and its inhabitants in a time where there seem to be a need for such reconfigurations. What does the monster reflect back to us in times like these, where borders are closing; xenophobia and racism abound in the wake of the so-called refugee crisis; capitalism stands practically unchallenged, even after the financial crisis; public
sectors are experiencing severe cuts; climate change causes natural disasters; individuals and nation states worry about ageing populations, etc. Further still: Who are ‘we’ to begin with? And who, then, are ‘they’? All monsters are boundary-pushing hybrids and ‘Monstrous Encounters: Nordic Perspectives on Monsters and the Monstrous’ is no exception. We therefore invite both non-traditional (such as essays and creative writing) and traditional scholarly work, as well as artistic contributions such as fiction, poetry and art. Possible themes for contributions (these are only suggestions):

- The monstrous and gender studies/feminist theory
- Ethics of monsters
- Queer monsters
- Monstrous sexualities
- The monstrous and postcolonial studies/critical race theory
- Disability and the monster/monstrous
- Ageing and the monstrous
- The monster in art and popular culture
- Monstrous technologies (digital technologies, biotechnology, etc.)
- Medical monsters
- Monstrous embodiment
- Hauntology and spectrality
- The monster and the environment/climate change/eco-theory
- Animals and the monstrous
- Posthumanist theory
- Monsters of science fiction, horror, fantasy and speculative fiction

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Deadline for abstracts (max 200 words + 50 word bio): 1st of September 2016
Deadline for article/other contributions: 15th of March 2017

All contributions must be in English and should be submitted to: redsek@soc.ku.dk
Guidelines for submissions: http://koensforskning.soc.ku.dk/kkf/skriveguide/