

February 25, 2016

Dr Sara Edenheim's Public Lecture at BRAC University

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Under the Linnaeus Palme International Exchange Programme between the Department of English and Humanities, BRAC University and Umeå Centre for Gender Studies (UCGS), Umeå University, the BRACU English department hosted a public lecture, titled, “Performativity as a Symptom: The Trembling Body in the Works of Judith Butler” by Dr Sara Edenheim, Senior Lecturer at UCGS, on February 23, 2016 at the university auditorium. Dr Edenheim’s lecture was based on her recently published peer-reviewed academic paper of the same title. Her lecture was based on a number of works of Judith Butler, the contemporary iconic theorist of feminist and queer studies, and it reexamined Butler’s key theoretical terms such as, ‘performativity’ and ‘heterosexual melancholia.’ Based on her reading of Butler, the speaker critiqued the dominant tendency within feminist scholarship to use Butler’s notion of performativity, often sweepingly, while not paying equal attention to the issue of ‘heterosexual melancholia’, originally a Freudian term to name the unnamed loss that constitutes human subject. According to the speaker, performativity is the symptom of the heterosexual melancholia which defines gender identities and the desires seemingly attached to it. She further argued to take Butler’s notion of the

'trembling body' seriously, since the acknowledgement of embodied vulnerability might open up a newer form of feminist politics away from the established western liberalism. The session ended with a lively question and answer session from an engaged audience. Professor Firdous Azim, the chairperson of the Department of English and Humanities, handed over the token of gratitude to the speaker, and on behalf of the department, Dr Rifat Mahbub, assistant professor, organised the event. - See more at: <http://www.dhakatribune.com/feature/2016/feb/25/dr-sara-edenheims-public-lecture-brac-university#sthash.J8CS2ngd.dpuf>