



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on November 18, 2024

Downright Fruity: Swedish Official Demands Banana-free Rooms Due to Phobia

“Yes, We Have No Bananas” is the name of a famous old song. It’s also apparently what Sweden’s “gender equality minister,” Paulina Brandberg, wants to hear.

What’s that?

Well, here’s the story: The official actually demands that her staff clear rooms of *all* bananas before her arrival — owing, reportedly, to a phobia.

I know, I know, while some may crack, “You can’t make this stuff up,” someone *must* have. When I first heard the story, on social media, I thought the same: “Okay, this really could be satire.” So I did a bit of research and, well, hell’s bells, it’s as real as a monkey’s love for, uh...bananas.



Jose Miguel Sanchez/iStock/Getty Images Plus

So it’s not enough that Sweden has declared itself the world’s first nation with an officially “feminist” government. It’s not enough that the country’s “Left Party” (real name) once proposed a “[Man Tax](#)” (yes, levied *only* on men) or that Swedish feminists started a movement to [compel boys to sit down](#) while urinating. It’s not enough that Sweden even has a “gender equality minister.”

No, the nation that single-handedly proves that “truth is stranger than fiction” has a gender equality minister who fears bananas.

My, wait until the fruit equality minister hears about this.

(Or, would a fruit equality minister and a gender equality minister be the same thing?)

Not Monkeying Around

Joking aside, the BBC (which does propaganda, but not satire) [reports](#) on the story:

Local media outlet Expressen has quoted from leaked emails it has seen, in which staff working for minister Paulina Brandberg ask for any bananas to be removed before official visits.

Brandberg ... is said to have posted on X in 2020, saying she has the “world’s weirdest phobia of bananas”. The posts have since been deleted.

Fellow Swedish politician, Teresa Carvalho, also said on X that she too had bananaphobia, and was united with Brandberg on the issue.

Seriously? Two female Swedish politicians have this incredibly rare phobia that no one had ever heard of? It sounds a bit like those Hollywood actors or Marin County residents who claim to have “two ‘trans’ kids.” Yeah, that totally aligns with probability.



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The Full Effect

To fully appreciate this story, however, one should read the [original version](#) in *Expressen*. Note that though the following identifies Brandberg's issues as an "allergy," this doesn't appear true. As the outlet reports (auto-translated from Swedish):

In February this year, Brandberg was invited to what is described as a "VIP lunch" at the Swedish National Courts Administration. In an email response, her cabinet secretary writes:

"Paulina Brandberg has a strong allergy to bananas, so it would be appreciated that there are no bananas in the spaces where she will be staying."

The response from the authority was positive:

"We will secure the conference so that there are no bananas."

In an email to the County Administrative Board the same month, the tone from Brandberg's employees was more direct:

"No bananas are allowed in premises either."

Yet another politician was told that "there must be no traces of bananas in spaces that the government will be in."

As for the "allergy" bit, it appears Brandberg was just trying to justify her demands and save face. For *Expressen* was able to successfully press her on the matter and, well, stripped off the peel of illusion. She then confessed to the paper in a written response that her issue is, in fact, a phobia.

"It's something that I get professional help with," *Expressen* relates her as saying.

Whether or not Brandberg was also getting professional help with her urge to be a gender equality minister was not reported.

The Banana-philes Object

Perhaps the problem is that while tender-aged and impressionable, Brandberg saw something like what appears below. If so, Paulina, know that it's all make-believe.

Unlike my serious thesis, however, many on the internet, quite predictably, had fun with banana-gate.

On X, for example, tweeter "Jolly Roger" [posted](#), "She said if the bananas were not removed she would split."

Not everyone took kindly to this, though.

"I don't find your puns a-peeling," [responded](#) one Al Terego.

Tweeter Shannon Hillis was both pithy and perspicacious, [writing](#), "Freud would love this."

But some observers obviously felt sympathy for Brandberg over the ribbing she was taking. For example, "My phobia is gorgeous women if yall need to taunt me," [confessed](#) "Brostradamous," in a chivalrous effort to draw fire away from her and toward himself.

Others noted the abnormality of so many of our "betters."

"That's unusual, an irrational politician...," [wrote](#) a commenter at Metro.co.uk.

And returning to X, another tweeter [stated](#), "Mental illness seems to be a prerequisite for progressives."



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“Actually it is,” yet a different user responded. “In America over half of liberal women report being diagnosed with a mental illness,” he [explained](#). He then added that “the other half simply hasn’t gone in for their diagnosis yet.” (I just [reported on this Friday](#).)

All I’ll say is, were I a Swede called to appear before Brandberg for some equality violation, I’d comply. But I’d inform her that my gender identity is “banana,” my pronouns are pudding/cream pie, and I’d dress like this guy:

And now we know that Japanese commercials are perhaps as odd as Swedish ministers.

Anyway, exit questions: Does pondering what’s going on in the world today make you feel eminently normal?

Or does it convince you that, now, that’s the last thing you’d ever want to be?



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