PROGRAM ARBETSGRUPP 11: KULTURSOCIOLOGI

SESSION 1 ONSDAG 16 MARS 13:30 – 15:00

DIGITAL LIVES

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In search of the simple life: Exploring intersections of rurality, neoliberalism and colonialism in 'off grid' social media accounts

During the covid-19 pandemic, urban to rural mobility increased in Sweden and many other Western countries. The trend can be explained by both the magnitude of covid spread in bigger cities, and the flexibility and digitalization of jobs that the guidelines to stay at home called for, enabling many Swedes to work from whatever location they preferred. Rural lifestyles have also become increasingly visible in social media accounts, where influencers who have chosen to move from the city to the countryside document their daily life and the surrounding nature. In this study, we explore the extreme end of this lifestyle, focusing on five 'off grid' influencers and the social media content they produce. Going 'off grid' can have a variety of meanings, yet in this study we refer to a lifestyle choice that includes living relatively remote and with fewer facilities (e.g. without electricity or running water).

The study's material consists of social media content from Instagram, YouTube and the influencers' blogs. The influencers are all in their 30s and have moved from big Nordic cities to the countryside in northern Sweden in the last decade. The material was collected during the spring of 2021, yet it was published online in the period of 2012-2021. Analyzing the material, we have used a narrative lens where we addressed the influencers' social media accounts in terms of entrepreneurship, where the narrative they construct of the 'simple life' is understood as a product they sell to their audience. Using theories on social movements in relation to affect and place (Bosco 2006) as well as disenchantment (Weber 1904-1905), we explore

these narratives as a resistance against the demystified modern society and neoliberal values on productivity. However, we also examine how the narratives that the influencers sell build on colonial imaginaries that construct the rural north as a peripheral place (Gahman 2020; Wolfe 2006). We find that even though the narratives are to be seen as a critique of the modern society and neoliberal values, it simultaneously reproduces neoliberal ideals on flexibility and individual self-fulfillment. Further, we argue that the increased interest in a simple lifestyle can be understood as part of an emerging paradigm that we label a neoliberal romanticism. The study contributes with new insights to sociological studies of protest movements, migration and mobility, and studies of colonialism.

References

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Coping in the culture of connectivity: how older people make sense of living with digital ageism

This paper applies a cultural sociological perspective to explore and understand how older people cope with their everyday life in the culture of connectivity (van Dijck, 2013). Culture of connectivity is understood here not only in terms of altered nature of connections and sociality and organization of social exchange based on neoliberal economic principles, but also as a profoundly ageist culture. Ageism is

a form of discrimination in which individuals are judged according to age-based stereotypes or views (Rosales & Fernandez-Ardevol, 2020) that, similarly to other forms of discrimination such as racism and/or sexism, perpetuates and takes new forms in the networked information society. The empirical basis for this study comes from the research project that focused on exploring older non-users' understandings and experiences of digital technologies and how they relate to their own understandings of aging and old age (2015-2017). The material consists of six focus group interviews (4-6 people each) conducted in Sweden in the autumn of 2017. The sample encompasses 30 older non- and seldom-users of ICT between ages of 68 to 88, who were recruited through local associations for the retirees. When it comes to the analytical approach, the study employs a discourse analytical approach where focus group interviews are considered a source of the normative, dominant discourses pertaining to digitalisation and technology use. From a discursive point of view, focus groups are also sites of reproduction of socially and culturally embedded ways of giving meaning and thinking. To facilitate generation of this type of material, during interviews, which lasted about 70–80 min each, the study participants were presented with open, rather broad questions about digitalisation of society. For instance: "Do you remember your first encounter with computers?", "What do you think about the idea of the paper-free society?". Additionally, to facilitate the discussion and receive more spontaneous reactions, the participants were asked to comment on the headlines from main Swedish dailies about older peoples', often rather negative, experiences with digital technologies. An important aspect of the analysis has been the cross-group comparisons of normative discourses emerging as patterns of knowledge across focus groups. The overall goal of the analysis has been to reach conclusions about which discourses are available and dominate the discursive field. The paper departs from an idea that both cultural and structural forms of ageism are embedded in digital technologies and their ideological underpinnings. It applies a cultural sociological perspective that investigates the processes of meaning-making and meanings people attach to their groups and interactions (Spillman, 2020). Older people are often portrayed as digitally illiterate or technophobic and consequently marginalized targets of several digital inclusion policies. This paper explores how older (non-)users themselves navigate and negotiate everyday life in this culture, how they make sense of embedded power relations and the fact that social world in digitally networked societies is often discriminating against older people and their use and understanding of digital technologies.

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Lockdown Fauna: The Beastly Topology of the COVID-19 Pandemic

A few months into the COVID-19 pandemic, photos and news articles began circulating in social media about animals making unexpected appearances in urban areas. Photos were published in news media of dolphins in the canals of Venice, a record number of flamingos in Mumbai, wild boards in Barcelona, and undaunted urban foxes in central London. While some of these stories were proven to be false, such as the Venice dolphins, other stories turned out to be misleading. The animals who allegedly showed up in, returned to or overcrowded certain areas were in fact there all along, but had not gained wider attention until now. Although several of these stories are lacking in credibility, they can be seen as indications of humans' understanding of themselves and their relations to nature and other animals. As such, they differ from typical romanticizations of a pristine nature untouched by human hand, as the depicted sceneries are human-built environments. Rather than a dream of a pure nature in a distant past, but a future in which humans picture their own downfall. We suggest that lockdown fauna imageries express a happy misanthropy and an optimistic apocalypticism that capture human self-understanding in a society characterized by pandemic and environmental crises.

SESSION 2 TORSDAG 17 MARS 9:00 – 10:30

VOLUNTEERISM, ENTHREPRENEURSHIP, EDUCATION

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Meet the volunteers

Sociologists have long thought that individualism is the challenge to American democracy – undercutting the bonds of goodwill and

commitment to the public (whether associations or the welfare state) – and that the counterbalance to the disaggregating effects of individualism are the commitments to the public, the "Habits of the Heart" as Bellah famously called them, taking the expression from Tocqueville's study of American democracy. In one sense, then, there is a struggle between democratic civility, volunteerism, and mutual commitment and inegalitarian, winner-take-all capitalism and politics on the other. However, what is infrequently considered is the struggle that rages also within and around American civic life. Dependence in the US on volunteerism and civic associations means these organizations and their volunteer have the potential to both expand and constrict the limits of extension of caring across times, locations, classes, race, religions, genders, and ages. The optimism around American collectivism and associational life can preclude our view of the costs and risks of depending on volunteers and civil society organizations to deliver the things that are needed for a well-functioning society and a happy, healthy populace. And there is still one more struggle to consider: that between the civic and the state. What research there is on "unequal democracy" in American civil society tends to focus on the interests and motivations of individuals and their impact on the democratic potential of civil society. Yet, volunteerism and associational life have a direct relationship to the organization and power of the state. Many sociologists have noted that civil society can act as a check on the power of the state, just as it acts as a check on rampant individualism. What is rarely considered is what happens when the state abandons its responsibilities to the public, counting on the goodwill and effort of American volunteers to pay medical expenses, organize disaster relief, keep public schools running, and determine how to manage local service and infrastructure needs? This is a struggle between subsistence volunteerism and supplemental civic engagement, between involvement that strengthens democracy versus helping that masks the decline of democratic government. In this article, I draw on 57 interviews with volunteers in civil society organizations in New York City. I consider how their volunteerism is shapes and is shaped by the American democratic ethos, with a particular focus on subsistence and supplemental engagement.

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**An interdisciplinary outlook on cultural entrepreneurship:
Development of a meeting ground between sociology of culture
and entrepreneurship studies**

How can economic sociology, sociology of culture and entrepreneurship studies be connected and combined to better grasp the phenomenon of entrepreneurship in the cultural and creative industries? This is the overarching question that lies at the foundation of this conference presentation, which builds on research about cultural entrepreneurship carried out by the two presenters from the field of entrepreneurship studies and sociology of culture respectively.

With deinstitutionalization processes and cutbacks in the cultural sector, alongside a growing creative industry developing not least around digital participatory culture, the topic of entrepreneurialism has become of increasing importance in the cultural and creative industries. Yet, this raises the central questions about what characterizes this phenomenon, how it can be conceptualized theoretically, and which perspectives it offers. To address these issues, researchers from different fields offer quite different takes. While entrepreneurship studies in economic sociology and business studies have embraced the idea of comparing characteristics of artists and entrepreneurs, seeing both as innovative change agents, sociologists and humanities scholars have been fundamentally critical of this change, seeing it as a neo-liberal move to ask precarious gig workers to comply with and take responsibility for precarious structural conditions, proposing the artist as a self-driven and autonomous role model worker in late capitalism (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005).

Contrary to how it appears at first glance, the suggestion in this presentation is that these two fields might not necessarily be in opposition. Rather, we argue, they constitute and address the same phenomenon differently. To unpack this idea, the presentation will look into parameters that are used in conceptualizations of cultural entrepreneurship and explore how elements such as intention and motivation, different types of value creation, and unit of analyses are defined and operationalized differently. Moreover, the presentation looks into the various methodologies that are used in these diverse fields of research. We aim at doing so by contrasting the literature on

creative and cultural industries from economic sociology and sociology of culture (cf., e.g., Aspers, 2001; Blumer, 1969; Bourdieu, 1995; Menger, 1999; Simmel, 1975; Swedberg, 2006) with that of entrepreneurship studies rooted in the Schumpeterian evolutionary economics (cf., e.g., Carlsson, 2013; Chang et al., 2021; Fagerberg, 2003; Lassen et al., 2018; Potts, 2011; Schumpeter, 1934; Schumpeter, 1947; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). By examining the space and intersection between these two scholarly fields, our aim is to further the understanding of the phenomenon of entrepreneurship in cultural and creative industries, with a focus on the practices and actions of the creators. An important aspect here, we believe, is the unpacking and understanding of the innovation process (cf., e.g., Jones et al., 2015).

The presentation will outline a suggestion for how to integrate these perspectives - pointing towards a potentially productive meeting ground between business-oriented and critical perspectives that can hopefully be of help for both scholars and practitioners to get a more nuanced sense of this phenomenon."

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Spiritual ethos and the fostering of originality in the Swedish Waldorf school

Waldorf schools are often debated on the basis of their connections with the anthroposophical movement and their presumed non-scientific foundation. Arguments tend to focus on whether or not Rudolf Steiner's educational philosophy rimes with the educational standards of enlightened modern societies and how these schools make use of the anthroposophical program in ways that threaten students' educational achievements. In this paper, I ask, not for the scientific accuracy of Steiner's ideas, but approach the anthroposophical values as a target for exploring a productive relation. Quite the contrary to the critics, I argue that a spiritually grounded belief system, under certain conditions, may generate resourceful and engaged schooling cultures with high educational standards. Drawing on ongoing ethnographic work at Kristofferskolan, the oldest and largest Waldorf school in Sweden, the paper explores how a shared set of values forms not only the institutional embedding of the school but also how it creates a motivational structure. Somewhat similar to Max

Weber's classic study of the Calvinists whose capitalist achievements were mediated through a religious belief, the social and economic resources allocated at the school are discussed as entangled with the spiritual pursuit. However, families choosing this school are not necessarily spiritually convicted, rather they are attracted by the social and educational surplus values generated by the embedded ideals (such as the schools focus on creativity, artistic training, joyful learning, excellent teachers, and skepticism regarding screens and digital teaching). Although conditioned also by other factors, the paper concludes that the embodied spiritual ethos constitutes a productive force that pushes the education, not necessarily towards poor academic training but towards a fostering of cultural originality.

	TORSDAG 17-03-2022, 11:00 – 12:30 Gemensamma session med **Kulturssociologi**/ Joint session with **Cultural Sociology**	
11.00-11.20	**Anna Khanukaeva** Uppsala University anna.khanukaeva@soc.uu.se **"You know how it is" – postdocs' feel for the rules in academia** Discussant: Anna Nørholm Lundin	The postdoc position highlights tensions in current academia: on the one hand, postdocs hold a highly competitive yet vulnerable position, which does not automatically provide secure future jobs. On the other hand, postdocs are in an environment that pushes for collective work, as group research projects become the new working norm. This presentation focuses on postdocs' position by examining how they describe experiences of conflicting norms in academia. Based on thematic analysis of 20 in-depth interviews with postdocs in social sciences in Sweden, I show that postdocs describe a feeling for rules as a way to interpret their situation. In the interviews, postdocs use the expression of the "you know how it is" or "it is just this way in academia" referring to the decisions and practices that become normalized and become routines. I analyse different ways in which postdocs indicate the feeling for the guiding rules of academia which help them explain or cope with a situation of uncertainty and competition. The focus is on the invisible structures of rules that become visible when postdocs turn to or acknowledge them as usual or unusual to understand and bring to the surface the rules that "go without saying".
11.20-11.40	**Yên Mai** Uppsala University yen.mai@soc.uu.se **Youth participation in Vietnamese civil society: meanings, motivations, and emotions** Discussant: Hedvig Ekerwald	In this contribution, I present the preliminary findings of my PhD project, which looks into the motivations and experiences of young people who participate in Vietnamese development programs. The data consists of in-depth interviews with 31 informants and from my participant observation at three events of development programs organized by Vietnamese civil society. The subject of people's motivations in volunteer activities has been addressed in the field of psychology, which yields debates about intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Bringing cultural sociology into this discussion, I argue that young people's trajectories towards volunteering or altruistic actions are intimately shaped by their access to certain cultural toolkits and resources. Participation in development programs offers a type of alternative socialization with new habits, cultural toolkits, and social networks for participants to draw on, thus influencing their actions and motivations after participation. To identify what kind of repertoires are cultivated in these programs, the study utilizes the notion of a "feeling subject" from sociology of emotion: informants, as feeling subjects, reflect on their own emotional experience and interpret meanings in relation to subjective self-awareness. In other words, I analyze the data from a narrative phenomenological approach, focusing on major biographical disruption in the narratives of my informants. Moments or activities that informants identify as important, as altering their perception, or yielding strong emotional impact all point to the type of cultural tools and resources they gain from participation. The study takes place in the context of an authoritarian setting, shedding light into the complex, paradoxical relationship between civil society and the state. The analysis bridges cultural sociology with the sociology of emotion, bringing emotion elements of cultural repertoires into the foreground in the investigation of a participation culture.
11.40-12.00	**Anna Nørholm Lundin** Stockholms Universitet anna.norholm.lundin@edu.su.se **Beyond the crisis – are we? Freelance musicians' strategies for dealing with precarity and limbo before-during-after pandemic covid-19** Discussant: Yên Mai	Freelance musicians in the art music genre are normally dealing with precarious and ambiguous positions, of being only partially socially included and symbolically acknowledged. During the pandemic Covid-19 they are facing an increased limbo, due to restrictions and lockdown. The freelancers' previously socialized strategies and practical sense for the job is used, reformulated and challenged at its' core. In autumn 2021, the performing arts sector in Sweden is slowly re-opening. However it is an open question what will be left and possible to re-build after the pandemic, due to huge financial loss and competency drops. This study has an empirical and theory-developing approach. Freelance musicians have been interviewed during the pandemic, and follow-up interviews about the re-entering into post-pandemic careers are being planned. The freelance musicians' strategies for dealing with pre-pandemic, pandemic and post-pandemic precarity and limbo is understood and explained in relation to concepts from emotional sociology (emotional labour, hope) and Pierre Bourdieu's theory about social practices (practical sense, habitus, illusion, symbolic violence). The aim of the paper is to understand and explain some of the freelancers' strategies for dealing with the re-opening of performing art, seen in relation to their previous careers and pandemic experiences. Keywords: freelance musicians, precarity, limbo, pandemic Covid-19, emotional sociology, social practice

MIGRATION/INTEGRATION

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La Dame Bleue; Stockholm's neighborhood belonging through hip-hop

Hip-hop artist Yasin describes his love-hate relationship with "his" neighborhood Rinkeby which lies towards the end of T10 blue line, a.k.a. the blue lady. The environment he grew up in reflects through the music he creates; harsh, raw, criminal dense, not pretty to say the least, but a reality of a Sweden none the less. His belonging in society is closely related to the environment. Rinkeby is one of many so-called vulnerable areas, where poverty, criminality, and segregation are intensified through feelings of being excluded from Swedish society. There are many more artists like Yasin, who feel strongly about their close(d) environment, both positively and negatively, and make it sound in their music. How does the neighborhood offer them a place of belonging, in an otherwise segregated society?

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Staging Migration. Performing Solidarity in Swedish Children's Theater

Since the "long summer of migration" (also known as the 2015 "refugee crisis") the field of performing arts for children in Sweden has displayed a growing interest in staging migration while elaborating new artistic strategies and modes of participation. In many parts of Sweden, there are young persons with experiences of flight

and relocation – either their own, or in their family histories. In 2020, 26% of the population in Sweden was either foreign born or had two parents born abroad. An overview of Swedish children's theatre of the last 10 years shows that migration and integration have been given ever increasing room on the Swedish stage, but also that children with their own experiences of migration have been engaged in artistic processes, resulting in newly written plays for children and youths. Newly arrived children – both refugees and others – share the stage-audience encounter with children born in Sweden while meeting and interacting with content including the staging of escape routes, new homes, multiple homes, homelessness, identities, belonging, and experiences of being "other". Despite theatre's bourgeois white culture, children's theatre also has a historical legacy of redefining social and cultural norms in Sweden, and has dared to embody the unexpressed. Dramatic art for children carries a political potential that needs to be taken seriously. This is particularly important at a time when we are witnessing a turning point in Swedish migration policy, with temporary residence permits, tougher requirements on who may stay in Sweden and institutionalized suspicion of young asylum-seekers. This paper is a theoretical elaboration of the potential for children's theater to stage an inclusive Sweden, simultaneously we are aware of how symbolic boundaries between "us" and "them" may be reproduced as an unintended consequence. Empirical illustrations are examples from the rhetoric of cultural policy documents; representations of stories, bodies, and languages on the stage; and attention to the audience reception of staged migration. Civil sphere theory is utilized in order to advance our knowledge on cultural aspects of the meaning and challenges of migration and modes of incorporation. Can the dramatic arts be a site for civil repair and social inclusion through activating symbolic structures of meaning and emotions?

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From crisis to critique: young migrants' sexual wellbeing and its role for integration

Young refugees and migrants are often presented as figures of, and in, crisis. Sexuality, sexual health, and gendered relationships constitute an important – if less explicitly articulated – component of this

narrative. On the one hand, young migrants are in crisis because of their vulnerable position, a reported lack of knowledge on reproductive health issues and restricted or conditional access to health services. On the other hand, they are figures of crises, representing the dangerous "Other", as carriers of oppressive gender regimes and harmful sexual practices (de Genova 2018; Herz 2018). The provision of educational measures in relation to sexual and reproductive health during school- and leisure time, and the active engagement of education professionals and civil society, is highly prioritized by the Swedish government and organisations working with reception and resettlement. The urgency of this interventions suggests the need to keep the attention high on a topic that always risks turning into a reason of crisis.

On the ground, professionals engaged in education and in civil society are constantly on the alert for signs that could reveal violent situations in the youth's lives, such as honor-related violence, failures and misunderstanding around consent to intimacy and intolerance to diverse gender identities/expressions and sexual orientations. The response to these preoccupation is to offer educational measures and programmes that would ideally allow migrant youths and their families to adapt to rules, regulations, and norms of the surrounding society. In this process, both the migrant community and the host society are represented as overly homogenous in terms of culture and shared values (Grzymala- Kazlowska & Phillimore 2018); the migrant is positioned as the problem that needs adaption or even correction in order to integrate (see for example Pripp 2005).

If young migrants' sexuality is an object of crisis, what can a meaning-centred analysis and a cultural sociology critically say about it? What are the possibilities for a critique of this discourse, based on the young migrants' and professional's perspective and negotiations? Working from both crisis-as-breaking-point and crisis-as-point-of-scrutiny and judgment (Vigh 2008; Roitman 2013), we propose a dialogue between narratives on young migrants' sexuality from the perspective of the media, organizational actors and the surrounding society, and the youth's first-person testimonies. Based on interviews and participant observation in a rural area in southern Sweden, the paper argues for the importance of sexual health and relationships from a critical migration studies perspective.