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Cover illustration: A woman taking a sled tour through the winter landscape. Eva Grelsson.

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Editorial

By Jonas Frykman

Ethnologia Scandinavica covers the Nordic scene by means of detailed reviews and penetrating articles, but it is also an important forum for debate and development of theory. *Sven-Erik Klinkmann* thus opens this year's volume by trying to capture the restlessness and dynamism that lies in cultural release, invoking the concept of *cultural kinesthesis.* His aim is to broaden the discussion that *Tom O'Dell* introduced last year in his study of the cultural heritage of movement: travel and tourism as both bodily restlessness and a factor in cultural change. With the aid of a number of media stars – from Elvis Presley to the Swedish heptathlete Carolina Klüft – Klinkmann seeks to show how dependent the mediascape is on this new restlessness. The popular imagination lives and develops with the aid of precisely this kind of release: new combinations and constant cultural shifts. Movement is inherently rapid, transient, transcendent, and indeterminate. Many of these icons have the ability of the trickster figure to combine and symbolize complexity. In his response O'Dell points out the importance of studying how people in practice live with this mobile energy, and seeing its potential to change everyday life. These two articles stand as good examples of the creativity of the encounter between stimuli from ethnology's empirical cultural analyses and the focus on the media in cultural studies.

While ethnology's new approaches to the study of material culture have dominated the last two issues, the discussion this year concentrates on a social phenomenon – the family – and its biological and cultural reproduction. This does not mean that the interest in material culture has decreased, but it is a good example of the breadth of contemporary research. In a very thought-provoking study *Ann-Sofie Thorhauge* considers the role played by the psychological sciences in questioning the taken-for-granted authority of the family. Here she continues a long tradition in Danish ethnology of studying mentality in a historical perspective. What exactly happened when parents began to be identified as the cause of their children's mental suffering? In other times and other contexts, different explanations have been invoked, but today it is almost a given truth that the person you love most is the one who causes the greatest pain. Was it perhaps in the rapidly growing mental hygiene of the post-war years that this form of identity discourse took shape? Was it here a culture was created in which the scientifically schooled expert not only can but must get involved? Those who became ill – and with the magic of diagnosis their numbers grew – could testify to the sins that had been committed against them. Confession was now about misdeeds committed against the defenceless child. This development laid the foundation for an optimistic intervention by the strong society. The dream of many people was that, if any generation was to create a better world, it was the children who had been given the right upbringing. This naturally paved the way for child rearing through public institutions – day nurseries and schools were the most important instruments. They gave professional cures for all kinds of psychopathology. On the way, both children and parents were persuaded that their proper identity was synonymous with being a victim. A high price to pay, it might be thought, and definitely something other than the idea of the liberating effect of modernity on the individual.

What no public intervention could replace, of course, was birth-giving, the biological task of the mother. *Susanne Nylund Skog* analyses narratives of childbirth within the framework of today's health-care institutions.

Her initial assumption is that narratives help to shape both practice and ideology. She draws attention to the remarkable fact that, even though the family is being reorganized, childbirth consolidates the idea of the nuclear family where the mother and father take joint responsibility for the birth. The professionals are marginalized, but they are still there as a back-up behind the scenes. It is only on the surface that their influence has diminished, since the parents have effectively internalized their instructions. The actual birthing has been filled with mystery – but also with what is emotionally in focus today, namely, sexuality. The fact that the child can give the mother a powerful orgasm when it squeezes out is a secret so great and so important that the midwife has to whisper it. The emphasis in the narratives is on the physical experience. The more protracted cultural reproduction, on the other hand, takes a secondary place – probably as a result of the long socialization processes described by Thorhauge.

Tove Fjell's article about childless women underlines once again how biological birthing – not child rearing – has acquired the role of confirmation of a feminine identity. It has developed into a magical experience for a woman, one that changes and confirms her. Whereas an earlier generation, bearing the ideas of the 1970s, could view motherhood as a voluntary choice – and perceive this as a liberation from older duties and commands – childbirth today is a central question for the construction of identity. The dream of the nuclear family thus remains strong, but with an emphasis on the central role of the woman. Tove Fjell draws our attention to the part that the dream of giving birth has been given at the expense of the ideal of having children: becoming a mother rather than being one. This can be seen in the light of the fact that gender has become the cultural identity that it is most rewarding to relate to. Whether one wants to transcend gender boundaries or confirm them, in both cases it is a matter of keeping them in the nervous mobility that Klinkmann and O'Dell have discussed in their papers about cultural kinesthesis.

When *Mia-Marie Lundén* writes about the growing number of adults who suffer from some kind of psychopathology – burnout – she sketches a culture that differs in many respects from the dreams of a coming land of bliss that people had in the mid-twentieth century. Only mentally healthy people would live there. Having been professionally reared, it was their task to create a different world from today's. Instead the competence to identify oneself as having burnout has increased dramatically. And the labour market has probably changed in such a direction that more and more people feel ill. The fact is, however, that increasing numbers of people feel that they are inadequate. The figures for sick-listed people are very high in the Sweden she describes. Is it perhaps the long schooling process, starting with the post-war mental hygiene, which has had the result that people know what it means to be a victim? It is evident that development, communications, power structures, and other expressions of an inhuman society have now taken over. Burnout has become the multi-tool to explain why something has gone wrong. Interestingly, however, the disease also opens the door to new strategies, giving those who suffer from this complaint a strange form of energy in that there are no ready-made forms in the panorama of diseases. The rescue that they seek is in getting back to basics, to simpler contexts where one can find oneself. Here the undemanding world of the child – drawing, writing poetry, uncensored creativity – becomes a possible refuge. As a child once again, liberated from

ready definitions, one can unite in groups and demand attention from society. The risk that Lundén points out is that the identity again becomes that of the victim, the witness.

The last article portrays young men who seek their challenges in the sport of Ultimate Fighting. *Ann-Helen Sund* writes about the longing to feel in the body what pain means and how to inflict it on others – all done according to strict rules and in specially designated arenas. Reality is so desirable that it must be simulated. This may seem like a dismal end to a fascinating issue of *Ethnologia Scandinavica*. But one should then perhaps return to the opening articles about cultural kinesthesis which show clearly that everyday actions constantly give rise to something new and unpredictable. This is what happens when people test themselves in sports arenas like this, where the space has not yet been claimed by set rules and definitions. Only someone who has the answers becomes blasé in retrospect.

After eleven years, this is the last editorial I have the pleasure of writing. During that time Scandinavian ethnology has developed into a broad science analysing culture, where events in the ethnologist's own society have become a self-evident research field, often with a comparative background, whether historical or contemporary. It is therefore a delight to end with a collection of essays which describe in different ways the restless and creative energy that exists in cultural contexts which are constantly being reorganized. Next year Birgitta Svensson, Stockholm, takes over as editor, which no doubt means that we may expect something equally new, creative, and – let us hope – totally unpredictable.

Cultural Kinesthesis in Mediascapes

A Comment

By Sven-Erik Klinkmann

Mobility, and its various derivates such as travel, tourism, nomadism, liquidity etc., have become 'buzz words' in cultural analysis and in a scholarly field trying to come to grips with various – often highly complex – social articulations and representations that seem to be emerging in the vast landscape of what can be called human and social studies; studies involving disciplines as different as ethnology, sociology, architecture, film studies, psychology, transnational studies, to name but a few.

In an article published in *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 2004, the ethnologist, Tom O'Dell, brought an intriguing new concept to this interdisciplinary and rapidly expanding analytical landscape. I think that this concept is worth dwelling on and investigating, as it appears to occupy a strangely ambivalent position between different disciplines and paradigmatic levels, especially when one is trying to make substantiated statements about the nature of current cultural, social and aesthetic conditions. This takes place in a world that is said to be characterised by large scale movements and/or narratives of e.g. globalisation, digitalisation, mediatisation and fictionalisation.

The concept that Tom O'Dell brings to this ongoing discussion – which is also the title of his text – is that of cultural kinesthesis. He defines it in the following manner (O'Dell 2004: 110):

> Cultural kinesthesis alludes to the parallel existence of some form of restlessness – and here I am interested in the meeting of the body, culture, and politics that has been an important motor in modernity, and that has from the very beginning been an economic, moral, and political factor of the world.

O'Dell refers to kinesthesis as it is defined in *Webster's New Dictionary,* which emphasises kinesthesis as "the sensation of position, movement, tension, etc., of parts of the body, perceived through nerve end organs, in muscles, tendons and joints". In using the concept of cultural kinesthesis[1] (which from now on I will simply call CK) he is clearly aiming at something more general and abstract; something which he sees as a deeper seismicity. He says that it (ibid. 109):

> more often than not is a nearly imperceptible, slowly undulating vibration, like a drawn out sine wave – a cultural energy that keeps us moving, and that consequently keeps the ground we have traditionally called 'the local' shifting and rolling around us.

This form of "muted energy" is what he sees as CK; a form of energy which by its power seems able to destabilise not only the concepts of 'home' and 'travel', but also – and this seems to be a central concern of O'Dell – the categories of various travelling agents, such as vagrants, nomads, tourists, and professional travellers (ibid. 115).[2]

O'Dell's article starts with a short retelling of Ian Hacking's highly influential book, *Mad Travelers. Reflections on the Reality of Transient Mental Illness* (1998), on the psychosocial phenomenon of fugue or "mad travelers" mainly found in late nineteenth century France. From this narrative, he then moves to a short discussion of 'good' and 'bad' mobility – and the technologies of their production and control. Following that, the text leads to a discussion about how different understandings of mobility and travel have become an aspect of daily life in a more than local cultural context (O'Dell 2004: 115f.), as O'Dell phrases this conception. It is at this point that he introduces the concept of CK, and then goes on to discuss a series of empirical examples of what he sees as prime examples of how this kind of CK operates in a cultural and political economy such as the one we are

experiencing today. My chief concern with the theoretically important discussion that O'Dell is aiming at occurs precisely at this point, because all his examples are, curiously or tellingly enough, concerned with different forms of mobility, travel and ways of telling or retelling something that is central to these cultural forms. This makes me rather uneasy about the way the concept is being implemented.

Limiting it to just one dimension of meaning and relevance, i.e. in travel and tourist studies, opens the way to a reduction of the impact of the original concept, which, to my mind, would be a serious mistake. I am not saying that O'Dell does this, but his choice of examples leads to a natural linkage in the reader's mind between CK and human mobility. This is a risk that is important to be aware of. The other interrelated and even greater danger with this coupling of CK and mobility is that the connection distorts our understanding of the whole concept.

This concept indeed seems to be quite new, the closest conceptual neighbours perhaps being Joseph Roach's kinesthetic imagination (1996), Peter Hitchcock's oscillation (1999), Deleuze/Guattari's rhizome (1987) and Giuliana Bruno's haptic (2002). What I see as a great advantage is the fact that it provides a tool which links together metaphors of movement, performance, performativity, emotion and embodiment. Since my own field of study concerns mass-mediated culture and representations, as well as a phenomenon I have called popular imagination, I would like to comment on O'Dell's text by giving a short and somewhat tentative description of five particular examples where the concept of CK could be applied. To borrow Arjun Appadurai's phrase, we can call it mediascape (Appadurai 1990: 9). To viewers throughout the world, a mediascape can be seen as a repository of large and complex repertoires of images, narratives and ethnoscapes[3], in which the world of commodities and the world of news and politics are profoundly intertwined.

In an attempt to determine whether new insights into what the concept is all about can be arrived at, I would like to discuss the concept of CK as seen through the lens of other closely related theoretical concepts.

The Kinesthetic Energy of the Rockabilly Singer Elvis

The first of my examples of CK is the young Elvis Presley – the rockabilly kid who, in the Southern states of USA in the mid-fifties, created a teenage hysteria and general cultural turbulence of a magnitude never before experienced[4] – and only rarely since. It was a presence; a form of cultural representation that, as I have argued in my dissertation *Elvis Presley – den karnevalistiske kungen* (1999), draws heavily on kinesthetic effects. One of the key elements of the whole Elvis phenomenon occurs when he appears in public for the first time as a rockabilly artist. Here something of the characteristics of CK, in the form of the highly transgressive, ambivalent figure of Elvis the rockabilly singer, is perhaps for the first time displayed in a more general way. The event took place at Overton Park in Memphis on the 30th July 1954. Elvis' lead guitarist, Scotty Moore, said that when Elvis went onstage, his knees were knocking so much you could almost hear them:

> --- and he raised up on the balls of his feet leaning forward into the mike, his lips twisted involuntarily into a kind of sneer, as his legs began to quiver. "I was scared stiff", he explained afterward. "It was my first big appearance in front of an audience, and I came out and I was doing [my first number] and

everybody was hollering and I didn't know what they were hollering at" (Guralnick 1994: 110).

"We were all scared to death", said Scotty:

--- and Elvis, instead of just standing flat-footed and tapping his foot, well he was kind of jiggling. That was just his way of tapping his foot. Plus I think with those old loose britches that we wore – they weren't pegged, they had lots of material and pleated fronts – you shook your leg, and it made it look like all hell was going on under there. During the instrumental parts he would back off from the mike and be playing and shaking, and the crowd would just go wild, but he thought they were actually making fun of him (ibid.).

Elvis has also recalled some of the things that happened:

I came offstage, and my manager (Bob Neal, my comment) told me that they was[5] hollering because I was wiggling my legs. I went back for an encore, and I did a little more, and the more I did, the wilder they went (ibid.).

The British rock scholars David Hatch and Stephen Millward interpret these movements as "a failed sophistication":

Presley's "sexual gyrations", as they were called ... may ... have been the result of naivety. Certainly Presley's stage act was an unlikely outcome of someone having both the intention and the capability of showing their sophistication and worldliness (Hatch & Millward 1987: 81).

The following descriptions of the reactions of the Elvis-audience are also noteworthy:

You know, he was really a natural. When Elvis was performing, everyone had the same basic reaction. It was almost spontaneous. It reminded me of the early days, of where I was raised in East Texas and going to these 'Holy Roller', Brush Arbor meetings[6]: seeing these people get religion. (Interview with Tom Perryman, in Guralnick 1994: 151.)

So there he was, these two strings dangling, and he hadn't done anything except breaking his strings yet, and these high school girls were screaming and fainting and running up to the stage, and then he started to move his hips like he had a thing for his guitar ... (Interview with Tom Luman, ibid.: 182f.)

There was this keening sound, this shrill, wailing, keening response, and I remember thinking, that's an amazing sound, and then I realized I was making it too. (Interview with Jack Baker, ibid: 303.)[7]

This concentration of a highly charged CK-energy, as one could call the early performances of Elvis, can be interpreted in different ways. One way of understanding the effects is to see Elvis' performances and bodily movements as a new construction; a sort of cultural bricolage made up of fragments from cultural fields such as his own 'white trash'/Pentecostal background in the predominantly black southern state of Mississippi. The fusion of influences from a white southern background with those of cultural forms of "blackness", as well as with other aspects of popular culture, such as Hollywood-movies, science fiction magazines, truck driver-culture etc., led to the creation of the highly transgressive and disturbing cultural representation of Elvis Presley. The nickname, 'Elvis the Pelvis', describes his "gyrations", or his CK in the performance situation so to speak, which is perhaps the most intriguing and important factor in his meteoric rise to fame.

His performances can not only be seen as constituting an outburst of kinesthetic energy 'channelled' through the screaming teenagers that make up the audience. It should also be noted that Elvis' early recordings, his use of voice, timber, rhythm, and the special technology used in the studio where his early recordings were made (Sam Phillips' Sun-studio on Beale Street in Memphis) is highly distinctive from a CK-point of view.

The forward propelling pulse, the driving rhythm of the music, the strange echo effects in the studio all lead to a form of listening

that is tactile, or kinesthetically activating[8]. It makes the listener start to move his/her body, tap out the rhythm with feet or fingers, or swing and dance. This nervous, restless sort of energy is, in my mind at least, closely related to the often violent mobility to be encountered in the American cartoons of the day, e.g. Disney's Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse, or Warner Brothers' Bugs Bunny & The Looney Tunes[9].

Besides the element of kinesthetic energy exuded by the rockabilly singer, what was disturbing about Elvis' rockabilly and the actual music was his bodily movements on stage. It was the cross-pollination of 'white' and 'black', the worldly and the religious elements of the music that were most disturbing, and above all the singer's way of moving which, in the USA of the fifties, was seen as scandalous in its sexual frivolity. Elvis was projecting a black male sexuality in his music and in his persona; something which made a large part of the American TV-audience choke on their breakfast. His public appearance was soon censured. One of the national TV-hosts of the fifties, Steve Allen, decided to just show the television audience the upper part of the singer's body; a kind of singing torso as it has been called. In the mind of the TV-producer, the unruly, swinging, shaking and rolling of the lower parts of his body were considered too dangerous and subversive to be exposed (Klinkmann 1999: 152f.).

Key concepts in my understanding of the CK associated with the Elvis persona include performance, performativity[10] and play. The performance studies scholar, Joseph Roach, (1996: 2ff.) has noted that what he calls kinesthetic imagination consists of a triangulation of memory, performance and substitution. My tentative conclusion would be that as a result of a combination of mimesis (the "aping" of various cultural forms which can never completely recreate the earlier forms) and a recombination of earlier cultural phenomena drawn from quite diverse fields, new and 'strange' hybrid forms of CK seem to be emerging. The fact that this kind of cultural construction has an implicit history of gender, race, class etc., means that the presentation in question is always marked in some way. In other words, it has a history which cannot be totally erased.

The Warped Space of *Collateral*

My second example of a powerful emergence of CK in today's mass mediated popular culture is the movie *Collateral* (2004), directed by Michael Mann and starring Tom Cruise as the contract killer, Vincent, hell-bent on a murderous taxicab tour of Los Angeles. The taxi driver, Max (played by Jamie Foxx), is drawn in on Vincent's killing mission and "bad mobility".

How, then, can this film be understood in terms of a cultural analysis concerning the film's CK? Taking my cue from an article on automobile cultures, Automotive Emotions: Feeling the Car (2004), written by Mimi Sheller, I note that she understands automobility as involving both aesthetic, and especially kinaesthetic, dimensions:

> Drawing on both the phenomenology of car use and new approaches in the sociology of emotions, it is argued that everyday car cultures are implicated in a deep context of affective and embodied relations between people, machines and spaces of mobility and dwelling in which emotions and the senses play a key part – the emotional geographies of car use. Feelings for, of and within cars ('automotive emotions') come to be socially and culturally generated across three scales involved in the circulations and displacements performed by cars, roads and drivers: embodied sensibilities and kinaesthetic performances; familial and sociable practices of 'caring' through car use; and

regional and national car cultures that form around particular systems of automobility.

In *Collateral*, the taxi can be seen as not only functioning as the movements of the taxi driver, Max, and his client, Vincent, but also as a claustrophobic place in which both these men are, in various ways, trapped (although they are at the same time connected to the outer world: Vincent indirectly and one-sidedly via his laptop and computer program to his client, and Max via the radio to his taxi station). Vincent is a strangely ambivalent 'mover' that combines the characteristics of nomad, tourist, business salesman, flâneur and hitman on the move. Max, on the other hand, is seen as some kind of hostage and eye-witness in relation to the hitman. The positioning of Vincent's movements through the cityscape of LA by way of the taxi, his confinement in the taxi and his missions outside the taxi through the killings, must be seen as an amalgamation or condensation of the strong emotional and moral issues at stake in a 'larger' societal economy (i.e. the conflict between a barrister trying to convict his client, Felix, a Latin-American drug dealer and mobster).

With his stony face, blue-grey hair, tailor-made grey[11] suit and 'absolute' existential loneliness and emotional zero point (with more or less ironic hints from his side at deep-level psychological problems with a difficult father figure etc), and above all his lethal weapon, a H & K USP handgun, Cruise/Vincent, can be read as a powerful representation of CK (cf. O'Dell's "restlessness" concept: "an apparatus of pulses, rhythms, flows, and tactilities which tickle our fantasies, cause frustrations, and potentially have economic as well as political consequences for our lives", O'Dell 2004: 110), that explodes at various points in the ever-moving urban landscape of Los Angeles by night. In a way, the gun and the mission give his life an existential motivation and paradoxical stability – as an eye of the storm – as well as a financial and sort of matter-of-fact reason.

The taxi becomes a battle ground of sorts between the two male protagonists. It's a sophisticated cat and mouse-game, where only one of the two men will survive to the break of day. The mobility of the contract killer – which seems to make him almost superhuman or robot-like – comes to a standstill by the end of the film. This can be read as an indication that the eruption of CK is over. But before that, the nervous energy of the hitman has resulted in a series of brutal killings and havoc on a grand scale; the shootout in a Korean night club representing the "high point" of the film's kinesthetic forces. Filmed with hand-held cameras and accompanied by the noise of shooting and relentless disco music, the whole night club sequence is an example of how a deadly form of CK can result in warped space, to borrow the terminology of architectural theorist Anthony Vidler; a space which is quite unlike those we are used to. The space of the night club shoot-out instead collapses as in a major catastrophe (or catastrophe movie) as we watch. Bodies are thrown towards each other and on to the floor by some 'unknown force', i.e. the deadly form of CK which Vincent practices. But at the same time, the relentless driving, intoxicating rhythms of the dance music (Tom Rothrock's Rollin' Crumblin') played in the night club continue as before, and even seem to gather CK-energy from the shoot-out.

What characterises a warped space according to Vidler? He distinguishes (Vidler 2000: viii) between two different, but closely related, forms of spatial warping. The first is that produced by the psychological culture of

modernism from the late nineteenth century to the present day, with its emphasis on the nature of space as a projection of the subject, and thus a harbinger and repository of all the neuroses and phobias of that subject. He writes that, in this ascription, space is not empty but full of disturbing objects and forms, among which the forms of architecture and the city take their place. In their turn, the arts of representation are drawn to depict such subject/object disturbances, themselves distorting the conventional ways in which space has been described since the Renaissance (ibid.).

According to Vidler (ibid.), the second kind of warping is that produced by the forced intersection of different media – film, photography, art, architecture – in a way that breaks the boundaries of genre and the separate arts in response to the need to depict space in new and unparalleled ways. So, following Vidler, we have two kinds of warping: psychological and artistic. The two forms are held together by their common ground in modernity, especially in the space of metropolis. In *Collateral*, the metropolis of Los Angeles is represented as an element of almost sensual, tactile desire, or *Sehnsucht*, a highly charged, ambivalent, strongly destabilising desire for what could be called the "emptiness of the city", as described by the movie critic, Christopher Lyon: "The washed-out, grainy, handheld shots[12] lend his L.A. and the film a sense of emptiness" (Lyon 2004).

The notion of warping can, to my mind, be understood as approaching the semantic space of O'Dell's destabilizing subjects and also be read as corresponding with another theory along similar lines, namely Peter Hitchcock's (1999: 6) concept of oscillation, which is designed to analyse the concept of subject and the other person in positive and negative ways. The recognition of the other person by a subject either presents or makes a possible world, as Hitchcock writes. What happens with the establishment of the other person is, in Hitchcock's analysis, that the other person makes subject-hood, desire and a particular form of power structure possible.

What happens in oscillation is then – and here he cites Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari – an establishment of an oscillating field of philosophy in which the other person, no longer either the subject of the field or the object in the field, "will become the condition under which not only subject and object are redistributed, but also figure and ground, margin and centre, moving object and reference point, transitive and substantial, length and depth" (Deleuze & Guattari 1994: 18). What takes place in this kind of oscillation is that the concept of the other person either begins to disturb, or reconceptualise, a whole array of components within the possible world.

The strong oscillation in *Collateral* is part of the film's operatic, grandiose quality. It is as if the images aren't strong enough to satisfy the desires of the camera. The film builds up to a finale that is highly formulaic à la Hollywood thrillers, and open to existential probing and agony along the lines indicated by the film's clash between dreams and reality, beauty and ugliness, connectedness and loneliness, promises and disappointments. The world of this strongly kinesthetic cinematic[13] thriller is a romantic one, where the various dreams and nightmares of the parties involved, the director and the audience, can all be played out.[14]

The Oscillating Ambiguity of 'the 35 year old'

In my third example I will try to take the formal logics of CK one step further. What or whom I have in mind is the so-called 35 year old ("35-åringen") prime suspect in the

killing of the Swedish Foreign Minister, Anna Lindh, on 10th September 2003 (she died of the stab wounds caused by the apprehender's knife the following morning). The 35 year old was held in custody by the police for about a week, and released at approximately the same time as the man later convicted of the crime was arrested.

I have studied reports on the Lindh murder case published in two Swedish evening papers, *Aftonbladet*[15] and *Expressen,*[16] with special focus on how the 35 year old suspect is construed as a highly ambivalent, indeed oscillating kind of character.[17] In the narratives, the "35-åringen" is not only described as a murder suspect, but also as a football hooligan, playboy, dandy, Bohemian, neo-Nazi, a professional criminal, drifter, small time crook, loser, mytho-maniac, psychopath and bisexual.

Several key events in the storytelling can be seen as relating to a CK of the type that O'Dell has described. The key scene of the assault in the NK department store had really nothing to do with this "35-åringen". As he was the prime suspect for a week, the papers thus established a strong connection between him and the event. The implications (or transgressions of the line between fact and fiction) contained in the newspaper reports concerning the apprehended person were tactics used to form an interlocking metonymic chain between the images and the texts relating the "NK-man" believed to be the assaulter. Through a strong metonymic linking of the three personas of the 35 year old, the NK-man ("NK-mannen") and the suspected murderer, a powerful conjunction is established which can be supposed to have the effect that readers will automatically make the assumption that the three different representations are really one.

Other kinestethically coloured scenes in this storytelling of the 35 year old man involves the accused man's connections to football hooliganism, neo-Nazism, wild drinking parties, the habitual use of drugs and violent behaviour in general.

In my view, the narrative primarily concerns the notion of ambiguity in several different respects; an ambiguity which undermines the several different configurations the stories are proposing (hooligan, neo-Nazi, villain etc.). The ambiguity of the narrative makes the 35 year old into a trickster figure of a type well-known in today's popular culture and in the mediascape at large. Figures such as Elvis, Johnny Cash, Madonna and Michael Jackson, are largely developed through the cultural logic of transgressivity. To borrow a phrase from Stallybrass & White's investigation of transgressivity in history (Stallybrass & White 1986), one can talk about a secondary grotesque.[18] A central point to be made about this form of grotesque is that it integrates alien symbolic material from what is called the primary grotesque. What is rejected at the conscious level – the primary, rejected Other – will be integrated at a subconscious and collective level. This is something that cultural critic, Fredric Jameson (1981), calls the political unconscious, and invades those identity constructions made at a conscious and political level.

The most ambiguous element of the narrative of the 35 year old suspect reported in the two evening papers concerns the theme of lack of identity; 'the man without a face'. This is also quite literally a photographic portrait of the person in question, with his blurred face becoming a synecdoche, implying a personality that seems impossible to catch in a single formula. The papers make continuous reference to a dual nature, a chameleon, a shape shifter. The 35 year old suspect becomes a

variant of the Dr. Jekyll/Mr Hyde theme: a person who is nice as well as horrible, ordinary and extra-ordinary, social and a recluse, aesthete and hooligan, neo-Nazi and a friend of immigrants. Not only that, he is a person without any definite identity in the sense that he changes identities. He is a shape-shifter, a transformer. He has many alter egos, and uses false identities, false bank cards and false credit cards, has no steady address, lives with his bohemian friends, says he has an address in Switzerland, calls himself a student and a web designer even though he is out of work and dropped out of college a long time ago. He is, one could argue, a kind of image of the lack of identity that many of today's young people are said to suffer from; an image of marginalisation[19] and of unsure self estimation, exuding a transgressivity to identity which clearly points away from a steady subject or an identifiable "I". In many ways, he is a postmodern stereotype, oscillating and filled with the nervous energy of CK.

If we are to believe Tom O'Dell, he is both a border patrolman and a transgressor who points to important ethical choices to be made in postmodern society, and their likely consequences in the constantly moving, shifting, kinesthetically defined society that we inhabit. There is a strong element of creativity in this fantasy figure, this anti-hero whom we both despise and are strangely fascinated by. According to the narratives of the evening papers, he seems to be living a life that we might be interested in trying to emulate (he is e.g. a friend of friends of the Swedish royal family, he is interested in literature, music and football, well read and, at times, quite social), if we just had the guts to do it. He points at culture's ability to constantly reinvent itself, while at the same time showing us that such a reinvention might come at a high price.

'Carro' – a Fictional Sporting Superstar

The fourth of my examples is taken from the intensely mass-mediated form of popular sports culture known as track & field. The person I am considering is a Swedish 'superstar' of sorts, the postmodern athlete and heptathlonist, Carolina Klüft, or simply 'Carro', who by her presence points to both the sunnier and the murkier sides of today's elite sports. In today's crisis-struck mental and spiritual arena of elite sports, where issues of doping, hubris, recklessness, one-sidedness and greed constantly rear their heads, Carolina Klüft with her mix of childishness and maturity – what one might call the Pippi Longstocking-syndrome – strikes us as an image that is counter to all this. In an interview conducted by *Expressen* (30.12.2002) shortly after she had been voted Swede of the Year in 2002 by the radio programme *Efter tolv* (After Twelve), Carolina Klüft says that she is, and wants to stay, a small town person. Moving to Monte Carlo, as so many of her Swedish track and field, tennis and others sports colleagues have done, is not an option. Money is, she says in the interview, not important to her. It is necessary for her daily bread and butter and enables her to make a real commitment to sport, but becoming a millionaire is not her goal.

There is a certain amount of CK involved in the construction of the superstar Carro, which makes her into a fictional character; a good-hearted, lively, intensely kinestethic public figure who, as a result of her fame, tends to be looked upon as an emblem of goodness, humanity and decency in a sporting world where the dominant narratives are soap-operas of mischief, doping and extreme selfishness.[20]

Carro's postmodern trait has something to do with her 'marketing' the central concepts

of joy, play and enjoyment (here almost Bachtinian chronotopes) of not only her sporting activities, but also of life as a whole. The emphasis on having fun immediately connects her to pop and youth culture.[21] In this context, having fun can be seen as the opposite spectrum to a tedious and boring life, but also to the rat race and the compulsory competing tendencies of postmodern society.

When Klüft makes funny faces à la Mister Bean, or impishly shows the TV camera her fingernails painted in the Swedish emblematic colours of blue and yellow, when she indicates through her bodily postures that she is enjoying the competition, and when, at the same time, she is one hundred percent focused on winning, we as spectators are presented with an impression of someone who represents both order and chaos, play and seriousness, something realistic and something imaginary.

In contrast, the other exponents of the current Swedish track & field 'wonder' – the triple-jumper, Christian Olsson, and the two high-jumpers, Stefan Holm and Kajsa Bergqvist – seem to create images of plainness and ordinariness in a way that is quite different from Carro's more ambivalent representation. The gestures, the exhilaration, indeed the whole habitus of this athlete, who has been compared to Astrid Lindgren's fictional character of Pippi Longstocking, "the strongest girl in the world", seem to represent something unsettled and unbalanced. It's an example of CK in a sports 'superstar'.

At the same time, she manages to balance what can be considered as the comfortable, common sense, Swedish and family-centred values on one hand, and her zaniness and continuing battle against boredom and untruthfulness on the other.

In the Track & Field World Championships in Paris in 2003, the CK of Carro was enhanced by a stroke of genius. The focus on Carro and her Swedish team colleagues high up in a café in the Eiffel Tower before the games made her into a form and a figure just like us (a tourist, a visitor, a guest). Due to her overflowing kinesthesic energy, she also appeared as something altogether different (an icon, a figure of popular imagination, a star, halfway between heaven and earth so to speak).

When she made her third and critical jump in the long jump event in the women's heptathlon in Paris, the whole of Sweden came to a standstill. The successful jump, which laid the foundation for her gold medal, turned her into a figure of the Swedish popular imagination. She becomes someone you can trust. She is just like Pippi; smart, fun-loving and brave all at once.

Swither as Postmodern Aesthetics

The fifth and final example of mass mediated CK concerns a small musical piece, written by an American accordionist actively involved in the accordion-ensemble, Accordion Tribe, together with four European colleagues. The piece by Guy Clucevsek that I want to discuss is called Swither, and appears on Accordion Tribe's CD, *Sea of Reeds* (2002).

Swither (waver, oscillate) is a seemingly very simple tune; what one could call a post-minimalist sketch of rhythm and groove with an expressive intensity that is hard to pinpoint. The intensity has something to do with the dynamic element of the song in that it accelerates and moves on. But the intensity of the song is also related to the relentlessness with which the musical theme is being explored. At the same time, there is a jerky quality to the music which is both charming and a little bit odd. Although it is not really unanimously or nostalgically coloured, the tune has hints

of old silent movies, and Chaplin.

What is notable is the fact that Swither can be understood as both serious and humorous at the same time, as subversive and a drift, and as something beautiful and exciting. In my mind, Swither is a prime example of a postmodern aesthetic; a kind of musical storytelling which is closely related to the kind of narrative the poet and critic, Ralf Andtbacka, discusses in an article in *Hufvudstadsbladet* (27.7.2003). Andtbacka refers to this as the blown-up story, and notes that it is the elements of refraction, drift, skidding, defect and waste that are the most important in both poetry and autobiographical writing and narrative.

Both Swither and the whole *Sea of Reeds* CD can be seen as an illustration of this existential and poetic approach. There is no secure, emotionally fully satisfying ground on and in which to place the music. Instead it moves between the very beautiful, the serene, the serious and the burlesquely frolicsome, sometimes appearing almost crude and ironic. Indeed, the entire *Sea of Reeds* has a pronounced circus and silent movie-character to it. It is a strange hybrid, which metaphorically speaking oscillates between the village church, the circus tent, the film theatre and the jazz club, without ever being able to choose where it is most at home. It is this kind of homelessness, or constant border crossing activity, this kind of oscillation within known frames[22] in what Slavoj Žižek (2001: 101ff.) calls nodal points (words that on the level of the signifier bind together a field of signifiers, thus giving it its unity and identity, ibid. 111), which seems to be such a central proposition for the arts of today. Another artist to have explored a similar cultural terrain is Bob Dylan.

What should also be borne in mind is that positions such as mental isolation or electronic or digital limbo are very real dangers in relation to CK. If such tautology is permitted, the picture of this nervous scheme of movement, or this oscillation between various places and positions forms, in the case of *Sea of Reeds,* a cultural history of the accordion's place among instruments and musical genres. The instrument moves nervously, marginalized, sometimes even ostracised, between high and low, between the concert hall, the parlour, the sweaty dance barn and the bar, between the exhilaration, dash and sentimentality of folk music and the more ironic and hybridising positions of 'serious' music.

To conclude these rather fragmentary comments on Tom O'Dell's intriguing concept of CK, I note that it is perhaps no coincidence that three of my examples, taken from the mass mediated world of images and sounds, concern what could be described as problematical or troubling forms of masculinity in the late modern or postmodern world. Of course, this might indicate my own concerns as to the nature of masculinity as a viable discourse in today's world. Although a central one, the question of masculinity is just one of the aspects, to be subjected to a cultural investigation along the lines of the concept of CK.

The destabilising movements of places and subjects which O'Dell embraces,[23] indicate other forms of cultural negotiation and ordering, e.g. one that could take its cue from the concept of the haptic (tactile, tangible) as theorised by cinema scholar, Giuliana Bruno, who writes the following in *Atlas of Emotion* (2002: 65):

> Film/body/architecture: a haptic dynamics, a phantasmatic structure of lived space and lived narrative; a narrativized space that is intersubjective, for it is a complex of socio-sexual mobilities. Unraveling a sequence of views, the architectural-filmic ensemble writes concrete maps. The scope of the view – the horizon of site-seeing – is the mapping of tangible sites.

It may well be appropriate to close by pointing out that the concept of CK indeed shares a deep affinity and link with another central theoretical concern of today, which is that of the vanishing subject. This has taken the form of Barthes' death of the author, Jean Baudrillard's object philosophy and the more common shape of intersubjectivity, a concept theorised today by a host of cultural analysts, the most prominent of which are Mieke Bal, Michael Jackson and Luisa Passerini.

The representations, images, music and texts that I have discussed here as examples of a mediated form of cultural kinesthesis can also be understood as a flow of feelings, affects, values and norms waiting to be packed and temporarily stored in a continuum of subjective and intersubjective elements (as I have written elsewhere, see Klinkmann 2002: 39f); a flow which regularly 'crystallises' in the forms of mediated and mental representations waiting to be unpacked, used, attributed in various ways, and for their alluring presence, strength and meaningfulness to be experienced.

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Notes

1 Incidentally, another form of the word is also found in the English, kinaesthesis.
2 For ethnographies roughly along the lines outlined in O'Dell's paper see e.g. Maja Povrzanović Frykman's account, Bodily Experiences and Community-Creating Implications of Transnational Travel about Croatian immigrants' bus trips between Sweden and Croatia, and Ghassan Hage's research among Sydney's Lebanese community with a focus on the practice of reading/listening to/watching the news about 'the homeland' (The Differential Intensities of Social Reality. Migration, Participation and Guilt), both in Frykman & Gilje (eds.) 2003.
3 By ethnoscape, Arjun Appadurai refers to the human landscape made up by all those "who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers and other moving groups and individuals" (Appadurai 1990: 297).
4 Strictly speaking a case can be made for an earlier eruption of teenage hysteria, namely as early as 1935. When Benny Goodman's swing band played at the Palomar Ballroom in Los Angeles on August 21, the lengthy drum solo in a piece entitled Sing Sing Sing, written by the band's drummer, Gene Krupa, created a similar wave of (e)motion as that experienced in Memphis 20 years later. Cf. jazz historian Gunther Schuller's assessment of Krupa as a drummer: "He is a special kind of phenomenon, peculiar to American show business: a perplexing combination of raw talent and exuberant vulgarity. His success with the public was primarily visual, kinetic – occasionally purely musical. But his show-biz genius lay in the discovery that rhythm, reduced to its unsubtlest common denominator, had for a mass public a universal, primitive, irresistible gut-appeal, a discovery thousands of mediocre rock drummers were to make and exploit thirty years later" (Schuller 1989: 28f.). One notices the striking similarity between Schuller's view on Krupa and later assessments on 'Elvis the Pelvis'.
5 The grammatically incorrect form may be said to indicate the low, Southern 'white trash' status of the young Elvis.
6 What could be described as a combination of an outdoor religious meeting and a harvest feast, see Malone 1968/85: 11.
7 See Klinkmann 1999: 158ff.
8 Cf. Elvis' own spontaneous exclamation to his accompanists Scotty Moore on electric guitar and Bill Black on acoustic bass at the beginning of the recording of Kokomo Arnold's Milkcow Blues Boogie, in December 1954: "Hold it fellows, that don't move me. Let's get real, real gone for a change" (Presley 1987). The utterance can be seen as a demonstration of Elvis' self-reflexive knowledge of the importance of CK.
9 Note the proximity of music, dance, film – and violence – in these cases. Later incarnations of this kind of cartoonish music/film/dance occur

in Hollywood-films such as *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* (1988), *The Flintstones* (1994), *Space Jam* (1996), *The Pink Panther* (forthcoming) to name just a few.

10 As to the semantic and analytical difference between performance and performativity, see Bal 2002: 17, 78. According to Mieke Bal, performance is a theatrically constructed concept, while performativity is a socially constructed one.

11 Note the fuzziness in the descriptions about the exact colour of grey of the suit (the colour can also be seen as a function of the silver-grey hair of the protagonist) in the film reviews. A small sample of the online reviews reveal different shades of grey: silver-grey (Rene Rodriguez), sharp grey (Jeremiah Kipp), crisp grey (Ella Taylor), iron grey (Bill Warren), monochromatic grey (Megan Basham), stone-cold grey (Ryan Ellis), middle-grey (Ray Pride), shark-grey (Michael Ventre), silk grey (Rebecca Redshaw) and light grey (Wallace Baine). This kind of fuzziness may be a result of a confluence of several factors, the conceptual "openness" of the colour grey itself, the cinematic and lighting technologies used in the film and the Cruise/Vincent character's continuous movement or restricted visibility (although he is one of the two main characters of the film he is rarely seen in close-up shots. It is safe to say that the attention of the audience constantly shifts and oscillates from the both literally and figuratively speaking 'front seat' of Max to the 'back seat' of Vincent). Taylor (2004) also comments on the anonymity of the actor Tom Cruise: "Vincent redefines the meaning of a real pro, and there's no one better suited to play him than Cruise, with his anonymous good looks – there are hundreds just like him playing volleyball on Santa Monica beaches or eating out in West Hollywood – and his anodyne competence as an actor."

12 Shot with high resolution digital photography.

13 Note the common linguistic root for cinema (or kinema), kinesis (a motion in response to a stimulus) and kinesthesis in the Greek verb kinein (to move).

14 Cf. the following assessment of the film's peculiar qualities by Travis Hoover 2004: "Mann's weird combination of noir fatalism and colourific palette at once trap you in space and wash you with operatic regret; the many helicopter shots show our heroes as specks on the cityscape with nothing mooring them except personal scruples (or lack thereof)".

15 *Aftonbladet* 2003.

16 *Expressen* 2003.

17 This is part of ongoing research within a larger project at the Department of Folkloristics and Comparative Religion at Åbo Akademi. The research project is called Violence and Damage. Cultural Behaviour Among Youth. My text only exists as a preliminary draft at this point.

18 For a more detailed analysis of the grotesque see e.g. Bachtin 1986, Kayser 1981, Haag 1998, Russo 1986, and The language of the grotesque. Interlitteraria 2. 1997.

19 For marginalisation in postmodern society, see e.g. Johansson & Sernhede (eds.) 2002, 2003, Tagg 2004.

20 Consider e.g. the 'soap opera' about the two Greek sprinters Kostas Kenteris and Ekaterini Thanou in the Olympic Games in Athens in the summer of 2004.

21 For another example of the connection between sports, youth culture and a fight against boredom, see Olav Christensen's ethnographic account of a Norwegian snowboard community, in Christensen 2001.

22 For another kind of oscillation within known frames consider various spaces of transition, such as hotel lobbies, bus depots, highways and malls. For informed analyses of some of these, see the electronic journal Speed 1:3, also Sarlo 2001, Morse 1990, Tallack 2001. As early as in the 1920s, Sigfried Kracauer wrote about hotel lobbies as transient, deeply ambiguous spaces located in the interface between the public and the private spheres (Kracauer 1995).

23 For a related, but still somewhat different kind of conception of the relationships between place, movement and identity, see Jonas Frykman, in Frykman & Gilje (eds.) 2003: 183, who in his ethnographically informed analysis fuses phenomenology, cultural constructivism and Bachelardian poetics into a theory which emphasises the active, open role of places: "Places are arenas for action, dreams, and practices: they are fields where something new is being tried out".

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To Haunt and Enthrall

The Cultural Kinesthetics of Minds and Bodies

By Tom O'Dell

I have begun to write these words from a hotel room in China, where I am attending a conference. Since arriving in China I have had a tight schedule, so in order to see a bit of the local setting around me I got up early this morning and went for a run around the West Lake, in Hangzhou. By six o'clock the side walks were so pact with people that I found myself forced to walk at times, and even to stop all together on occasion and wait for those around me to pass by or make way for me.

The sidewalks were full, but these were not employees who were on their way to work. They were simply people who were "out and about". Some people walked hand in hand, some, dressed in the latest Nike running gear jogged by, while others stood still and performed various stretching exercises. Along the banks of the lake elderly Chinese performed tai chi. At a busy corner by the entrance to a park a group of thirty couples held each other tightly and waltzed to music playing through loud speakers; many other people stood and watched. And as I approached my hotel again I came across an elderly man who walked backwards and painted Chinese proverbs on the sidewalk with water – within an hour they had evaporated – three other men in their sixties zipped by on mountain bikes.

What was all of this about?

In last year's volume of *Ethnologia Scandinavica* I presented the concept of cultural kinesthesis in an attempt to further develop our "understanding of the moral repercussions mobility and travel have had as an aspect of daily life in a 'more than local' cultural context (2004:108). As I explained, I was interested in focusing our attention upon the cultural tensions and energies that surrounded different forms of mobility. As part of this endeavor I presented a wide array of empirical examples taken from different points in time, and different places in the world in order to accentuate the complexity of perceptions linked to mobility and travel. But I did this also for another reason. Although there currently exists a large body of interesting theoretical work on (and related to) mobility (such as Bauman 1998; 2000; Morely 2000; Rojek & Urry 1997; Urry 2000), I believe that ethnology can play an important contributory role to this field of study by challenging those theories with empirically grounded ethnographic studies that problematize, test, question, and re-theorize this work. Beyond this, I wanted to invoke a wide range of examples in order to resist the perception that certain moralities could be simply and singularly aligned with specific modalities of movement. Kinesthesis is about sensations of position, perceptions of orientation, and tensions as they are related to movement. Strictly speaking it is a phenomenon of the body. As a cultural phenomenon I think of it as this, but even as much more than this – it is an energy that relates bodies (and minds), connecting them, pushing and pulling them, and repelling them.

Since the publication of "Cultural Kinesthesis" last year I have been somewhat surprised, but pleased to see the amount of discussion the article has generated. In retrospect, for clarity's sake, there are a few points I wish I had emphasized more strongly, and some I was reluctant to take up, but wish now that I had more explicitly addressed. In particular, there is one word that I used twice to explain cultural kinesthesis in the beginning (page 110) of the article which I wish I had discussed and problematized at greater length. That word is "restlessness".[1] It is a word that Jonas Frykman latched onto when he presented my article as "a study of restlessness" in the introduction to last year's volume of *Ethnologia Scandinavica* (page 4).

Since then restlessness has been a topic that others have also returned to and dwelled on in discussions we have had about cultural kinesthesis. Unfortunately, in these discussions there has, at times, been a propensity to link issues of restlessness to the lives of immigrants – a linkage that I find somewhat problematic. The problem here is that in contemporary society restlessness tends to be a state of being that is negatively valued – it is an ailment, a sign of nervousness or discontent, a pathological condition of sorts. Restlessness is one of many sources of the cultural energy at work in cultural kinesthesis. However, my intention has neither been to link a discussion of restlessness to any particular group in society, nor to privilege the metaphor (with any form of special status) as an explanatory trope in the course of my work on the politics of mobility. My concern here is that in discussions of mobility, an analytical focus that concentrates all too strongly upon forces of restlessness runs the risk of overlooking the role such things as curiosity, imagination, yearning, or senses of responsibility can play as powerful kinesthetic energies. It risks missing the point that mobility can even be a strategy of resistance and empowerment in the world today.

In my presentation of the concept of cultural kinesthesis I wanted to move beyond simple dichotomies (of good vs. bad, enfranchised vs. disenfranchised, etc.), and problematize the (often contradictory) moralities and ambivalences that inform our perceptions of different types of mobilities (and mobile bodies). It was for this reason that I invoked so many different empirical examples, and argued for a need to understand how kinesthetic energies could work doubly to both haunt and enthrall us, to enable and constrain daily lives.

Sven-Erik Klinkmann, in his contribution to this volume of *Ethnologia Scandinavica*, is correct in pointing out that my discussion of cultural kinesthesis was primarily "concerned with different forms of mobility and travel" (page 8). The article was generated out of discussions I had had with other ethnologists on the politics of everyday life. My point of entry into these discussions derived from my interest in the role mobility and travel play (and have played) in society. And yes, the material I presented was tainted by the scholarly baggage I carry with me (having previously worked with issues of ethnicity and migration, and now working on questions related to tourism). But my intent was never to argue that the energies of cultural kinesthesis were only of relevance in connection with "travel and tourist studies", a thought that makes Klinkmann "uneasy". To the contrary, I think his contribution here is a good example of some of the ways in which the notion of cultural kinesthesis can be applied to other fields of study not directly related to tourism.

I am particularly intrigued by the manner in which he invokes the concept in relation to issues of performance and performativity. I do not have the space here to comment on his text in its entirety, but let me begin with his discussion of Elvis.

Elvis, in his early years, is interesting because there is such a perceptible cultural energy around him. As Klinkmann points out, it arises out of a mix of many different factors, such as sexuality, and the mixing of music styles ("white" country and western, and "black" blues). But for my own thinking, a very important aspect of cultural kinesthesis has to do with relationships. Kinesthesis is "the sensation of position, movement, tension, etc. of parts of the body, perceived through nerve end organs..."[2] And the relationship between Elvis and his audience is central. There is a

power here that, based on the quotes Klinkmann presents, Elvis himself does not seem to be aware of at first...and it scares him. He is afraid people are laughing at him, but then he quickly learns that certain movements evoke specific reactions.

This scene reminds me of an article *Svenska Dagbladet* carried in 1958 when Tommy Steele (England's equivalent of Elvis at the time) held a concert in Stockholm. The journalist reporting on the concert, had very little to say about Steele, focusing the majority of his reporting upon the reaction of the audience:

> Throughout the concert, the entire tennis hall was a bubbling kettle of screaming, foot stomping, hand clapping, and whistling. After the concert no one had any idea how well the rock idol sang (*Svenska Dagbladet* 1958:30, my translation).

But the journalist's gaze is gendered. And what he repeatedly describes is the activity of women...doing things that women did not "normally" do. What we see here in the cases of Steele and Elvis, is the opening of a morally charged transgressive space between the artist and the audience. For a short period of time there is room here for both the artist and the audience to play with alternate raced and gendered identities.

But Klinkmann is attracted to the notion of cultural kinesthesis because "it provides a tool which links together metaphors of movement, performance, performativity, emotion and embodiment" (page 8). He describes how Elvis' performance channels energy through the concert-going crowd, and he describes the sound captured on Elvis' records as possessing a "nervous, restless sort of energy" (page 10). I find the juxtapositioning of issues of performance, emotion and embodiment intriguing in this case because it also raises the question of the role synaesthesia might play as an aspect of the kinesthetic processes Klinkmann is describing. At a concert, after all, music is not just listened to: it is also felt – if nothing else, in the thumping of the bass drum against your chest. The crowd is stomping, screaming, adrenaline physically affects the body, the mouth goes dry, a sense of *exuberant freedom* washes over you, the air fills with the smell of sweat – a reminder of the collective movement in which you are involved.[3] To what extent can these other senses be re-stimulated by listening to an album? To what extent might this be a kinesthetic aspect to Elvis' success? And to what extent might a better appreciation of these processes help us understand how different forms of popular cultural might slowly work, as cultural backdrafts (O'Dell forthcoming) leading to change: quietly brewing and accumulating power through such inconspicuous daily practices as the act of listening to a record...informing our imaginations and bodies of potential alternative social orders?

Sven-Erik Klinkmann takes cultural kinesthesis in a provocative and stimulating direction with his article. There are a few instances in connection with his discussion of "Carro" in which I wonder if cultural kinesthesis does not simply become synonymous with other terms such as "symbolic power", or "symbolic ambivalence", but this is a very compressed section of the paper, and I look forward to reading a longer presentation of his thoughts here. More importantly, he succeeds in pushing us down new, and invigorating paths of inquiry.

This being said, I also look forward to seeing the direction in which the concept is taken in the future. There is room here for further interpretation. As I move around the West Lake in Hangzhou, I, as a foreigner visiting China for a very short period of time, have a

difficult time interpreting and understanding the multitude of different activities I witness. But it seems that there is more at issue here than just restlessness or physical movement. Competing notions of health, well-being, tradition, religion, modernity and identity hang heavy in the air and seem to connect (and fuel) these disparate movements (perhaps constituting important sources of cultural kinesthesis). The three elderly men who speed by me, riding mountain bikes and wearing streamlined helmets as well as colorful spandex biking clothing seem to be linked to developments in the West in some ways that, at least superficially, appear to be different from those of the people who are practicing tai chi. Admittedly, I may be wrong, but their activities allude to the fact that in their minds, they may be moving in different ways. Consequently, cultural kinesthesis can (and undoubtedly should) be envisioned as encompassing very different forms of mobility – from physical, to cognitive to technological.

Klinkmann may be right, the linkage I make between cultural kinesthesis and mobility may distort the concept (cf. page 8), but I am not prepared to give up on this linkage entirely because I do think that there is more knowledge to be won by interrogating this juncture more thoroughly. At the same time, there is clearly ample room to push the notion further, and in new directions.

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Notes

1 Although the word "restlessness" does resurface again at the end of my text in a quotation from the Swedish author Göran Tunström.
2 As *Webster's New World Dictionary* defines kinesthesis (1984:776).
3 In relation to the issue of freedom, I am reminded here of interviews I did with people who identified themselves as hippies in the sixties. Some of the women I spoke with described a sense of freedom they enjoyed while traveling. They noted a feeling of being suffocated by the patriarchal structures of daily life upon returning to Sweden, and they claimed that the only way to escape these feelings was to physically leave Sweden. The question I am alluding to here is, can music (experienced at a concert and then later heard again in reproduced form), work in the same way through synaesthesia – provoking corporeally located memories and knowledge of alternative freedoms, identities, and positions of empowerment?

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Guilty Parents

Mental Hygiene and the Relationship between Bad Parenting and the Development of Psychopathology

By Ann Sofie Thorhauge

The Fifty-year-old Daughter

In April 2000 an 82-year-old woman was guilty of the death of her daughter. Her case was not tried in court, but the daughter's accusations were known. The old woman and others had heard them for many years.

The 50-year-old woman, who took her own life one evening in April, was a grandmother with three grandchildren and a mother of two children, but she was primarily a daughter, and it was in her childhood that she searched for the key to her unhappy fate. On the day of her death she bought a small bottle of whisky, drank it together with all her tablets, and walked out into the bay to die.

Eight years earlier, just after her 42nd birthday, she was admitted for the first time to a closed psychiatric ward with manic psychosis. When she was discharged she sold her car for one Danish krone to a fellow patient, who drove it into a gravel pit, leaving it a total write-off. In the following three years she had recurrent manic psychoses once or twice a year. When she had three attacks in a row the doctors thought that the time had come for serious medication. She reluctantly let herself be persuaded, and an extensive programme of medication was initiated. She became depressive. The psychiatrist gave her medicine so that she became more cheerful. Then she would become manic and the psychiatrist subdued her again.

When the doctors believed that she was well medicated, she herself thought that she was depressed. For almost four years she was more or less unhappy. She saw no way out of her illness, talking only about her mind. She realized that she was a nuisance to herself and to everyone with whom she was in contact.

During these years she went to a psychologist, a psychiatrist, a graphologist, and a psychotherapist. She developed a highly charged relationship to her mother (her father was dead), who had given her such a bad childhood that she had now become ill as a result. She searched her early childhood memories and her dreams for signs of sexual abuse, and she did find them. Sometimes she suspected her father, other times it was nannies who had taken her out into the forest and offered her to their friends. In either case her parents' failure to care for her was the inevitable conclusion. The therapists also searched in her childhood for the causes of her illness; they found no sign of sexual abuse, but they did find many other signs. The 50-year-old woman accused her mother of the terrible childhood that sealed her destiny. She looked for the cause of her own bad childhood in her mother's bad childhood. But her mother had had a good childhood, she said. The daughter doubted this.

The illness became increasingly difficult to handle. The mother, whose failure back then had sown the seeds of the psychoses, failed her again. Her visits to her daughter became less frequent; the accusations and the atmosphere were unbearable. One bright evening in April the daughter died. And it was the mother's fault, wasn't it?

The Parents' Fault

With an ethnological gaze at changing times and the varying ways in which people understand their world, the tragedy above represents one of the most significant understandings of parenthood in our times.[1]

With its violence, this story about the crucial significance of childhood for a human life, and about the parents' fault, has made me notice how often and how close together two such different concepts as parents and guilt occur.

All the media and many conversations about child-rearing are rife with theories about the

important and fateful relationship between parents and children.

Anxious and stressed children find their way into the newspaper columns with increasing frequency. Long waiting lists in children's psychiatric wards arouse a response in the press, and prime-time programmes now show how helpless parents let various child experts evaluate and comment on their parenting, evidently providing great entertainment for viewers who do not have obligations in the nursery around eight o'clock.

"Ten per cent of all four-year-olds show such serious signs of mental problems that they should be receiving treatment," wrote *Berlingske Tidende* in March 2003, with a long article documenting how worrying the situation of children is at the moment.

Parents who have no time and just park their children in institutions are one of the explanations most frequently invoked in the rapid media flow of pictures. Parents who do not impose limits or assume their responsibility as adults are another explanation. A third one is scolding parents who do not respect their children as human beings. There are numerous explanations for the miserable condition of today's children, and the majority of them start with parents who do not ...

But it is not only today's children that have problems with their parents. "Young people don't learn how to tackle conflicts at home," said the chairperson of Private-practising Psychologists, Susan Schlüter in *TV-Avisen*, after a survey had shown a rapid rise in the number of students consulting psychologists. The younger generation of parents have thus failed their children so badly that, now that they are adolescents, they need professional help to cope with their studies and their lives.

But it is not just children and adolescents who need help. A large number of adults who were once let down by their parents also need help. Recent studies show that psychologists and psychotherapists are receiving more clients than ever before, and not all but many of the people who seek assistance in this field are helped to see that they were let down by their parents. In today's crisis management parents are often present, and rarely for the better.[2]

When we are confronted with problems, when our lives do not take the shape we want them to, or when we find ourselves in situations that we cannot control, there is a tendency for us to start evaluating, criticizing, and accusing our parents, and it is the history of this tendency that I want to shed light on here.

When did it become the parents' fault when life turned difficult? How is the idea of the parents' guilt produced, the notion that is an integral part of parenthood today? And what made people mentally ill before parents became the cause?[3]

Mental Illness, Parents, and Guilt

Historically, the connection between mental problems and bad parents has not always been as obvious as it is today.

Well into the nineteenth century, religious texts claimed that mental illness was a punishment from God, and even a deserved punishment for sinful living (Foucault 1999:80). These religious texts about the mentally ill paid little attention to parents, and even the idea that psychopathology could be blamed on the parents' problematic handling of the child in early childhood did not occur at all in the religious world-view. Guilt (fault, blame), on the other hand, was a familiar and esteemed concept in the Christian universe, but in eighteenth-century religious texts about the causes of mental illness it was not the parents who were blamed for mental illness. When you were afflicted by mental illness in those days

it was not your parents' fault but your own.

When doctors in the mid-nineteenth century began the struggle to wrest mental illness from the professional grasp of the clergy, the doctors likewise did not see the link between psychopathology and parental failure which seems so obvious today.

The doctors' chief argument why they, and not the clergy, should treat the mentally ill, was that mental illness was in fact an illness and not a punishment from God, and therefore the doctors argued that the religious linkage between mental illness and guilt was both unscientific and inhuman (Kelstrup 1983:126). The doctors looked for quite a different aetiology for mental illness, and during the latter half of the nineteenth century they put forward documentation for various possible causes: the soil, influenza, and the intestines. But it was not until the breakthrough of the degeneration theory at the start of the twentieth century that parents began to play a role in the development of mental illness.

In 1910 one of the leading Danish psychiatrists, August Wimmer (1872–1937), published a book entitled "Degenerate Children". This book exerted a great influence on the diagnosis and treatment of the mentally ill until well into the 1940s, and with the publication of this book it was clear for the first time that children could be mentally ill too. In 1910 Danish children, for the first time in history, suffered from psychic complaints, and despite this radical extension of the population base for mental illness, Wimmer was not unnecessarily cautious in his estimates. He stated that about 15 per cent of children in each year were bearers of what he called degenerative traits, and that this figure was rising. Degeneration resulted in small congenital injuries to the brain; so small that they could not be observed by autopsy, yet Wimmer nevertheless declared that the progressive biological *inheritance* through generations was the reason for most mental ailments in both children and adults. Unfortunately, according to Wimmer, degeneration could not be cured, only limited, and consequently he recommended restricting the spread of mental illness by means of castration (Wimmer 1910:150).[4]

Not everyone, however, was so despairing of the possibility of treating mental illness as the degenerationists were. In Vienna at this time a circle of interested people gathered around the physician and psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud (1856–1939). Quite different theories were developed here about the causes and treatment of mental illness, theories that would be of great significance for the linkage of mental illness, parenthood, and guilt that is the object of this analysis.

Freud agreed with his contemporary degenerationists that mental ailments were hereditary and organically conditioned, but despite this he developed a method for the treatment of mental illness: psychoanalysis.

Freud also agreed with Wimmer that children too could suffer mental disturbances, and in 1908 he and one of the members of his circle, Max Graf, performed the first psychoanalysis ever on a child. Graf's son, the five-year-old *Little Hans*, was psychoanalysed to test the theories that Freud had published in 1905 in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. Here Freud had outraged many people by describing how the child's sexual drive led him through different stages of libidinal development. Little Hans's passage through the oral, the anal, and the Oedipal phases was therefore duly analysed, and Freud and Hans's father concluded fairly early in the analysis that the child's zoophobia – Hans had a pathological fear of horses – was due to an Oedipal conflict. After many long psychoanalytical conversa-

tions with Little Hans, both in the child's home and in Freud's office, the mental tension was nevertheless relieved, and Little Hans was cured of his phobia. The interesting thing in this context, however, is that neither the father nor Freud believed that Hans's mental problems were due to the parents' incorrect upbringing of the little boy. They both thought that the boy was biologically disposed to his psychopathological development, but they believed at the same time that they had proved that the father, in collaboration with Freud, had cured his son. Little Hans's father, by virtue of the psychoanalytical technique, had taken on the role of fighting disease.

Thirty years later, when Sigurd Næsgård introduced psychoanalysis to a Danish audience, he no longer stressed the organic aetiology of mental illnesses. And the parents' roles were no longer so positively defined:

> Mother and father have placed obstacles in the way of the child. And E could remember that when she was two years old, she still thought life was very happy, but never since (Næsgård 1949:39).[5]

In 1949, when the first team of psychologists qualified from Copenhagen University, it was finally clear that there was a link between mental ailments and bad parents. This link even highlighted the religious linkage of mental illness and guilt. In the eyes of psychologists in the late 1940s, the development of mental illnesses was no longer the fault of the sufferer alone; the parents were now blamed for being the cause of the complaint.

Mental Hygiene and Psychological Upbringing

The establishment of psychology as an independent discipline at Copenhagen University coincided with a growing interest throughout the western world in psychology, also called "mental hygiene" or "mental health".

In 1948 the Third International Congress on Mental Hygiene was held in London. This gathered 21 national associations of mental health to form the World Federation for Mental Health, and the Nordic countries were well represented. Sweden had 40 delegates, Denmark had 34, Norway 8, Finland 13, and Iceland had 2 of the total 1,841 delegates (*Mentalhygiejne* October 1948/33).

The congress adopted the resolution that WFMH should apply for affiliation to the United Nations under the aegis of WHO, and that the members of the federation should work for an improvement of the mental health of the population in their respective countries.

The mental hygiene movement quickly became a significant factor in several countries, and from the start the federation was able to enlist prominent names in its work. The world congress opened with good wishes from King George VI, and in 1952 WFMH began collaboration with the famous American anthropologist Margaret Mead (preface in Mead 1959:8) on a research project drawn up by the federation, which resulted in the publication of the book *Cultural Patterns and Technical Change*. The acknowledged child psychologist John Bowlby also published, on the imitative of WFMH, the policy statement *Maternal Care and Mental Health*, a book which quickly became a classic in child psychology.

The Danish National Association for Mental Hygiene was founded in 1947, or more precisely the nine-year-old National Association for the Prevention of Mental Illness changed its name in the year before the big international congress in London, so that it fell in line with foreign organizations of a similar kind (*Mentalhygiejne* December 1948:46).

The Danish national association worked quickly and professionally, and in May 1948

two unanimous boards approved the incorporation of the National Associations for the Promotion of Children's Mental Health into the National Association for Mental Hygiene. The Danish Psychological Association was incorporated the following year. All through the fifties the national association financed the establishment of six clinics for both marriage guidance and child counselling, for the organization of study groups all over the country, the making of a film on mental health, the production of brochures and radio lectures about the work for mental hygiene, and the publication of the members' newsletter *Mentalhygiejne*.

The first twelve years of this monthly newsletter, 1948–1959, are the source of this analysis of how the linkage between psychopathology, parenthood, and guilt was formulated in what I would call a psychologized discourse of child-rearing in the 1950s.

The newsletter, however, cannot be analysed as a source for child-rearing as it was generally practised in Denmark in the 1950s. The educational ideals and techniques that were put forward in this periodical were presented as new and revolutionary, and the people who wrote in it were fully aware of their pioneer status and their responsibility for the dissemination of these techniques.

> We have formulated the watchword *parent education* because we realize that parents have to be educated to educate their children in the right way. We know that it will take a few generations – but only a few – before we reach this goal. But the crucial thing is that we glimpse it in the distance: a new and better world created by our children and their children and grandchildren. We therefore stand confidently before the court of history. In a few centuries it will be acknowledged that it was thanks to us that the decisive changes occurred (*Mentalhygiejne*, June 1957:99).

The scientific foundation professed by the mental hygiene movement was psychology. This had been established as an independent subject at Copenhagen University in 1944, and the spread of scientific knowledge and practical recommendations on a psychological basis was the declared goal of the national association. The association's logotype left no doubt (Fig. 1).

The ideals and technique of child-rearing described in *Mentalhygiejne* were formulated by different professional groups. Psychologists, physicians, educationists, and lawyers all wrote about this field, but education for mental health was primarily presented as education on a scientific psychological foundation. As Karl O. Christiansen, doctor of law, wrote in the February 1953 issue, "to as great an extent as possible, modern child-rearing should be applied psychology".

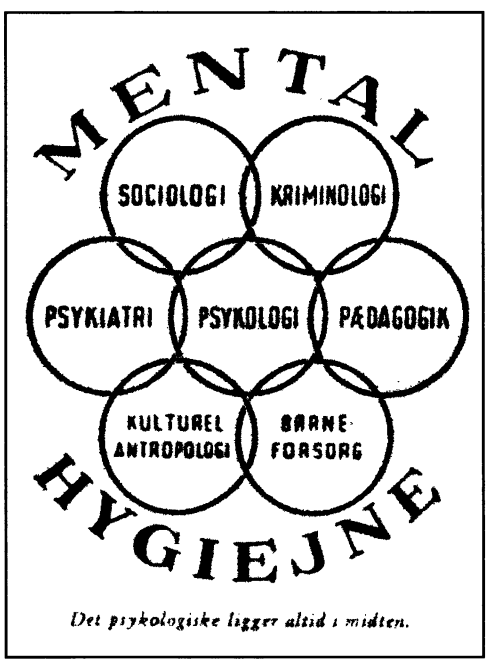


Fig. 1. Logotype of the Danish National Association for Mental Hygiene (*Mentalhygiejne* September 1952:75)

In a Danish context the National Association for Mental Hygiene, and the texts on mental health, represent some of the earliest established links between the development of psychopathology, bad parents, and guilt. This link still constitutes the construction of parents in certain parts of psychological science and in much of today's discourse on child-rearing.

The Danger of Parental Love

In 1948 there was no doubt at all in the National Association for Mental Hygiene about the significance of childhood and parents for the mental health of the population (Fig. 2).

"Mental health begins in childhood" (*Mentalhygiejne* June 1949:36) was one of the slogans of the National Association for Mental Hygiene, and right from the beginning it was clear that there *was* a significant link between the development of psychopathology and child-rearing.

> Without wishing to deny that heredity is of some importance, modern psychologists and educationists agree that disorders which develop in children and adolescents mostly have their roots in harmful environmental factors, in the insufficiency of the surroundings (Budda Leunbach, cand. psych., *Mentalhygiejne*, June 1949:36).

Even though the mental hygienists to a large extent relied on Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytical theories, they did not have the ambiguity that Freud had formulated about the significance of child-rearing for the development of psychopathology. In his analysis of Little Hans (1909) Freud had argued that the boy's psychopathology was organically conditioned, but with psychoanalysis he had given Hans's father a tool with which to cure his son. With the publication of this case, Freud had opened the door for a discussion of the positive influence of psychoanalytical education on the child's mental development.

Freud believed that the cause of psychopathology was organic but that psychoanalysis could have a healing effect. But the mental hygiene movement more or less ignored Freud's reflections on the significance of biology, and in diametrical opposition to Freud emphasized the pathogenic significance of upbringing. In most cases psychopathology was now no longer thought to be organically conditioned; according to the mental hygien-

Fig. 2. Logotype for the campaign "Mental health begins in childhood" by the Danish National Association for Mental Hygiene (*Mentalhygiejne* June 1949:36).

ists, psychic problems were mostly caused by harmful environmental factors. These were not things like pesticide in drinking water or smoky rooms, leading to disorders in children. In the mental hygiene discourse the environment was defined as the child's immediate and most significant surroundings – the parents.

> The most important among the circumstances that can engender conflicts in a person are the emotional relations – and especially the relations of dependency – that we have with a number of our fellow men. People to whom we are emotionally indifferent could scarcely inflict mental suffering on us (Lise Østergård, cand. psych., *Mentalhygiejne*, March 1959:64).

Having recognized the parents' key position in relation to the infliction of mental suffering on children, one of the most important tasks of the mental hygiene movement was to regulate emotional relations within families. The parents had to be informed about their unique, but also potentially dangerous, significance for their children.

In connection with the death of the American psychoanalyst Karen Horney in 1953, the editor Bent Henius wrote a long article presenting her work and especially her pioneering theories of neurosis. This demonstrated that neuroses usually have their foundation in an absence of love from the parents.

"In every neurosis there has arisen what Karen Horney calls 'fundamental anxiety'. This anxiety mostly begins in childhood, because the children lacked true love and warmth from the parents" (Bent Henius, *Mentalhygiejne*, 1953:14).

Parents' lack of love for their children had become the deficiency that most often gave children and adults mental problems. But it had simultaneously become the cure that could prevent neuroses from arising. The development of psychopathology was now chiefly due to the parents' conscious or unconscious rejection of the child, and the parents' positive attitude to the child was a precondition for the child's normal development.

But it was not just the lack of love that could mentally stunt a child; too much love could also cause irreparable damage. The new parental education was intended to give the parents techniques and tools with which to express their love for their children in precise doses.

> The study of transmission in maladjusted children and adolescents regularly shows us that these children have had their love life destroyed in early childhood in that their need for love has either been unsatisfied or else they have been overwhelmed with love (Sofie Rifbjerg, cand. psych., 1974:79).

Parental love had become a dangerous medium, which had to be dosed in the right quantities and expressed through the right upbringing in order not to harm the children.

Education in mental hygiene was a tool for parents who wanted to express their love for their children in an appropriate way, so that the children received neither too little nor too much. Through this education parents could be taught to express their important, but potentially dangerous, love for their children, without harmful consequences.

The recognition of the parents' key position in relation to the mental health of the growing generation resulted in a strong focus on the parents' crucial role in the child's life. The education of the child and the child's more or less suitable upbringing in relation to norm of mental hygiene became the barometer on which one could measure the degree of the parents' love for the child. The child's upbringing became an expression of the parents' healthy or problematic emotions for it. Neurotic traits such as bedwetting, nail biting, stammering, or anxiety became distinct signs of problems

in the emotional attachment between parents and children.

Maternal Deprivation

The mother's adequate presence during the child's first six years was of vital significance for the child's possibility of developing sound mental health. According to a review of the English psychologist John Bowlby's book *Maternal Care and Mental Health* (1952), separation from the mother – as a result of hospitalization, death, growing up in a children's home or other form of institution such as a crèche or kindergarten – before the age of six could have far-reaching consequences for the child's personality development. *Maternal deprivation* was Bowlby's term for one of the most neurosis-producing experiences to which a child could be exposed. But maternal deprivation denoted not only the physical separation of mother and child. Maternal deprivation could also occur if the mother's emotional contact with the child was inadequate.

> "maternal deprivation" [...] can occur both when the child lives at home with the mother – if she is incapable of providing the loving care that small children need – and when the child for one reason or another is separated from the mother (J. Egsgård, child psychiatrist, *Mentalhygiejne*, June 1953:56).

Children's neuroses were no longer, as with Freud, organically conditioned. And children who were exposed to maternal deprivation could also develop serious mental disorders. Crèches and kindergartens meant a separation from the mother which usually developed into a neurosis, but in serious cases maternal deprivation could be the reason for the development of psychopathy in the child's development. According to Bowlby, maternal deprivation, as either a physical or a mental reality, was one of the most frequent causes of both criminality and mental disorders.

With this recognition of the parents' part in the creation of the child's mental problems, the increasing diagnosis of neurotic children was a worrying sign of the widespread lack of warmth in the home and of the problematic relations in the bosom of the family.

The Necessity of Prevention

The recognition of the parents' – especially the mother's – influence on the child's mental health made all families into potential producers of psychopathological individuals, and drastically expanded the need for psychological counselling. Mental illnesses, which at the start of the century had only affected the degenerate part of the population, were now best treated by a general preventive effort in childhood. Psychology and its methods became relevant in relation to everyone bringing up children. In the early 1950s studies of Danish schoolchildren aged 6–7 showed worrying results, with nervous disturbances occurring in up to half of them:

> Of 879 children, 391 or 44 per cent displayed clear signs of nervous behavioural disorders. These disorders can be classified in 15 groups, of which the four most important are highlighted here:
> Nervousness, weakness, over-emotionality 169 (19%)
> Restless, rowdy behaviour 68 (8%)
> Nail biting 59 (7%)
> Difficulties in moral adjustment 32 (4%)
> (*Mentalhygiejne* December 1949:84).

In the 1950s psychopathology in childhood was thus definitely not uncommon, and what was worse, research showed that even little things which had not previously been associated with mental illness were signs of more profound mental problems in the child. These deeper-lying problems could at any time, but mostly in adulthood, deteriorate into more serious mental illnesses.

In the conviction that nail biting, thumb sucking, involuntary urination, constipation, vomiting, refractoriness, fits of rage, restlessness, headache, pains in various places, uncleanliness, pilfering, and truancy (*Mentalhygiejne*, August 1948:20) were expressions of a psychopathological state, children with these symptoms were offered treatment in child psychiatry wards, although in most cases as out-patients.

Whereas degeneration, according to Denmark's first child psychiatrist August Wimmer in 1910, was a serious but limited problem for about 15 per cent of each generation (Wimmer 1909:64), psychopathology in the eyes of the mental hygienists became a problem concerning the whole population, and without the proper measures and counselling the neuroses could now evidently spread like epidemics.

"Only colds are more common than neuroses", declared Professor Poul Bonnevie, MD, in 1959 after enumerating various illnesses (*Mentalhygiejne*, October–December 1959:172). And in the light of the widespread prevalence of neurotic symptoms in the population in general and in the growing generation in particular, the mental hygiene movement was forced to conclude that the quality of the parents' emotional attachment to their children was problematic in almost half of all cases.

There could be no doubt that there was a need for psychological expertise. And even if the establishment of child guidance clinics and the treatment of already damaged children and adults was part of the work of the National Association for Mental Hygiene, the enormous need and the long treatment time meant that the way forward was by prevention through advice on child-rearing. Promotion of mental health had to begin in the home with the education of the parents.

The newly discovered pathogenic parents created infinite scope for the work of preventive psychological guidance. Mental illnesses were no longer a punishment from God, were no longer inherited in degenerate families or caused by the child's organic constitution. Now it was parents themselves who unintentionally made their children mentally ill.

In the mental hygiene discourse, education became a complicated matter which required special knowledge if it were not to do more harm than good. Against the background of this knowledge, psychologists opened families for a scientifically founded regulation of the parents' behaviour and the children's upbringing.

The Blame for Mental Illness

> ... if, through the recognition of our fault, our knowledge of the consequences of our actions [for the children], we manage in the future to act better, then the consideration of our responsibility has been fruitful, and we may dare to hope for a little more pleasure for the next generation (*Mentalhygiejne*, February 1956:10).

The mental hygienists' texts discussed the parents' fault in concrete terms, just as the blame had been discussed in religious texts about the mentally ill. In works like *Forlad os vor skyld* ("Forgive us our guilt"), from which the quotation above is taken, the mental hygienists referred directly to a religious context. They implemented a religious problem of guilt in a psychological frame of understanding.

Nineteenth-century doctors, with reference to a scientific understanding of mental illness, had rejected the religious linkage of mental disease and guilt. In the 1950s, however, the two concepts were brought close together again. Referring to a new scientific psychology, the mental hygienists of the 1950s reintroduced the theme of guilt and blame in the

discussion of mental illness. In their discourse, however, the blame was not attached to the mentally ill person, but to the parents.

The burden of guilt that the new insights of mental hygiene inflicted on parents was not greeted with universal enthusiasm. In 1953 a polemical article in *Mentalhygiejne* referred to a protracted dispute in the daily newspapers, in which the Danish author and prominent advocate of abortion, Thit Jensen, had attacked the way in which

> unwise doctors and psychologists give mothers advice and guidance of such a kind that the mothers are weighed down by pangs of conscience and a sense of guilt (Poul Koseleff, mag. art., *Mentalhygiejne*, December 1953:98).

Several people writing in the newsletter admitted that parental guilt was a problem that accompanied the efforts of mental hygienists to change the parents' behaviour in a less neurosis-producing direction. The recognition of the parents' share in the children's development of psychopathology could, in certain circumstances, give parents a sense of guilt, but in such cases the mental hygienists thought that the parents had misunderstood mental hygiene.

> Guilt is a painful reality for many people who have misunderstood or not properly digested the information about child psychology and nutrition which is so easily available today, and which can be harmful for over-conscientious and emotional parents (Einar Geert-Jørgensen, senior physician, *Mentalhygiejne*, September 1959:139).

The problem of parental guilt constantly arose in the texts on mental hygiene. A sense of guilt was injurious, and one of the points in the psychological discourse on education was that at least the child did not have to bear the burden of guilt (Fig. 3).

But parents were not supposed to be burdened by feelings of guilt either, and all through the 1950s writers discussed how a knowledge of the parents' responsibility and their share in the children's neuroses could be communicated and mitigated, so that they would not be damaged by this burden of guilt.

> ... it has become a general assumption that it is the parents' fault if the children develop in an unfortunate direction. But this is wrong, for although parents often make mistakes, it is not their fault. Even if the parents have given the children a very unhappy upbringing, they cannot be blamed for it. [...] one cannot blame the parents for the fact that they themselves grew up in unhappy family circumstances and had an inharmonious development, so that they are now neurotic and therefore not able to establish a harmonious relationship with their own child (Karen Margrethe Simonsen, MD, *Mentalhygiejne*, September 1953:83).

Most mental hygienists pushed the blame one generation further back, so that the failed parents could adopt a position as victims of their

Fig. 3. "Now we must first and foremost take care not to give him a sense of guilt" (*Mentalhygiejne* February 1953:3). This illustration accompanied the article "Psychology and Education" by the school psychologist K. B. Madsen, whose text stressed that the illustration should not be understood ironically.

own parents' failure, thereby creating family trees of victims of inadequate love and mental problems inherited over generations.

> We have almost all been victims of a more or less unfortunate upbringing with demands and prohibitions, especially demands for obedience far exceeding the obedience needs of our child ego. We must not forget that the cause of the unfortunate education is often the educator's own uncertainty, which gives them a tense defensive position (Grandjean 1957:27).

Bad parents were victims of their bad parents' failure, and bad parents had to be understood and treated rather than pronounced guilty because their children developed neuroses, even if their children's mental problems were still, of course, their fault.

The subject position ascribed to the neurotic child was that of a victim, but this could also be ascribed to the child's tormentor, the neurotic parents.

The Victim's Confessions

In *Governing the Soul* (1999) Nikolas Rose discusses Michel Foucault's analysis of the confessional society. "Western man has become a confessional animal," writes Foucault in *The History of Sexuality* (1998:59). And Foucault points out here that the confessional technique, as it functions today, has a long prehistory as a knowledge-producing technique in the western world. Foucault writes that confession as a technique, since Catholic priests in the confession box cultivated a particular interest in the sinner's confession of the lusts of the flesh, has spread as a technique to the production of knowledge about the individual, which now functions in medicine, law, education, and which thus also plays a part in the special psychoanalytical interest in confessions of the traumas of childhood. In the confession box and on the psychoanalyst's couch alike, confession functions as a technique that seeks and produces a truth about the individual's innermost secrets. In Catholic practice the confessional technique produces the truth about the individual's soul, a soul that must repent, ask for forgiveness, and be judged. In psychoanalysis the confessional technique exposes the patient's unconscious mind and the truth about why the patient became sick.

Rose challenges Foucault's emphasis on continuity in connection with the spread of the confessional technique by pointing out that there is a fundamental difference in the subject position offered by the confession box and by psychoanalytically inspired forms of therapy. In the specific psy[6] version of the confessional technique the individual no longer confesses his own sins; instead he confesses the sins committed against him by others.

> Perhaps what we are observing today is not organized along the axis of personal failing, the incorporation of responsibility, the hope of forgiveness and healing. Rather than a sinner repenting, those who speak out today are increasingly survivors bearing witness to the hidden injuries done to them by others (Rose 1999:268).

The version of the confessional society for which the mental hygiene movement was working was definitely not characterized by being a society of sinners. The confessional technique that was used in the mental hygiene discourse was a technique that produced a society of victims. In the psychoanalytically inspired mental hygiene therapy a neurotic patient was encouraged to tell what had been done to him, the traumas inflicted on him. In the mental hygiene discourse the confessional technique produced the truth about the parents' guilt.

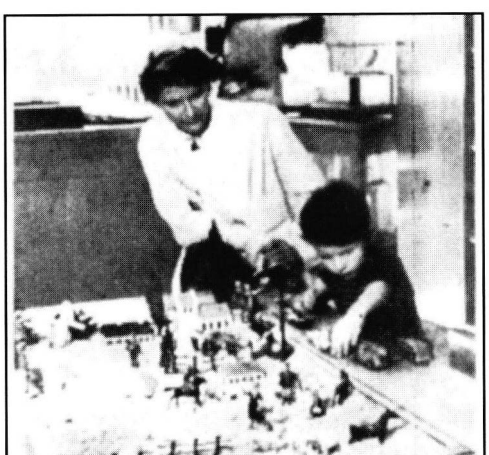
In the religious discourse, problematic or problematized children had to pray for forgiveness or be called to account for their sins at

the last judgement. In the medical discourse, problematized children were a deplorable but natural result of a biological development. But the problematized children in the mental hygiene discourse were victims. Not of the devil. Not of biology. They were victims of their parents' inadequate love and care. They were victims of educational failure. They were victims of parents who were victims of parents, who were victims.[7]

Confession as an Educational Technique in Mental Hygiene

The psychological authority that defined and produced this generation of victims simultaneously offered help and relief to the victims, in the form of therapy, but also in the form of advice to parents about educational techniques to prevent neuroses, so that new generations of children could avoid becoming the victims that the parents themselves had been.

At the child guidance clinics, neurotic children and especially adults confessed their parents' sins against them. Regardless of the patient's biological age, however, the subject position that the psychotherapy offered was always that of the child. The psychopathological patient was defined as a victim, but also as a child: a child who had not been given the possibility of growing up mentally in relation to his natural psychic development, but who had remained fixed at an early stage, and regressed back to this stage. The psychoanalyst's patient, whatever his biological age, was psychically a child. In the mental hygiene discourse the child was also a victim of parents who had not been able to let the child become an adult.



Billede fra dr. med. Mogens Ellermanns film: »Hvad er mentalhygiejne?«; et barn undersøges af børnepsykiateren.

Fig 4. A child is examined by the psychiatrist. Still from the film "What is Mental Hygiene?" by Mogens Ellermann, MD (*Mentalhygiejne* October 1954:190).

As we have seen, Freud published his first and only analysis of a child patient in 1909. Little Hans was five years old at the time he received his therapy, but Hans formulated his thoughts like Freud's adults patients, about his interest in the anal, his night dreams, and his sexual fantasies. One of the problems that Freud later expressed in connection with the psychoanalysis of children was that one had to put so many words in the mouth of the child (Freud 1983:18). Yet the child's linguistic inability, which at first sight seems problematic in relation to the psychoanalytical confessional technique, was one of the problems that the subsequent generation of child analysts solved by the play technique.

The play technique was a form of analysis invented by Melanie Klein (1882–1960), which became widespread in child psychoanalysis in the child guidance clinics of Denmark. During analysis the child was given drawing equipment, various toys repressing people, animals, houses, and furniture, and was observed playing with these (Fig. 4).

Play took the place of a verbal confession and was analysed as the child's expression and processing of its mental problems. A child

who was unable to express himself verbally about his psychic conflicts could now express himself through play and action.

In the mental hygiene publications parents were not encouraged to use the play technique with their children. But the parents were urged to analyse their children's body and actions as expressions of the children's underlying mental conflicts. Culturally problematic actions such as bedwetting, nail biting, aggression, and anxiety were interpreted symbolically as signs of mental tensions. The children's bodies and their actions were symbolic confessions of mental damage.

The parents were advised to pay close attention to the children's patterns of action and react to their concealed symbolic language. Some of the children's actions contained symbolic confessions about problems in the child's everyday life, which parents concerned with their children's mental health should do something about.

Interpretations which explicitly referred to the child's psychosexual development – such as Freud's interpretation of Little Hans's phobia for horses as a reactivation of the child's fear of the primeval scene[8] – did not appear in the mental hygienists' articles about child-rearing. Here the children's symbolic confessions were mostly about the lack of parental love. Children who stole for no reason were confessing with this symbolic action their unsatisfied need for affection.

> Such symbolic thefts are perhaps directed against a specific person: the child takes coins from his mother's handbag or his father's purse. This can be an indication of the person whom the conflict concerns. If one can improve the relationship with the mother or father the pilfering may stop by itself because then one does not need to steal love any more (Margareta Embring, child psychologist, *Mentalhygiejne*, October 1954:190).

Aggressive children were no longer to be punished. In the texts on mental hygiene, aggressive behaviour was the child's symbolic confession that it was unhappy and lacked love. Masturbation was viewed in the texts as a symbolic act which concealed nervousness and anxiety:

> In all ages there are children who masturbate a great deal [...] as a rule nervous or worried children. The task is to find out the reason for the nervousness instead of campaigning against masturbation (Ibid.:163).

Freud had also tackled the problem of masturbation, and Little Hans had been presented with a veritable prohibition on masturbation, because Freud believed that one of the goals of education was to contain the child's polyperverse sexuality. In a mental hygiene education the child's masturbation was still problematic, but it was no longer supposed to be combated directly. Masturbation had become a symptom. It was anxiety about the parents' divorce, the mother's death, or problems in school that caused masturbation. It was against this anxiety that the parents should act. When the child became secure, it would stop masturbating of its own accord.

Difficulties connected to the child's oral needs were also signs of mental problems. For alert parents capable of symbolic interpretations, too much or too little food intake could be the child's confession of its problems. *Nervous hunger* was constant, unnecessary eating, a problem that the parents had to interpret: "It is often the unsatisfied need for affection that is the reason for a craving for sweet food. If one satisfies it, the need for sweets may abate" (Ibid.:167). But the opposite reaction could be a sign of the same: "A child who is neglected by his mother can use food refusal to bring attention to its own person" (Ibid.:177).

Interpreting the actions of one's child was a

technique that parents were encouraged to use because it made them able to act in relation to the child's more deep-lying conflicts, and not just in relation to the symbolic expressions that the children's problematic actions fundamentally were.

Neurotic behaviour in children over the age of six was a symptom of more serious problems. Tics were an expression of pressure over many years. Stammering was a late sign of excessively strict training in cleanliness, and word-blindness was in many cases a consequence of a previously established neurosis. These late-manifested disorders were particularly problematic because they did not reveal themselves until long after the origin of the psychic trauma, and neurotic symptoms in children over six therefore required retrospective therapy. Education for mental hygiene, on the other hand, concentrated on the child's infancy and aimed at treating the neurosis before it took firm root.

Yet even if the mental hygienists' education sought to treat the child's neuroses before they became serious, the confessional technique, which encouraged the parents to interpret the child's body and the child's actions, was a technique which presupposed that the child was a victim.

The child had suffered mental damage (perhaps only a little, and not seriously) from the very same parents who were encouraged to interpret the child's symbolic language. The moment the parents used this interpretative technique to decode their children's bodily confessions of mental problems, they used a technique that defined their children in a subject position where the child was the victim and they themselves were the tormentors.

The confessional technique that Foucault and Rose discuss in relation to psychoanalysis and what Rose calls psy techniques, thus functioned not only on the verbal level, as found both in the Catholic practice and in the psychoanalysis of adults. Even the practical mental hygiene education required parents to place their children in the subject position that Rose argues is characteristic of psy confession.

In the texts on mental hygiene parents were urged to conceive of their children as victims and interpret the children's problematic bodily expressions and actions as symbolic signs of incipient or firmly rooted psychic damage caused by the parents themselves.

The parents' guilt in the child's psychopathological development was thus a problem that was discussed explicitly in the mental hygienists' texts, both about the causes of the illnesses and about neurosis-preventive education. The first six years of childhood in particular were psychically a highly vulnerable period, and psychopathology in general could often be ascribed to an inappropriate emotional atmosphere in the home during those important years. Physical or mental separation from the mother, too much or too little love, were singled out in the discourse as causes of the widespread prevalence of neurotic symptoms tormenting the population.

With the construction of the link between the development of psychopathology and problematic parent–child relations, the mental hygiene movement suddenly made all families into potential producers of psychic problems. The recognition of the parents' crucial role in the development of psychopathology made the still far too few psychologists into self-aware fighters against major social problems such as mental illness, criminality, divorce, alcoholism, fanaticism, and many other problematic behaviours, if the cause could now be localized and hopefully prevented in childhood.

The burden of guilt that this scientific

knowledge placed on the parents was not intended, however. Parents were not supposed to be made to feel guilty, nor should they give their children a sense of guilt. Parents who had guilt feelings as a result of the advice on mental hygiene must therefore have misunderstood the half-digested message.

Nevertheless, at the risk of winding up in this category of having read too much and understood too little, I would argue that both the mental hygiene construction of the genesis of neurosis in a problematic emotional attachment between parents and children and the recommended techniques for preventing neurosis constituted parents as guilty by definition.

Real living parents could read too much, misunderstand, and be excused. Real parents could even leave their parental role and adopt the position of a therapist, so that they could be understood as injured children of injured children, and so on.

But the child as a category was conceived as a victim. And parenthood as a category was closely associated in the mental hygiene discourse with guilt.

Fifty Years Later

In March 2003, one of Denmark's major newspapers, *Berlingske Tidende*, wrote:

> For the first time in the world there is to be a survey of small children's psychic development and its difficulties. This is to take place in a large-scale research project at the Glostrup County Hospital (*Berlingske Tidende*, 17 March 2003).

The doctors now, despite August Wimmer's investigations 100 years before, despite the studies by the mental hygienists 50 years before, and despite all the studies that must have been undertaken since then, have *for the first time* surveyed small children's psychic development. And now psychiatrists have found out that "ten per cent of all infants have mental disorders" (*Ibid.*).

The children whom psychiatrists diagnose today do not have entirely the same symptoms as either the degenerate children, Little Hans, or the mental hygienists' children. Today children's psychic problems are no longer expressed as nail biting, stammering, or Oedipal anxiety about horses. Today

> anxious children, irritable children, and children who are aggressive and who simply cannot concentrate are hospitalized. Children who have such difficulty with food and sleep that they have an outright eating or sleeping disorder (*Ibid.*).

The doctor in charge of the child psychiatry ward in Glostrup, Anne Mette Skovgård, says that it is only "perhaps two per cent" of these diagnosed children who will continue to have mental difficulties. But like the mental hygienists who in 1949 were shocked at the prevalence of neuroses in society, this doctor too argues that these ten per cent of all children need help much earlier than they receive it today, "so that we can prevent lasting psychic difficulties in them".

Today, however, the problem is that, because of the lack of research in the field,

> doctors do not know much about how mental illnesses arise in small children. [...] There can be problems in the mother–child relationship, and harmful effects on the brain increase the risk of mental difficulties (*Ibid.*).

The mental hygienists' guilt-producing focus on the mother–child relationship is thus still one of the causal explanations with which psychiatry operates. But now, at the start of the twenty-first century, science also has a new suggestion as to the cause of psychic complaints in children: the harmful effect on the child's brain that is today called stress:

Stress can, for example, affect both the foetus and the little child. "When children are exposed to stress very early, they can slip into a state where they are ready for battle, while others slip into a passive, almost lethargic state. [...] There is no doubt that we will have to concern ourselves a great deal with the significance of stress for the development of mental illnesses in the coming years," says Anne Mette Skovgaard (*Ibid.*).

Today psychiatrists no longer necessarily believe that parents make their children mentally ill because they love them too little or too much. Psychiatrists now think that parents damage their children's vulnerable brains because they stress them.

Parents of small children today can only console themselves with the fact that in the last 50 years there has been a significant fall in the statistics for children's psychic disorders. No one today claims that 44 per cent of the children in each annual cohort suffer from neuroses. Perhaps parents have after all become better at avoiding causing damage to their children, since they have assumed the guilt for their children's present and future mental well-being?

On the other hand, the percentage of mentally ill children was zero when the first reliable estimate of mentally ill people in Denmark was published in 1851 (Hübertz). And August Wimmer found degeneration in 15 per cent of children at the start of the last century. So perhaps it is not primarily the parents who produce these fluctuations in the figures for mental disorders in children.

Perhaps the radical oscillations in the statistics are rather an expression of changing scientific discourses with their totally different, historically specific, diagnoses of the symptoms and causes of mental ailments in children and adults.

There is no reason to believe that the causal explanations for psychopathology with which today's psychiatrists operate will last forever. On the contrary, historical development in the sciences suggests that new knowledge is often built on the ruins of old knowledge. In the name of progress, scientists dismiss what the previous generation characterized as knowledge.

With this in mind, we may fear that the educational techniques recommended to parents today will be described as downright harmful in twenty years. On the other hand, parents who dream of maintaining lifelong relations with their children can also hope that, when today's children become adults, it will no longer be the parents' fault so often when life hurts.

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Notes

1 The introductory narrative is based on real events. Specific details have been changed to protect the identity of those involved.
2 For a longer analysis of how the mother–daughter relation is discussed and problematized in a psychological discourse see Lindvall 1987.
3 The article is based on the analysis in my MA thesis, "Forældreskyldens genealogi: Forældre og børn, sindssyge og skyld i historisk perspektiv" (Thorhauge 2003).
4 August Wimmer took part in drawing up the Danish legislation on sterilization in 1929–35 as a member of the Anthropological Committee and of Steincke's sterilization commission.
5 Extract from an analysis of a patient published by Sigurd Næsgård, one of Denmark's first practising psychoanalysts, and one of the main figures behind the spread of psychological knowledge and mental hygiene in Denmark.
6 Rose uses with the concept of *psy* as an umbrella term for the professions beginning with *psy-*, such as psychology, psychotherapy, psychiatry,

and psychodynamics, since he believes that these disciplines, despite their differences, operate against the background of the same perception of the individual.

7 For a psychohistorical account of this view see Lloyd deMause, "The Evolution of Childhood", in *The History of Childhood* (1974).

8 The primeval scene was a central concept for Freud, covering the child's first traumatic experience of intercourse. At the age of five Little Hans had witnessed an accident in which a carriage drawn by two horses had overturned, and Freud believed that the horses' panicky kicking of their legs in the air had activated a repressed experience of the primeval scene in the parents' bedroom and had therefore provoked a neurosis in the little boy.

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Demanding Desires

The Manifestation of Sexuality in a Midwife's Narratives

By Susanne Nylund Skog

There are those who argue that childbirth is a psychosexual experience similar to sexual intercourse. They maintain that crowning – when the child is pushed out – has parallels to female orgasm. There are also those who believe that sexuality and childbirth have nothing in common with each other. They view giving birth as a painful experience that is hardly sexual. Over the course of my fieldwork, from 1993 to 1998, when I was collecting childbirth stories for my thesis (Nylund Skog 2002), I encountered both of these extremes and every position in between. I found that it was a loaded subject and that the relationship between sexuality and reproduction was complex.

In this article, I shall investigate how that complexity is dealt with and described by a midwife whom I shall call Irene. She taught a parenting class at a maternity clinic where I was conducting fieldwork during autumn 1995.[1] Five couples between the ages of 25 and 30, pregnant for the first time, participated in the course, which was scheduled to meet four times for approximately three hours a time. The analytical basis for my article consists of three narratives that Irene told during the course of her class. My aim is to investigate how sexuality and desire are manifested in these narratives.

I view narratives as actions; something is achieved in their being told. Events and experiences are evaluated, reinterpreted and reexperienced. Beliefs are called into question, confirmed and tested. In other words, narratives serve as excellent analytical sources, symbolic elaborating forms, which can provide insight into ongoing opinion-forming processes in social and cultural life (Hymes 1981; Klein 1990). The narratives that I have chosen for analysis in this article should consequently be understood as personally composed presentations that both give expression to and struggle with especially sensitive and debated themes in Swedish obstetric care during the 1990s.

The Orgasm Narrative[2]

During the first gathering of the parenting class, Irene told how "it is very sensual to give birth" and that there are even "those who speak about orgasm in conjunction with giving birth." When Irene said this, she made it sound as though she was revealing a secret. But she later withdrew this secret, that she had let us overhear, when she stated that

> I don't personally think that is especially common.
>
> But [and here the secret comes out again] there are women here and there who have actually said that it is at least similar to orgasm.
>
> Not continuously. Fragments. A little bit.

During the short narrative which Irene then told us, her voice was restrained. During some of the sections she whispered quickly ahead. If we wanted to hear what she said we were forced to strain ourselves to the utmost, leaning forward towards her, towards the secret. During the first part of the account, however, Irene was very articulate and slow-paced.

> I was a fairly new midwife in the delivery ward. It was one of those days when there was a lot going on in the delivery ward. Everyone was busy.
>
> Although the person who was less busy, that was me.
>
> I was called in to a delivery room to provide help to one of my colleagues. Within the room there was a woman giving birth and the midwife, my colleague.
>
> The woman who was giving birth was in a very intensive phase with the baby crowning. Very concentrated on that.

Then Irene increased the pace of the story. She lost her concentration. Or perhaps it was

directed away from us and back to those events in the delivery room that she was recounting.

So I came in there
a twenty-year-old or whatever I was. Twenty-four perhaps.
Ah,
And then
I said to her "You're doing so well."

At this point, the story became an indiscernible murmur on the tape. The only word that I could make out was "start to blush". Soon, however, Irene picked up the intensity of the story and tells us that the woman "looks at [her], concentrating on her job she looks at [her] with one of those revealing glances".

You don't hear so much, don't care so much.
With a somewhat revealing gaze, she says, "Ssshh. Don't disturb me. This is an incredible orgasm." [some snicker briefly]
And I was so young and so unprepared for that, that I was so embarrassed that I didn't know what to do.

Once again, the account fades to a murmur. After that, Irene sharpens her tone, concluding her short account.

But she was generous, since it was so incredibly sensual.
I could have kept my mouth shut.

And a few seconds later she added:

Yes, well I attribute that to lack of knowledge.
Then there are a few others who have told that it does feel like that, but that is not so common perhaps.

In this article a narrative is understood as "one method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events which (it is inferred) actually occurred" (Labov 1972:359–360). In that sense a narrative is a cohesive demarcated presentation that provides meaning to events and experiences. A narrative also has a recognizable introduction and ending that separate it from other communication (Young 1987). Moreover, the narratives analysed here are told in the first person with Irene as one of the primary actors (Stahl 1989:12).

Altogether, I have been able to distinguish twenty-four such narratives out of more than twelve hours of tape recordings from Irene's parenting class. A majority of Irene's narratives were told in groups of three, where the stories were linked together and reinforced each other. These groups of three also corresponded with each other, embodying and illuminating the central themes of the course through the stories. Most of Irene's stories are detailed and presented in dialect with a great deal of humour. For the most part, they are pedagogical. For example, Irene uses as a starting point a commonly held, but according to her incorrect, belief which she subsequently tears apart. From one perspective, the orgasm story is also pedagogical. Irene points out that there are women who have experienced childbirth as orgasm, but at the same time she emphasizes that it is quite rare for women to experience labour in that manner. Consequently, course participants learn that while it is possible to experience orgasm during labour, it is uncommon.

The formal aspects of the orgasm narrative differ, however, in comparison with most of the stories that Irene told during the course. In that respect, this story, and the other two that I discuss in this article, are not representative of the stories that Irene told course participants. In the orgasm narrative, Irene is discriminating with details and seems not to be so concerned about having us understand everything that is occurring in the story. Why is that? Is it that she, herself, becomes embar-

rassed during the storytelling? Every time that Irene approaches the delivery room, the story also becomes a difficult to understand mumble. It is as if Irene, when she is about to describe the key scene, is forced back into her old self, a twenty-four-year-old, recently graduated and inexperienced midwife.

Desire and Pain

During the class, Irene described childbirth and becoming parents as a "no-man's land" and an "adventure", which sometimes took the appearance of fairy tales. In her narratives, childbirths were pictured as special events, moments when feelings, memories, atmospheres and impressions were all mixed together in a jumbled mess. In her stories, the boundaries between different contexts often ceased to exist. In the orgasm narrative, for example, both pain and sexual desire, at least momentarily, were united, linking together spheres which, in biomedical terms, are separated.

The delivery ward at a hospital is a public space, where specific rules of communication and behaviour apply (Young 1997). The technical apparatus within the room signals a connection to the biomedical realm. Other indicators, such as pastel-coloured curtain material and upholstered armchairs are meant to counteract the biomedical hegemony and elicit feelings of security and home. But the home-like attributes only provide an illusion of being in a private realm. Those items notwithstanding, the delivery room remains a public space. Viewed as such, the orgasm referred to in the story, which would be completely natural within the woman's own bedroom, is an anomaly, something that occurs at the wrong place in the wrong context.

In the same way that home-like attributes within the maternity ward do not really make the rooms private, so perhaps not even all the exposure to sexuality in the mass media has altered the limits of what is considered to be public versus private. Instead, these boundaries seem to be demarcated that much more clearly. It is Della Pollock's contention that the practices that come to the forefront in weekly magazines, the tabloids and on talk shows, help make icons out of private actions in the public arena, thereby creating a kind of fictitious intimacy (Pollock 1999: 187). Consequently, there is no contradiction, in her opinion, between sexuality, which is often viewed as our most private act, being discussed to such an extent in the public arena. One of the consequences of these practices is, however, that they cause sexuality to appear transparent. They provide the impression of there not being anything left to know and nothing worth knowing that has not already been made accessible. There is nothing left to hide (ibid.). Viewed from such a perspective, the orgasm story is at odds with the impression that all private truths have been revealed. Moreover, it makes visible, challenges and calls into question the biomedical separation between sexuality and reproduction.

On a few occasions during the class, Irene pointed out that childbirth stories always revolve around pain. The fact that it is possible to feel orgasm-like when giving birth is "somewhat difficult to believe, of course, since everyone tells how painful it is" she said in conjunction with the orgasm story. She meant that feelings of desire and pleasure are often considered to be irreconcilable with feelings of discomfort and pain, and that pain and sexual desire usually belong to two separate categories of feelings.

Opponents of "natural childbirth"[3] believe that the pain of childbirth has not been presented in realistic terms, but has instead been

romanticized and eroticized (see e.g. Ahlborg 1994; Borelius 1993). That, many midwives claim, leads pregnant women to create unrealistic expectations that it is not painful to give birth, which in turn can result in poor childbirth experiences. Irene confirmed these thoughts when she explained that the pain experienced during delivery was underreported during the psycho-prophylactic courses of the 1970s and '80s. At that time, midwives were not allowed to talk about labour pains, but rather spoke of contractions. The course leader at another childbirth preparation class where I conducted fieldwork explained that a woman who still experienced her delivery as painful was viewed as a "negative person". She pointed out that at that time people thought that if she just had the proper attitude, preparation and breathing exercises, then the woman giving birth would not have to experience pain (see e.g. Lamaze 1958; Wahlgren 1991). Several midwives that I have come into contact with claim that a sexualized view of childbirth went hand-in-hand with romanticized descriptions of labour pains. Consequently, in their courses, they wanted to offer non-romanticized "realistic" descriptions of labour pains, to prevent mothers from feeling as though they failed because they primarily experienced their deliveries as very painful rather than pleasure-filled.

But even if Irene joined those who criticized a sexualized view of childbirth, she nevertheless emphasized and described the sexual and pleasurable aspects of labour in her narratives. One reason why she did so might be that the desexualized descriptions of childbirth are often typified by rather sterile and mechanical language, focusing on physiology, a style of speaking that does not lend itself well to narrating. In the literature that promotes natural childbirth, on the other hand, the language is very elaborate. In these contexts, labour pains are characterized not as burdensome pains, but as powerful sensual sensations. Often, the descriptions are influenced by sexual expressions and feelings, although inspiration is also taken from nature with contractions described, for example, in terms of water and rapids, waves crashing against the shore, winds sweeping past and flowers that are blooming. Common to all these rhetorical devices is a desire to describe childbirth in terms that differ from the biomedical terminology of pathology and pain (Cosslett 1994; Davis-Floyd 1992; Martin 1993). The oft-expressed intention is to establish new forms for discussing childbirth, since the way in which an experience is described has a subsequent effect on how one actually experiences it. The fact that Irene lets orgasm-like feelings be a possible, even if not very likely, dimension of the childbirth experience can, from that perspective, be of importance for those who have listened to her narratives.

Overheard Secrets

In *Telling Bodies, Performing Birth* Della Pollock investigates "the performance of secrecy" as a separate verbal practice. Her starting point is that language is intrinsically secretive, that within verbal performances unexpressed truths are pointed out and hidden (Pollock 1999). Pollock describes many linguistic strategies with which to either point out secrets or keep them hidden, to reveal or mark. She demonstrates, among other things, that the narrator, by not telling, simultaneously reveals that she is aware of something that she does not want to reveal.

To tell, or refrain from doing so, is consequently not simply a question of a momentary impulse. Knowledge of when, how and whether a certain discussion topic is appropriate for

telling about is part of our cultural expertise (Young 1987:202–203). The way in which Irene told about the orgasm of the woman giving birth demonstrates proof of such expertise. In telling the orgasm story, Irene made it sound as if she was revealing a secret to those of us taking the class that during delivery women could experience pushing as an orgasm. The way in which this secret was shared with us means, in some respects, that it remains a taboo subject and in some ways marginalized. She did not discuss orgasms in the same manner as hormonal levels, for example, or uterine contractions. The way Irene told her story, made orgasm appear even more taboo than if she had let it go altogether.

There are those who claim that silence surrounding female-specific bodily experiences that depart from existing norms has the effect of making those experiences invisible (see e.g. Plummer 1995). At the same time, it can be pointed out that it involves a certain amount of risk to break the silence, since this makes monitoring and control possible. According to Pollock, the cessation of the secret-keeping practices can generate the power that once produced them. It can threaten the protecting silence (Pollock 1999:188).

At the conclusion of the orgasm story, Irene stated that the woman giving birth was generous. If the orgasm story is viewed as part of the performance of secrecy, Irene is correct in that the woman in the narrative was generous. She invited Irene to participate in her experience and risked, at the same time, being subjected to humiliation or ignorance. But the risks of talking about the taboo are often balanced by the power that the same verbal action generates. The woman giving birth in the orgasm narrative demanded authority with her comments (conveyed in Irene's story) and was exercising the right to define the delivery situation as an act of sexual pleasure. With her challenge to Irene, the woman confirmed the structures that define her physical experiences and labels them abnormal. Viewed from that perspective, the woman in the orgasm story, as well as Irene who told it, refused to let the taboo become overshadowed by the dominant conception of what kind of an experience childbirth is.

It is also in the nature of secrecy that Irene necessarily passed on that taboo, whether or not she believed in it. While she could assert her position, the moment that she revealed the "secret" she also passed it on. At the same time, Irene will never know whether she succeeded in convincing the course participants with her narrative. Nor does the woman in the story know whether she succeeded in convincing Irene of the authenticity and relevance of her experience.

The woman's shushing and Irene's lowered voice can therefore be viewed as a consequence of the fact that the experience that Irene describes was disputed, charged and, to some extent, taboo. The childbirth preparation efforts of the 1990s seldom spoke about orgasm-like feelings during labour. Such feelings were considered to be so unusual that when they were mentioned, there was always the risk that it would be received with revulsion and distancing, that they would be relegated to a time when "people didn't know better" or a muddled lifestyle that was no longer considered valid. The marginalization of such experiences can, in my opinion, be understood as an ongoing practice, where strategic silences form an important tool.

In the sexualized descriptions of childbirth, which dominated childbirth preparation handbooks ten or twenty years earlier, these experiences were instead normalized (cf. Hogg *et al.* 1989; Kitzinger 1986, 1995;

Wahlgren 1991).[4] They grew to become a natural part of childbirth stories and experiences, which in many cases, especially during the 1990s, resulted in the questioning of just how common these experiences actually were. Essentially, one could say that normalization eventually came to be replaced by a marginalization of the same experiences. However, processes of change are rarely evidenced that clearly in narratives. Instead narratives can be recognized by the fact that they are open to several different possibilities of interpretation so that in the same story, such as in the following, both marginalization and normalization of orgasm-like feelings during childbirth can occur.

The Pushing Narrative

During the fourth gathering of the class, Irene shared a story about an event that occurred "many years ago" when Irene was working in a delivery unit. To the unit, a "tall stately woman" arrived "with a very large stomach". Irene recalled how she had indicated to the woman that she had "a very large and stately stomach," upon which the woman said to Irene, "if you say another word about my fat stomach I'll hit you in the jaw". As soon as Irene attempted to say something the woman giving birth responded with a "shhh". Finally, Irene realized that "she didn't really have much to do here", since the woman giving birth and her husband were "the ones running the show". Irene attempted to stay out of the way as much as possible.

Finally she was at the point when she would push. At that time it was such that virtually everyone put their legs up in those stirrups, like when you go to the gynaecologist. So there they half sat.

And she wanted to do so. She had decided for herself how things should be.

And then

And so they set that up. And then I began telling her what she should do when she started to push. And then, then she said like this, "Shhh"

And then she said to me, "I want to blow out a candle."

And then I didn't know what she meant. I must be honest.

And then since she was the one who was deciding, I started envisioning "Where could I get a hold of a candle? [Guy laughs] Where will I find matches?" And then of course there is oxygen in the wall and that is [inaudible word]

open flame.

But I thought that it is she who decides so that I just have to go do this.

But fortunately I didn't have time, but I thought, "some of my work buddies, they smoke, they must at least have a lighter" Of course finding a candle was the next problem.

But before I had time to say anything, she demonstrated what she wanted to do. It was this technique of blowing out the candle.

And I am personally convinced that if she had inhaled air, as was the most common way to instruct women. And then that they would in some way lay out some sort of air pillar and then press out.

Then she would have never succeeded in crowning and delivering that baby herself.

Of that I am totally convinced.

In that case they would have had to use a vacuum or assist in pulling out the baby.

Of that I am totally, I am totally convinced about that.

And the only thing that I needed to say was about the fact that she wanted me to stand directly in front of her. That she didn't want me to stand to the side but rather directly in front of her, so that I could look her in the eyes.

So that she could, so that she would have someone to focus her gaze on.

Because her husband was moving around her, holding her hand and so forth, she was unable to look at him in that fashion. But she wanted to look at someone.

And now and then she would say, "Don't nag. Don't say anything."

Even though all I was saying was that I thought she was doing well.

And she succeeded in pushing out that baby. It took a little over an hour.

And out came a large girl. She weighed in at

about 4.8 kg. So there was no question about that. She was big.

It was no wonder that she had a large stomach when she had a large baby in her stomach, of course.

This narrative deals primarily with how the woman, with the help of a special breathing technique, succeeded in giving birth to an unusually large baby. This was the first time that Irene had heard about that breathing technique, and she described how the event convinced her about the effectiveness of the technique. On three occasions during the story, Irene pointed out the fact that she had been "totally convinced" by the experience that it was her breathing technique that gave the woman the strength to deliver her large baby.

The breathing technique that Irene described in the story formed a central part of the delivery preparations which, together with a sexualized view of childbirth, is included in the discourse about "natural childbirth" (cf. Lamaze 1958; Odent 1961; Kitzinger 1995; Wahlgren 1991). But with her story, Irene seemed to want class participants to rely on the technique and practice it, regardless of whether they were for or against natural childbirth. In order to convince class participants about the effectiveness of the breathing technique, Irene was forced to liberate the technique from this context.

Irene did not, however, succeed in completely liberating the breathing technique from this context. She pointed out that the event made her "absolutely, completely convinced that" she did not have much to do with the crowning, that it "more or less takes care of itself". In the narrative, crowning is presented as "a force that sweeps through" the body of the woman giving birth, "culminating when the baby is born" (Kitzinger 1995:245). With the pushing story, Irene reinforced her earlier descriptions of the power of pushing and the inwardly focused, concentrated behaviour of the crowning woman. At the same time, she repeated a few underlying themes in sexualized descriptions of natural childbirth. One of these is the irresistible, and often sexual, power of crowning. Another is the image of the woman giving birth as the natural director of her birth, with control over it.

The pushing story focuses on the moment when the woman is beginning to crown. Concentration within the room becomes more focused. The husband positions himself just behind the woman's head, giving her support. Irene focuses her gaze on that of the woman's and the woman blows out the fictitious flame with slow exhalations. From a situation in which the man and woman have collaborated to help advance the situation, they now proceed together into the climax of childbirth, which is also the culmination of the story. The woman in this narrative asks Irene, just as in the orgasm story, to "stop jabbering, don't say anything". She wants to concentrate. On several occasions, Irene repeats the woman's "shhh," and muttering "Shhh [...] I want to blow out a candle", making it the focus of the narrative.

In the taleworld of the narrative, it is with a hissing sound that the woman giving birth reclaims the right to define what kind of event is happening, and who is in control in the room. She takes charge and provides herself and her physical awareness the preferential right of interpretation. The woman giving birth even threatens to defend that right physically by threatening to hit Irene if she defies her. She asserts the authority and authenticity of the body giving birth. She commands Irene to be quiet in order to be able to listen to her own body. She directs the focus and attention of herself and others inwards to the truth expressed by her body. The only thing she wants

Irene to do is look her in the eyes.

Advocates of natural childbirth describe how women used to be prevented from pushing before their cervixes were completely dilated, but that this was very frustrating, especially if they themselves felt that their body was signalling to them how to proceed (Hogg *et al.* 1989:32). "Follow your body's signals" (ibid. 33), became the new advice to women giving birth. In that respect, the attention of women was directed away from midwives, hospital personnel and outer bodily signs, towards their own internal body signals.

This movement inwards towards the hidden inner realm of the body is not exclusive to the crowing process, but also includes the entire delivery care organization, according to Tove Ingebjørg Fjell (1998). Medical institutions today devote huge amounts of resources to penetrate and even remove the layer that blocks insight into the female body (Pollock 1999; Young 1997). New technologies not only open the female body, but also remove and isolate it from the foetus.[5] Despite this, the change in focus is interpreted as a reaction against and a distancing from the increased amount of technology within delivery care, at the same time that it, paradoxically, is orchestrated and, to some extent, has also been enabled because of the new technological aids offered, such as ultrasound and CTG (Fjell 1998).

Even though the ideology behind natural childbirth has emerged as a reaction against the increasingly technical and medical nature of childbirth, there has not been an increase in the advocacy of home delivery in Sweden. Rather, in various locations around the country, alternative delivery clinics have been created within hospitals, allowing for, as one midwife says, "the best of two worlds." An open and tolerant attitude towards the wishes of pregnant women regarding natural childbirth has therefore become more prevalent among the midwives that I have been in contact with. The desire to give birth at home is, on the other hand, an alternative that midwives have been less eager to endorse. In the following story this attitude comes into the open.

The Breast Narrative

During the third meeting of the class, Irene told a story about a woman who had decided to give birth to her second child at home, since she had traumatic memories from her first delivery, which took place in a hospital. The narrative begins with the woman not wanting Irene present during the home delivery, even though Irene has specifically offered to be there. Three hours after her child's birth, the woman did call Irene to let her know that the child had been born, and to inquire how long she should wait for the placenta to come out. Should she just pull the umbilical cord, wondered the woman over the phone. No, she was absolutely not to do that, replied Irene, for that could result in excessive bleeding. Irene then rushed over to the woman in order to assist her in delivering the placenta. Irene explained that when she arrived at the woman's home, the placenta had "been sitting there for almost four hours. So obviously something had happened to hinder the natural course of events, that hindered the placenta from coming out". One of the female participants in the course inquired how Irene was able to get the placenta out. Irene replied:

What did we do? Well
uh
When
the baby sucks from the breast, then the placenta contracts.
Well, this baby was not so interested in doing that so in this case her husband had to be good enough to do so.

There were no audible reactions from the group to Irene's response. Not even the woman who asked the question acknowledged Irene's answer. Rather, she averted her gaze. There was a quite moment and then Irene said:

> It was kind of fun.
> But it went well.
> It was nice for both her and me. It wouldn't have been much fun for me to have to go to my colleagues at the hospital and present the entire case.
> I did not help her deliver, so I really didn't have anything to do with it.
> Nevertheless, the fact that I was unable to prevent her from giving birth at home on her own, my colleagues would have, of course, felt [rest inaudible]
> And then to have come in with the placenta still sitting there after several hours [rest inaudible]
> If it doesn't come out, then one has to put the woman under and take the placenta out by hand.
> It was a good thing that it helped.

The breast narrative is an especially straightforward presentation. It describes an emergency situation. Something in "nature's wonderful process" has gone wrong. There is nothing sensual about the situation, even though it is occurring in the woman's home, the presumed home for her sexuality. Not only is the woman's body malfunctioning, the baby also seems to be defective since it does not want to suck its mother's breast. In other contexts, the baby's behaviour would probably have been interpreted as worrisome. Like a mechanic ready to apply her knowledge and her tools to repair the damage, Irene arrives at the woman's home. At the same time, she really doesn't do anything in the story. She acts as an observer and gives directions, but she does not touch, smell or experience anything.

The woman also plays a passive role in the story. Irene hinders her from pulling the umbilical cord. In this instance, it is the husband who acts; he is the one who steps in, on Irene's prompting, to perform the baby's duties. When the husband takes the woman's breast into his mouth, that sets in motion contractions in the woman's uterus that eventually results in the placenta being pushed out. But when the husband takes the woman's breast into his mouth, numerous other associations and interpretations are also called up. From one perspective, the woman's and man's sexuality are manifested in this action and, as in the pushing narrative, heterosexual intercourse marks the beginning of the delivery.

Later, Irene pointed out that it is not so unusual for many women to have problems nursing, "since the breast plays a very large role in sexuality and breasts leaking milk are not sexy". Irene encouraged women with newborns to "mentally readjust" to the fact that "breasts have nothing to do with sexuality any longer". Following birth, breasts are solely for the needs of the baby. She seemed to imply that once one becomes a mother, female breasts are automatically transformed from sexual objects to a baby's primary source of nourishment. The problematic and ambivalent nature of the female breast emerges from Irene's descriptions. A strategy that dominates medical presentations for maintaining a separation between reproductive and sexual aspects is to emphasize different functions of body parts in different situations (cf. Martin 1993). But first those different situations must be clearly defined. Perhaps Irene wanted to define the delivery situation as reproductive and not sexual with her fairly factual story and the emergency situation framing it.

The fact that stimulation of the nipples can hasten delivery is a recurring claim in childbirth preparation activities. At one of the other parenting classes I attended, the truth of these claims was supported with the help of the latest research into hormones, which had the effect of desexualizing female breasts. In

those contexts, the female breast belonged to the baby. The course leader even advised the men in the class to taste the breast milk, not for their own or the pregnant woman's pleasure, but for greater understanding of their baby. By tasting the sweet breast milk, one can understand the baby's unavoidable urge not to stop nursing and begin eating other kinds of food, according to that teacher.

There are women who describe nursing as very pleasurable. Just like the orgasm experience of childbirth, such descriptions usually prompt reactions. Receiving pleasure from nursing challenges, perhaps, the same preconceptions of pleasure and sexual desire that narratives like the orgasm story does. Children are born and suck up nourishment from their mother's breast, whether or not she derives pleasure from it. Perhaps such pleasure is labelled taboo on those occasions since it does not seem to have any other purpose other than stimulating herself.

The fact that the sucking worked meant not only that the placenta was delivered and they avoided going to the emergency room, it also meant that Irene, in her story, could restore the situation to the reproductive sphere where she felt it belonged. The woman also avoided having to be put under so that someone "with his or her hand" would have to remove the placenta. On a symbolic level, Irene's presence in the couple's home and her rescuing the situation meant that the entire incident was restored to the place where childbirth in Sweden is thought to belong – in a hospital delivery unit.

Heterosexual Manifestations

In the pushing narrative, the room is transformed through the woman's "shhh". The cold, sterile delivery room changes character and becomes situationally loaded with associations that direct one's thoughts to the bedroom of the couple giving birth. The crowning narrative is rich and, just as in the orgasm narrative, a charged atmosphere is created. In the breast narrative, where the delivery occurs in the home, this concentrated atmosphere is lacking. The breast narrative is similar to an account from a medical delivery journal. Probably, these various ways of storytelling not only have to do with the character of the events and experiences, but also with where they are occurring.

"Being present during a delivery is a little like stepping into someone's bedroom," writes one midwife (Hogg *et al.* 1989:54). In the same book, another midwife states: "it feels like going into their bedroom" (1989:93). Irene reinforces this when she points out that giving birth can be "incredibly sensual, incredibly powerful, incredibly intimate". She speaks quickly, but at times very clearly, when she describes how that sensualness can "be felt in the air. It is a very clear feeling. When one enters the delivery room with a couple that is working well together, when they are a good support for each other." Entering into such a delivery room "is charged with emotions. Very positive feelings, a great deal of intimacy," she says.

At the hospital's delivery unit, the midwife has a clear role. It is part of her job to take part in these intense, sensual moments. A midwife writes that "unconsciously the various positions a mother takes and the sounds she emits perhaps stir up unresolved sexuality within the midwife" and the midwife must therefore "be free and accepting of her own sexuality in order to endure seeing others deriving pleasure" (Hogg *et al.* 1989:59). This quote indicates, however, that the sensuality and sexuality that is expressed in the delivery unit is a different kind from what is expressed at home.

However, a sexualized view of childbirth can result in a midwife's occupational practices being called into question. When childbirth is equated with intercourse that can result, for example, in the woman and man wanting to be alone during the delivery, just as during the conception. It has also been pointed out that if an assistant is allowed to participate, then even her actions are sexualized. Emily Martin describes, for example, how the participation of a midwife during delivery in some circles is viewed as a homosexual act and experience (Martin 1993:159). The sexualization of childbirth could, as a result, render midwives unnecessary, and possibly it would be one reason why so many midwives seek other ways to describe childbirth. At the same time, the quotation above illustrates that even in sexualized descriptions it is possible to deny that labour could possibly be pleasurable for the midwife. In the quotation, labour is described as pleasurable for the one who is giving birth, not for the midwife, who with her free and accepting sexuality should be trained in not deriving pleasure herself, but rather be able to "stand" viewing others' pleasure.

Irene's participation during the home delivery in the breast narrative was caused by the problems that arose with the placenta. Before this, her participation was not welcome. Since the delivery occurred in the home, Irene did not have any natural place in the situation that was occurring there. And if the crowning story had happened in the woman's home or if the circumstances had not pertained to a delivery, Irene would have probably acted differently from the woman's appeals. She would likely have left the room. So long as the event, partially with the help of the physical location, was defined as a reproductive act and not a sexual one, Irene could stay and participate in the charged and sensual atmosphere that pervaded.

In her teaching, Irene was required to fulfil the goal of the class, which was to place the couple, the future nuclear family, at the centre of attention (Allmänna råd från Socialstyrelsen 1981:4: Hogg *et al.* 1989:56). She did this not only by making the future mother, but also the father and child, the central actors in most of her narratives. In the pushing story, for example, it was the woman and "her husband who propelled this match". They were able to manage themselves and there was not that much for Irene to do. As in most contemporary delivery narratives, the delivery is described as the project of a heterosexual couple, a joint achievement and experience. And, as is so often the case in the rhetorical logic of childbirth narratives, the couple's love is manifested in their collaboration which, despite the extremely large baby, resulted in a successful delivery. In some respects, birth stories such as this are short versions of the traditional fairytale about a woman and man who meet, overcome a few difficulties and then live happily ever after. Both the orgasm narrative and the breast narrative depart from that pattern and consequently challenge common preconceptions of sexuality and childbirth.

Such a perspective provides a possible explanation as to why orgasm narratives often generate such strong reactions. If heterosexual conceptions say that sexual desires are exercised between a man and a woman at home in the bedroom, then those pleasures that appear in the orgasm and breast narratives appear to be aberrations. Within such a framework, orgasm experiences during childbirth should be defined as abnormal female pleasure and desire in the wrong place at the wrong time with incestuous and/or lesbian tendencies. And, in that case, as a deviation from the heterosexual norm.

In Sweden, the ideology of "natural childbirth" has had a major influence on delivery care and delivery preparations. The ideology first emerged as a protest against the increasing institutionalization and medicalization of childbirth,[6] but eventually became an accepted factor in Swedish delivery practices. At hospital delivery units around the country, access to delivery environments that were like home, starting at the beginning of the 1990s, as well as offering non-pharmacological pain relief. In the larger cities, ABC units[7] were created within hospitals. And within delivery preparation practices, the choice of classes and handbooks advocating natural childbirth was expanded. One consequence was that the ideology incrementally began to change and adapt to the practices within which it was residing. Criticism of this influential ideology was not long in coming. Disappointed new mothers came forward and shared their feelings of failure, resulting in catch phrases such as "the tyranny of natural childbirth". The fact that the pendulum has already started to turn shows the steady increase in the number of medical procedures. Today, many women actively choose to be delivered by C-section, while others welcome pharmacological pain relief and prefer the security of medical monitoring.

When Irene taught the parenting classes, she was forced to account for and balance all of these frequently clashing opinions and positions that defined the Swedish delivery field. Her narratives are open to several interpretations, and it is rare that Irene would unilaterally take a position either for or against one of the opinions that is expressed. At the same time, it is unavoidable that her stories also reflect some of the most fundamental premises in contemporary delivery care. In her narratives, childbirth appears as a central and pleasurable experience, standing in the service of heterosexuality and the creation of identity, and which should occur in the delivery unit of a hospital.

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Notes

1 Since the 1980s, prenatal care has been a branch of primary health care, making female reproductive health a priority (SoS-rapport 1996:7), while simultaneously also encompassing the entire family (Allmänna råd från socialstyrlesen 1981:4). The overall goal of prenatal care is "good reproductive health and sexual health for the entire population" (SoS-rapport 1996:7:9). In addition to medical responsibilities, midwives should also pay close attention to the psychological and social supportive needs of the future parents, which can involve "providing people who are facing pressures and changes in life support and skills that they can use to overcome the difficulties associated with the challenges and changes in life" (Allmänna råd från Socialstyrelsen 1981:4:23). In an attempt to accomplish the goals of their trade, midwives within the obstetric care system work primarily on health maintenance together with education, family planning and parenting training.

2 The headings of the narratives are my own and reflect, more than anything else, the focus of my interests at the expense of all other aspects and themes that every narrative also deals with. I have attempted to maintain the verbal rhythm in the transcripts. Transcription has been done according to the following principles: indentation = short pause, skipped line = longer pause, CAPITALS = loud voice, smaller text = soft voice, underline = emphasis, *italics* = my emphasis, [within brackets] = my comments. I have also eliminated repeated words such as "you know" in those cases where these linguistic markers were not part of my analytical arguments.

3 Natural childbirth should be understood here as an umbrella for all the ideas and opposition movements that offer alternatives to the biomedical image of childbirth. For a more detailed description of the various trends within natural childbirth, see for example Cosslett 1994, Davis-Floyd 1992

and Holmqvist 2000.

4 Some of these guidebooks have been issued in numerous, sometimes revised, editions. This is especially true for Sheila Kitzinger's *Aktiv förlossning* in its Swedish translation 1972, and *Att vänta och föda barn*, which was first issued in Swedish in 1980, and Anna Wahlgren's *Barnaboken* from 1983.

5 See, e.g., Lennart Nilsson's (1995) photographs of foetuses, which appear to float freely in the universe, rather than being enclosed and hidden within the female body (cf. Martin 1989).

6 Ideologies about natural childbirth did not simply emerge as a reaction to the increased medicalization of delivery care, but also to the separation between sexuality and reproduction. Moreover, there was already a well-established tradition of delivery doctors, who had taken an interest in other aspects of childbirth than simply medical since the 1920s, and who had worked out methods for childbirth preparation and who advocated "natural" childbirth (cf. Dick-Read 1933; Lamaze 1958; Odent 1961). Most resistance movements sought their insipiration from that tradition, and its influences are still clear within delivery care and preporatory education (Cosslett 1994, Fjell 1998, Holmqvist 2000).

7 ABC is an appreviation for Alternative Birth Care. For a critical review of that practice see Hörnfeldt 1998.

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Childfree Women – Desirable or Deplorable?

On Having and Not Having Children and Other People's Views of These More or Less Random Choices

By Tove Ingebjørg Fjell

She is beaming at me from the television screen, the 35-year-old with the wild hair, the lively eyes, the white T-shirt, sitting on a white chair, against a white wall. She has been invited on to a current affairs programme entitled "Women ... that's mums" (Agenda, 12 December 1999) to reflect on her own choice to live a childfree life and is now passing comments on the state of any home with children: a bombsite, with ugly plastic toys scattered everywhere, and with the walls decorated with children's drawings and other things the kids bring home. To the woman on the screen this is an alien world:

> Kids have such awful taste, haven't they. They like the Teletubbies[1] and they like ... what else do they like? You know, those hopeless, ghastly television productions that you'd never even think of ... spending any time on at all ... and which they simply love. And their sense of aestheticism when it comes to toys, and what they think is cool and nice and good looking, all that's just incredibly yucky, right. You'd never want to be in that sort of world at all (NRK 1, 12 December 1999).

The childfree woman is making a vehement statement on television, a statement which may have been cajoled out of her by the interviewer, whose voice we never get to hear. Most likely this kind of statement generates an adverse reaction in many people: is this how they reason, the childfree?[2]

The English language provides a series of different words for denoting a person who has not given birth and who chooses to live a life without children. There is "unmothered" (Albert 1966), which according to Jean E. Veevers (1980:2) is inaccurate because it may include people who are motherless. Demographers use "zero parity" (Veevers 1980), whereas the medical profession talks about "nullipara" (Noack & Østby 1983:11). The terms "childless" and "non-mother" (Morell 1994:21) imply that something is missing. These are statistical terms and they are not necessarily based on individuals' experiences. They may nevertheless influence the way we understand living without children. I choose to use the term "childfree" (Cooper, Cumber & Hartner 1978:72), because this is a term with positive connotations, which implies a positive stance and which corresponds to my informants' understanding of the matter. However, I am aware of the fact that the term has its limitations in that it may seem to imply that those who are child-*free* would rather get rid of and avoid children (ref. Morell 1994:21).[3] I hope my paper will serve to balance this view.

Any discussion about being childfree will need to centre on the concept of plastic sexuality, in the sense of decentralized sexuality which is free of any procreational demands (Giddens 1994). Artificial prevention of pregnancy, or the use of contraceptives, disassociates sexual activity from procreation, or makes sexuality – that is, heterosexuality – more autonomous. Assisted conception involves further autonomy, maintains sociologist Anthony Giddens. In this way, technology has contributed to the de-mystification of procreation because its traditional sensual pleasure has been severed. What may some of the consequences be of the disassociation between reproduction and sensual pleasure?

In this article, I will be comparing a group of women who *used to be* childless but who are currently adoptive mothers, and a group of childfree women. The main emphasis will be on how childfree women are perceived. I will be asking to what extent motherhood is a significant constituent of femininity. How do adoptive mothers and childfree women express themselves about living with and without children? How do childfree women feel that they are being considered by other

people? Is the childfree option considered taboo, and if so: why?

What is the Empirical Basis?

There are three large adoption associations in Norway: Verdens Barn, Inor-Adopt and Adopsjonsforum. I contacted the management of the latter association, who put me in touch with six adoptive parents, all of whom had adopted children from Colombia. In the main, I talked to the adoptive mothers, except in one case where both parents wanted to be present.

Selecting a group of childfree women was more difficult, as they would not naturally constitute the membership of any particular association as is sometimes the case with the childless.[4] I therefore contacted a couple of women whose choice to be childfree had been given media attention, and these put me in touch with other childfree acquaintances. There are four women in this group.[5] What was important to me in making up the group was that the childfree women at the time of the interview maintained that they were childfree *by choice*. However, I will return to the point that the choice to be childfree will always be contextual and subject to change (Tjørnhøi-Thomsen 1998:6; Campbell 1985).

I have also followed the media debate about adoption, childlessness and childfreedom, and I have kept an eye on the contributions submitted to the adoption and childlessness links at www.doktoronline.no (DOL) and the www.snartgravid.com websites. This has provided me with insight into the concerns surrounding childlessness and childfreedom in a wider circle of women than that constituted by my informants.[6]

While the adoptive mothers' educational background varied (ranging from high school diplomas to honours degrees), all of the childfree women I talked to had been to college or university and held high-status jobs within research and media. Earlier research shows that there is no correlation between education and involuntary childlessness, whereas there is a correlation between high education and childfreedom (cf. Veevers 1980:15; Noack & Østby 1983:7). This does not imply that childfree women from lower social strata are non-existent, but perhaps that they are less attractive media objects or less likely to front the case in the media. Sociologist Carolyn Morell points out that three quarters of her American childfree informants identified their background as working class, and that they saw a connection between social mobility and the choice to remain childfree (Morell 1994:19). A correlation has also been found between childfreedom and residential region (East Norway) and a tendency to settle in urban areas (Noack & Østby 1983). My own material is not sufficiently extensive to draw conclusions regarding these matters.

Transnational adoption in Norway is only permitted for married couples[7] and all the adoptive mothers interviewed were married at the time of the interview. The marital status of the childfree women varied: unmarried, multiple divorcee, remarried, and cohabiting partners. All informants were either living in or had lived in a heterosexual relationship. All informants were living in cities in South Norway or in neighbouring districts.

On the Intrinsicality of Having Children

Today's medical possibilities have raised our expectations in terms of controlling our lives, and for the involuntarily childless it may now be more difficult to resign themselves to the fact that the child they want will never come. Physicians Johanne Sundby and Eiliv Lund

have studied grief in women and men who experience involuntary childlessness, and have found that whereas women's grief is linked to sexual identity, men's grief is linked to the loss of their ability to "perpetuate the family" (Sundby and Lund 1989:119–120). Sociologists Ulrich Beck and Elizabeth Beck-Gernsheim maintain that what is appealing about having children is that it is one of the most anti-modern things you can do: people in a highly industrialized society are trained to behave rationally and to be efficient, fast and disciplined. Having children represents the opposite: the so-called natural side to life (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995:106). The dichotomy rational–natural presented by the two sociologists may call for a comment. The longing for nature and the natural must be seen as cultivated by a rational world and therefore has parallels in late modern society. The longing for the natural side to life has been given a seedbed in today's numerous options for conception. Both the adoption process and the innumerable forms of assisted conception emphasize the importance of the nuclear family as well as parenthood (Morell 1994:10). Philosopher Nina Karin Monsen maintains, however, that most people never consider *why* they have children:

> To a certain extent, children simply arrive, and most people consider it a matter of course that they will have children. Children are part of life. Why is a question most people will find it impossible to answer. It's just how it is, it's natural, it's life-enhancing (Monsen 1984:107–108; my translation).

In a previous project (Fjell 1998) I asked my interviewees why they wanted children. Their replies coincided with Monsen's point of view (see also Stiege, Jeorell & Nettelbrandt-Hogg 1982:23; Fabricius 1989:10). Their responses were quite similar, ranging from the woman who said: "Well, I want children because that's what women want at a certain age", to the woman who said: "I want children because that's what *normal* women want." Some talked at length about biological clocks. The idea that the body virtually craves a pregnancy was strong.

The various forums for childlessness and adoption on the Internet also portray life with children as desirable and normal. The introduction page to "Forum for barnløse" (Childlessness Forum) incorporates this text:

> Having children is a basic human instinct (or need?!). Wherever you live, whatever your living standard, housing situation etc., culture and religion, having children is one of the most important aspects of people's life. (www.doktoronline.no/forum/forum2.htm, my translation)

Most of the people who contribute to this forum and to the adoption forum (www.doktoronline.no/forum/forum22.htm) emphasize that remaining childless is not an option they would want to consider. According to their contributions they undergo innumerable medical treatments in connection with in vitro fertilization or assessments by the social services in connection with adoption applications. It is rare to see contributions from childless people who question their medical treatment. Practical questions dominate, like "who helps you set the hormone jag?", "how long were you on spray?" or "do you get any pain killers in connection with egg retrieval?" Contributions which voice criticism against the medical treatment, questioning "the chemical warfare against the body", are extremely rare, and are typically written by someone who has undergone medical treatment herself, but who has now decided to adopt. However, the contributor may also be someone who wants to know more about the treatment she is about to embark on.

What Adoptive Mothers Say about Having Children

How do adoptive mothers talk about living with and without children? What do children mean to them? I will present two adoptive mothers, Hanne and Inga, both in their late 30s. Hanne had always thought that she would be giving birth to children of her own. To her and her husband the question had always been "*when* we have children" rather than "*if* we have our own children" or "are we going to have children?" But no child materialized. Hanne says:

> Everyone else was having children, and that was rather awful, really. Couples met each other years after we did, and then they had the first one, and then the second and the third, while we for our part ... you know, you were excluded in a way.

Difficult feelings – like envy – also take hold. Hanne says:

> After we got married we found out that my sister-in-law was pregnant, and she was on her own. And I remember feeling that: "Oh, heck, you know?" And she doesn't even want kids. While we'd do anything to ... [have children].

Whereas involuntary childless women used to be able to "resign themselves to" their childlessness, this is now more difficult. Many feel that they need to try out all the current abundance of assisted conception methods before they either accept the situation or start considering adoption. Hanne embarked on years of test tube treatment, which she has later taken a critical view of. She feels that they were always offered further treatment, and that the doctors never discussed adoption with them. During the last IVF attempt Hanne's egg was frozen. After years of treatment, Hanne became critical towards the industry of *in vitro* fertilization and says:

> At that point, no one asked whether I wanted them to be frozen. And I knew that three attempts were enough. I didn't want any more. So, you know, they froze the eggs, and I couldn't bring myself to say that they shouldn't do it. But I knew inside that this was it. I'd done what I could.

She knew at the time that she wouldn't be using the eggs, but felt unable to tell the doctors that she didn't want the treatment. After many years of uncomfortable and painful treatment Hanne eventually adopted a child.

The question I raise in my project is: why go through all this? Why go through innumerable hormone courses, painful examinations, hopes that turn to grief, and then go over to the adoption process which may take years, and which may also be fraught with disappointment? Why is it so important to have children? These are difficult questions, and answers are hard to come by. When Hanne looks back on life without a child, or without a family as she puts it, she says:

> I remember [...] in the evenings sometimes [...] We used to lie on the sofa, feeling tired. We seemed to be constantly tired. The housework was over and done with much quicker, of course, but ... and people said: "Why don't you go to the cinema, or why don't you do this and that and the other ... and you really must ... while you can". Not that we didn't do nice things as well, of course we did, but gradually everything seemed to centre on having children. It was extremely difficult.

Inga and her husband wanted children as well, but they wanted to wait for a while until they had finished their education and travelled a bit. Inga outlines a dividing line between before and after the adoption. She became bored with life without children, it seemed meaningless to her. Like Hanne, Inga was also told how lucky she was to be able to do whatever she wanted to. But she replied: "No, we're not lucky. Our lives are empty." Life

consisted of going to work, eating, resting, hill walking, and socializing with colleagues by going away on trips or partying. But she had been doing these things for so long that she felt she had finished with doing *nothing but* that. After the adoption she feels that she contributes more to society than before. She has become involved with the local community, and she feels closer to her husband and her own parents. Inga talks about this in terms of an increased quality of life.

In Inga's opinion, people without children live in a different world from those with children. Unless you have children, life tends to focus on one's own person and one's own needs, and there is every opportunity to become extremely self-centred and superficial. Inga has tried to communicate to others the experience she gains from touching the tiny hands of a child, or from having a child talk to her, and has been met with phrases like "Oh, how charming, but have you read that book?"

In contrast to some of the childfree women's definitions, the adoptive mothers I interviewed defined "family" as a couple with one or more children. Whereas one of the childfree women understands family to be a household, even a single person's household, and someone else feels that she has a family because she has parents, the adoptive mothers distinguish between singles, couples and families (see also Moxnes 1990:28).[8] Having a family means having a child and is about wanting to care for others, to take responsibility for someone else, and not wanting to live their lives as a twosome. The statement "That's how it is in society – you *are* families..." says something about how difficult it is to put the wish for children into words. Inga expresses some of this difficulty when she says: "Being a family is like being allowed to love more than one person and being allowed to be loved in return. Sharing big and small joys. You have to experience that to understand." Not making any point of the fact that everyone has been a child and that almost everyone has had parents, Inga says that being a mother is something you must have experienced to be able to fathom. To her, having children is a matter which gives little room for negotiations. Media expert Wenche Mühleisen points out that in the 1970s it was possible to reflect on reproduction and the freedom to choose. A few decades later discussions on *whether* to have children are rarer. To the extent that there is a debate on this issue at all these days, it concerns *when* to have children and *how* to better organize your day with the children, says Mühleisen (1996:37). This statement is supported by research which shows that in the 1980s and 90s, 89% of Norwegian women had in fact given birth (Sundby and Lund 1989; Sundby & Schei 1996).[9] When Inga states that wanting children is a matter of course, to the extent that the motives are virtually impossible to verbalize, this can obviously also serve as an exclusion strategy in relation to childfree women.

Do the Childfree Choose to be Childfree?

When I first embarked upon this project, an involuntarily childless friend commented that I would need to watch out for how childfree women explained their choice to be childfree. In reality, said my friend, these are often women who have tried for a child, but who have had to give up, and who re-write history. My friend pointed to a clear problem: we all re-write our lives in order to make our autobiographies coherent. Memory is plastic in that respect. A failure 25 years ago can later be presented as something completely differ-

ent, something extremely positive, which has helped us develop and become better persons. Time grinds our stories; they become smoother and more easily handled. However, having said that, this project is based on a presumption that some women actually do not want children and that some women do.

Saying something about why you do not want children may be just as difficult as saying something about why you want children. The most common popular explanations are either related to health: that the woman (or her partner) has a disease which she or he does not want to pass down to their offspring; related to global population issues; or related to the desire to have a career (Veevers 1980; see also Blom and Noack 1992:47).

To what extent is it possible to talk about rational choices in connection with childfreedom? Jean Veevers classifies childfree women as either *rejectors* or *postponers* (1980:157f.). The rejectors reject a life with children before embarking on marriage or a cohabiting relationship, their decisions are made irrespective of their current marital and work situation, and their husband or partner fully agrees. The postponers postpone pregnancy in a gradual process, their husband or partner is not necessarily in complete agreement, and pregnancy may become acceptable should the living situation change (partner, work, housing).

Lise, who is in her late 30s, is the informant who is closest to being a *rejector*. She is a researcher at a high international level, and her career has been an active choice. Nevertheless, Lise emphasizes that she understands that the relationship between a woman and her child is unique, and that the happiest moments in life may be related to giving birth and living with children. She can see fragments of happiness relating to giving birth and having children, but is not attracted to the idea as a whole:

> I can see that there are tempting things on the other side of the fence, but then again, I certainly live a good life as well. I have my freedom, I can sleep late in the morning, I can go out in the evenings, and I can travel at any time. It doesn't matter if I get ill. There are such a lot of little things. If I wake up ill one day, I think [...]: "what if I had a couple of kids running round here". And even the thought of that is horrendous [*laughter*]. I feel incredibly privileged in my illness, just being able to lie back and know that there is no one to worry about but myself.

Lise is not a clear-cut rejector. She has not decided once and for all that she will not have children. She recognizes that things hypothetically may change, but states that so far they have not, even if her current situation in life is optimal in relation to having children: she has a permanent job, a nice home and a "self-perpetuating" career. When she meets a new partner, Lise never asks herself whether this man will live up to the role of a potential father. In general, she meets men who "have no need to reproduce", often because they already have children from previous relationships. She believes they feel at ease with her, precisely because she has no ulterior procreational agenda.

Whereas Lise states relatively clearly that not wanting children is her basic stance, Thale, an academic in her mid-forties, uses another strategy for responding to questions about possible pregnancies. Such questions can often come from one's own parents, who are anxious to become grandparents. Thale's mother had a couple of American evening dresses lying in the attic:

> ... and they're simply adorable ... you know, doll's dresses with twenty layers of light blue tulle adorned with the cutest little decorations. And my mum said ... she's always been quite good in a way ... But then she said: "Should I hang on to them just for a

little while longer?" "Yes, I think you should!" And that calmed her down. And I suppose I've never actually said that I'm never going to have children. But I have said that I won't be having children in the foreseeable future.

Thale does not want to be so naive as to think that it is possible to plan her life in detail. She wants to keep the door ajar into the world of possibilities. At the same time, her stance is sufficiently clear for her to have been able to answer her mother: "No, why don't you just give those dresses to my cousin's children?" or words to that effect. She could have been more confrontational, but does not want to rob her mother of the hope of having grandchildren. Also, she is worried about offending others if she were to answer: "No, I don't like children. I don't want to spend time on raising them", as this might have been perceived as offensive to their own children and their own choices. Consequently, she chooses the postponement strategy. It is however difficult for Thale to envisage bringing children into a society which she does not particularly like. She is critical towards commercialization and the depletion of natural resources. Her choice is not about waiting till she has found "the right man". Her current husband has told her that if she wants children, that would be fine, just like her first husband, who himself did *not* want children. She is the one who has had to say: "No, to be honest, is it all right if I don't?"

Thale's stance is clear, whereas Helen and Gro point out the accidental nature of their childfree status. Helen, also an academic in her late 40s, says she would have had children if she had met the right man, a man who wanted children and whose children she wanted. Gro, on the other hand, believes that "the right man" would have unleashed a wish for children in her, and the child would have arrived "like a bullet". Gro, an editor in her late 40s, believes that wanting children is not always a specific wish for a child. It may just as well be a wish to be closer to a person one is fond of, and to create something with that person. Gro had her coil taken out recently, when she met "the right man". She is searching for words when she is trying to explain why she made this choice, and she ends up by saying that she wanted to "treat herself" to living her last fertile years without having to arrange for contraception.

We have been looking at different ways of relating to being childfree. Some of the women can be said to have postponed pregnancy. However, the term *postponement* has been criticized for implying that the women really want children, but are postponing it (Morell 1994:50). Thale's example shows us that there are several reasons for making it look like a postponement, for example to avoid offending others who have children themselves. But postponement seems to be a correct term when the woman accepts that "the right man", her romantic half, may awaken a yearning for a child and a nuclear family.

Other People's Perception of Childfreedom

The woman on the television programme talks about the care and love she has felt for a younger sister, feelings that "fill your whole body to a bursting point". She says that she has confronted mothers with this and their response has been: "Ok, so you know what it's about, 'cause that's how it is, really!" She says that she cares for plants, and that she and her husband, when they go round the house in the evening turning out the lights, talk between themselves: "Oh, look at that one. It's come on a lot hasn't it, and there's buds coming as well, look, and *that* one's doing well, and what do you think we should do about … that one

there has got a problem." It seems to me that she is worried that I, the viewer, will fail to identify her as a human being with feelings and capacity for compassion. The childfree women I have talked to have also commented on what other people think of them. Perhaps the woman on the television screen has met attitudes towards her own childfreedom which drive her to articulate her normality. Gro told me about an episode that happened to her when she was in a bar with a female friend. A man was chatting her up:

> And then he says: "This is the woman of my life!" And you know, he's really pissed and more or less throws himself at me. He can't keep his eyes off me all evening, and of course I think this is really entertaining. And in the end he asks: "And have you got any children?" And I say ... I had actually told him that I was [in my late 40s], and that proved to be quite unforgivable as well, you know ... a bit old ... But if I had any children. "No" I said, "I haven't got any children." And neither had my friend at the time. And then he says: "Yuck, childless women are the most disgusting people I know!" [*laughter*] I found that extremely funny. So you know, that was the end of my potential prince charming.

Gro says that she is not really offended by this, but that she perhaps finds it somewhat irritating that she "loses a point or two" when potential partners learn about her childfreedom. She feels that by being childfree, she falls into the category of being "dangerous" or "eerie". At her male-dominated workplace, Lise also has to face the music from time to time:

> My closest male colleagues keep telling me that my time is about to run out. Of course, I find it utterly *beyond comprehension* that they should say that my time is about to run out. That's not what I feel. [...] Some of them are quite brutal, and say things like "in a few years you won't be attractive as a woman any more". To me that's a completely incomprehensible way of thinking. [...] In a few years [...] I won't be attractive as a *mother to their children anymore*! [...] But I would in fact say that unless I age unexpectedly fast, I'll still be attractive as a women to men of an appropriate age. [...] Yes ... so you see I do get a bit of brutality, because [...] a woman [...] is frequently measured in relation to whether she has children or not.

Lise points out that she feels they are quite brutal, but that she is glad she knows how they think. Nevertheless, she wishes that they would respect her choice. She also observes that her male childfree colleagues escape the sort of comments that she gets. The question of age is related to gender to the utmost degree (Tjørnhøi-Thomsen 1998:76). For, as she says:

> *Their* biological clocks aren't ticking away. That's what they think. The fact is that with today's medical science, I'd say that *their* biological clocks are ticking at the same pace as *ours*. [...] In theory, today's medical advances would make it possible for me to have children when I'm 65. ... If I was desperate enough.

Of course, Lise's colleagues know this. But this knowledge has not yet suppressed the popular view that male fertility and sexuality is timeless while women's ability to reproduce is linked to a relatively young body (Lundin 1997). This is why so many people are provoked by the Italian grandmothers who give birth in their 60s: they are cheating time! However, a greater concern to Lise's colleagues is that they think she does want children, deep inside. They seem to believe that she really does not know what is best for her. Her male colleagues feel it is unnatural for her not to have children, and that it is extremely unnatural for her not to even be wanting children. Not only is infertility taboo; it is perhaps even more of a taboo to say that you have no wish for children.

Children? Career? Both? All Wrong

The childfree women make up a small group. They have, more or less by chance and more or less consciously, made unusual choices which may be problematic or provoking to others. The majority of women make, more or less by chance and more or less consciously, a choice to have children. Having children is considered by many as the norm and as the natural thing to do. But what are the childfree women's thoughts on whether it is natural to have children?

I had expected the childfree women to question the normality and intrinsicality of having children to a greater extent than proved to be the case. However, the childfree women feel that the wish to reproduce is intrinsic to plants, animals and human beings, and that the wish to have children is a strong driving force in human beings. Thale refers to an anatomy study which found that male shoulders are constructed slightly different and that this makes men better throwers, that men have better distance vision whereas women have better near vision and superior multitasking abilities. Thale maintains that this proves women are capable of withstanding more stress and are able to handle multiple tasks simultaneously (nurse babies, look after an elderly mother and cook dinner). Nevertheless, she also maintains that it is fully possible for a man to acquire this capacity for multitasking.

The women also feel that the development has gone in the wrong direction as far as men's and women's roles are concerned. Lise is primarily concerned with women and how they have gone astray in their attempts to combine children with a career:

> The women I see [at work] look as if they're extremely unhappy with their children. These are often women who might have been better off as housewives, or they would have been much better off if they didn't have any children. But then there's expectations and opinions on both sides that this is how it should be. Women today, particularly women with a good education, *must* be fully active and they *must* have children and they *must* do everything. Very few people can handle that role. [Women should] be more conscious of their choices [...]. If you choose to become a mother, that's a good choice, actually it's a fantastic choice, and I hear mothers who say that they could never even envisage life without children. Then they look at me and say: "but *you* haven't got this, which I treasure so deeply". But why then should they be entitled to what I've got [...]?

Lise feels that men are much more conscious of their own choices: they know how to prioritize and to pursue their goals and to settle for the choices they have made. Lise maintains that women, as a group, tend always to want something more, over and above what they have already. Women fail to live their lives because they always want to be something else. They never come to terms with their body, they never come to terms with their ageing, and they never come to terms with their career. [...]. In Lise's opinion, women are never really true to themselves in that respect. Lise's idea of men being more conscious and more purposeful and women less so may be commenting on the fact that contemporary women's repertoire is large, but the possibilities are as numerous many as we like to think. If a woman chooses to become a mother not pursuing a career, or if she chooses a career, or if she chooses both, they may all be regarded as wrong decisions.

Thale agrees with Lise to some extent, but argues from another point of view. She feels that women with children end up in a difficult situation whatever they choose to do. If they choose to stay at home for a number of years, employers (the employers that Thale relates to) will label them as unserious. If they choose to

combine small children with a job, they will wear themselves out:

Thale: [A]ll the women I know who try to combine a full-time job with small children, they're always a bit behind.

Tove: Always a bit tired?

Thale: Always a bit tired. Always, you know, "I don't know if I'll have the energy to come." "No, we'll see", and that sort of thing.

Tove: "My wee lad is poorly"...

Thale: Yes, and: "No, I just can't plan for that". Or: "No, I can't come 'cause he's got a temperature again", or his having a tooth or not having a tooth, or hernia, or something like that. And if your husband is of the type who never comes home, or is away on business or is working late and that sort of thing, then they're stuck. And they wish they had a permanent nanny.

Thale cannot bear the thought of having a guilty conscience because you really ought to be at home when you are at work and vice versa, nor the stress involved with having to phone work and say that you're sorry, but you can't get to that meeting in time after all because you can't find your son's teddy, without which you cannot leave home.

Helen believes that the wish to have a child says something about wanting to compensate for the losses that life brings. It is less common to want a child for the sake of the child. For brief periods she has wanted a child herself. When her boyfriend left her, she considered having a child without necessarily living in a relationship. Then it occurred to her that these thoughts were related to the need for a loving relationship, the need to be close to a man, not to a child, and that it would be wrong of her to expect a child to fulfil this need. In many ways, Helen feels *more* stigmatized by living without a partner than by living without a child, and Thale has also experienced exclusion when socializing as a single woman:

Thale: You're invited to somewhere, and then people say, "Is there anyone you'd like to bring with you?" "No, thanks. I'd be happy to come on my own." "Yes, but isn't there anyone you'd like to bring with you?" Implying that "we're going to have this posh supper with couples and set tables and all that, so you do need to bring a man." [*Both laugh*]. I've experienced that.

It seems as if the stereotypes which stuck to single women in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, emphasizing the single woman's anomaly (Hellesund 2003), still thrive. The childfree women, in many ways marginalized, hit back by bringing up in what is many ways a provocative issue. On the one hand, the childfree women conform to the notion of biological femininity, a feminine nature, which they have opted not to fall in line with. On the other hand, they criticize society as it has become: that many women with children live under unbearable pressures, drawn between their children, their husband and their job, and children are often used as substitutes for a non-existent romantic relationship. This somewhat out-of-the-ordinary standpoint increases the temperature in the debate on equal opportunities for women and men.

Complete Disassociation

The picture of the 35-year-old with the wild hair lingers on the television screen. She looks into the camera and says: "In a way, we're like outsiders in the family because [we haven't got any children] and, to some extent we are, perhaps unconsciously, not seen as part of the acceptable social circle." Childfree women face other people's attitudes on childfreedom and on socializing without a partner. Both may close some social doors. What is problematic about adult women without a child?

On the one hand we see a yearning for a

strong nuclear family constellation. Many go through painful treatments, waiting, hopes and disappointments in order to experience motherhood, which to many seems to be a significant constituent of femininity. It may seem as if pregnancy and childbirth define womanhood and femininity, while at the same time consolidating a loving relationship to a partner. Involuntarily childless women will to a greater extent relate infertility and involuntary childlessness to loss of gender identity (Tjørnhøi-Thomsen 1998:83) and loss of the good life. They will feel that motherhood is the ultimate source of an adult woman's identity (Gillis 1996:174), and an adult woman without a child may be considered an incomplete woman. This tells us something about the dominating status of biology and the reproductive functions in the construction of gender. The picture is not unambiguous, however: on the other hand there is a small group of well educated, highly articulate childfree women who argue that motherhood does not represent the most important element in the concept of femininity. Lise makes perhaps the most specific statement when she says that she has lately come to appreciate her bodily changes through the month more than ever before: "I am *more* of a woman now than I've ever been. Yet I have never been further away from the thought of having a child."

Nevertheless, a number of the people surrounding the childfree women believe that being childfree implies that some pieces are missing from the femininity puzzle. This may be related to the fact that childfree women fail to match up to a cultural expectation that women have an intrinsic, intense wish to have children. What makes childfreedom somewhat difficult for others to relate to may be its implication of sexual activity and sensual pleasure completely disassociated from procreation. Anthony Giddens maintains that sexuality has already become autonomized, in that its association with reproduction, as well as with death (death in childbirth), has been discontinued. Giddens mentions however that AIDS has formed a new connection between sexuality and death, and a number of other researchers (Lundin 1997; Tjørnhøi-Thomsen 1998) point out that an extended period of trying, unsuccessfully, to become pregnant, forges a very direct relationship between sexuality and reproduction. To the childfree woman, however, the disassociation is complete; contraception is not used for a limited period of time, but for all the foreseeable future. The more or less random choices may seem provocative to many – and perhaps even provocative to the entire heterosexual regime. Childfree women will never have sexual intercourse for procreational purposes, only for sensual pleasure. They have taken their sexual appetite and desire for sensual gratification aboard and made these feelings their own, much in the same way that childfree men have always done without ever being held to ransom. Is this what makes women's choice to be childfree so difficult to handle for the people around them – so awkward for us others to accept?

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Notes

1 The Teletubbies are large creatures well known from children's television throughout Europe. The Norwegian original refers to "Labbetuss",

which is a large, teddy-like dog well known for appearances on national Norwegian children's television over a number of years.

2 The topic was first presented in the conference "Bodies, Pleasure and Public Health", held at the Swedish Institute in Athens, 20–26 May 2000. The conference was organized by Georg Drakos who has also contributed useful comments on this article.

3 Some statistical literature makes a distinction between temporary and permanent childlessness (Noack & Østby 1983:12). A temporarily childless woman is any woman of child-bearing age who has yet to have a child, while a permanently childless woman is a woman who "at the end of her child-bearing age has never given birth" (ibid.). A woman's child-bearing age is considered to end in her 50s. If I were to adopt this set of concepts, the childfree informants in my project should all have been over 50 years of age. However, today's technology has made it possible for women to give birth far beyond this age, and consequently I have opted not to relate to the concepts of temporary and permanent childlessness, which were in use almost 20 years ago.

4 I have not found any childfree associations in Norway, although such associations do exist, for instance in Great Britain (Noack & Østby 1983:7) and in the USA.

5 I have conducted qualitative interviews with all informants. The interviews were recorded on tape and transcribed in their entirety. The informants have received a copy of the transcriptions for review and approval. One of the informants made certain corrections regarding word choice and punctuation, and made deletions. All informants have signed a statement of informed approval based on the guidelines issued by the National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (2003). All informants maintain their anonymity in the text, in the sense that they have fictitious names.

6 From the point of view of research ethics, quoting specific Internet forum contributions would be fraught with difficulties (Fjell 2005). In order to ask for permission to quote, I would have needed access to the contributor's e-mail address, which is not always attached to their messages. This article will therefore not include *quotations* from forum contributions. Also, my impression is that the contributors are seeking not to raise problems, but rather to confirm themselves and their views on these pages. Difficult topics (smoking during pregnancy or adopted children's need for contact with biological parents) may well be raised, but only in an unconfrontational manner. When smoking during pregnancy was raised as a topic (www.snartgravid.com), the forum operator deleted the debate after a while. When someone who was adopted as a child initiated a number of discussions (www.doktoronline.no) which among other things questioned the role played by adoption associations in relation to adoptions from abroad, the forum operator eventually excluded the contributor and deleted his/her previous contributions. The forum operator received a number of thank-you messages.

7 The marriage criterion is found in the Norwegian Adoption Act, §§5–5a. There is also a possibility of adopting as a single person, and it has recently been made possible for registered partners to adopt each others child, unless the child is adopted from a state that does not allow adoption by non-married persons.

8 The definition of "family" is subject to continual negotiations. In her book *Att leva med risk: Fem kvinnor, gentester och kunskapens frukter* (1998), anthropologist Lisbeth Sachs discusses perhaps the most recent understanding of "family". With today's focus on hereditary qualities, DNA patterns and gene testing, the molecular family becomes central. Shared hereditary qualities decide who are defined as part of the family. As Sachs points out, the molecular family is less inclusive than the traditional nuclear family consisting of mother, father and children.

9 A study undertaken by Sundby and Lund (1989) in 1984–85 found that out of their sample of 403 women born in 1944–49, 92.5% had been pregnant and 89.8% had given birth to live babies. Involuntarily childless and voluntarily childfree women made up a combined total of 10.2%. A study undertaken by Sundby and Schei (1996) in 1992–93 found that out of their sample of 4,034 women born in 1950–52, 89.1% had given birth to one child or more, while 2.6% considered themselves to be involuntarily childless and 8.3% considered themselves to be voluntarily childfree.

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The Price of Burnout or Burnout as Prize

The Limitations and Possibilities of Long-term Sick Leave

By Mia-Marie Lundén

An increasing number of people now find themselves excluded from the ordinary labour market. Many welfare states struggle with a rise in unemployment, as well as an increase in the number of people on sick leave. In Sweden, the number of people signed off sick has risen considerably since the end of the 1990s, and there is a tendency for them to be absent from the labour market for longer periods of time.[1] The theoretician, Richard Sennett, has pointed out that work is expected to provide an answer to the recurring question, "Who am I?" At the same time, he maintains that the chances of an individual finding personal satisfaction through his or her work have decreased in recent years. Increased flexibility, the abolition of hierarchies and being able to choose your own hours, put many people in stressful situations where they feel inadequate and unimportant (Sennett 2003). A similar argument is underway in the current political and media debate concerning the high number of people on long-term sick leave in Sweden. Many maintain that the demands of the labour market have been too high, that the tempo has increased at the same time as opportunities for recovery have diminished, and that these factors have contributed to illness. The fact that more people are now being signed off sick for psychological problems is seen as further confirmation of this view.

The challenge of an ethnological analysis is to take people's own life situation as the starting point for acquiring an understanding of larger problem complexes of similar character. Is it possible to capture the actual process by carrying out analyses at local and individual level? What are the limitations and possibilities of those who are ill and on sick leave? Is it possible to identify the formation of new cultural patterns in these contexts? In this article, I try to find answers to these questions. The article is based on fieldwork undertaken among people who have suffered "burnout" and who have also made use of this position to establish themselves in the public eye; putting themselves on the map through creative art, use of the media or by arranging courses.[2]

Variations of Security

Concurrent with the rise in the number of people on sick leave, a new syndrome of diffuse and difficult-to-explain stress symptoms catapulted to the forefront and a new diagnosis emerged: burnout.[3] Even though the phenomenon is not new, this particular term does not appear in previous classifications of illness listed by the social insurance authorities. The concept of burnout, however, is now used as a generic term for stress-related complaints in everyday speech and particularly in the media.[4] The interdisciplinary research project, Trygghetens variationer [Variations of Security][5] was formed as a result of the emergence of this new type of illness, and is mainly concerned with investigating the different regional variations of sick leave. In simplified form, it can be ascertained that the sickness rates are much higher in Jämtland (in northern Sweden) than they are in Småland (central southern Sweden); something that cannot solely be accounted for by labour markets and business structures. In the report entitled *Att leva på kassan – Allmän försäkring och lokal kultur* (2005), [Living Off Benefits – Social Insurance and Local Culture], ethnologists and project participants Jonas Frykman and Kjell Hansen maintain that every new incidence of sick leave occurs between the individual and the local culture; the process roots the individual more firmly in a local pattern. This is why this article takes its starting point in the local region. Focusing

mainly on Jämtland, the study not only looks at local environments to see how burnout is institutionalised, but also how this particular phenomenon is experienced.

Losing One's Footing

Suffering burnout means considerable losses for the individual. Those who are affected lose a sense of connection or context and fellowship. In other words, they lose their sense of meaning and purpose. Regular hourly and daily rhythms vanish. Self-esteem, joy and interest are often short-lived and fleeting states that can rapidly change to self-contempt, sadness and anxiety. At best, the only thing that remains is a body that, to some degree, still functions; at worst, the body doesn't function at all. Some experience debilitating palpitations and dizziness; rather like treading water in an attempt to stay afloat. Others take to their beds for a week, a month, or sometimes even for a whole year. Very slowly, chaos is replaced by order. It is somewhere here that the need to understand, to go over, to recapitulate, reverse the tape and analyse is also awakened. What has actually happened? What have I been through? Who am I now?

As in many other situations, those affected seek out others who find themselves similarly placed; understanding and sympathy gain a foothold between people who have shared the same experience, especially as burnout is sometimes regarded as a kind of exaggeration. In Sweden, this has led to the emergence of informal networks, often initiated by women. One such network exists in Östersund, in Jämtland, and has acquired the name *Malvorna* [The Mallows]. Members of the network know what it feel like to limp through the day, when the body goes on strike, and when you feel that everyone has deserted you. They also know, however, what it means to be part of a new fellowship and what it feels like to be included, respected and accepted by others in a similar situation. The analysis that follows not only touches upon this networking activity, but also another area closely connected to rehabilitation: the artistic expression of healing through painting. In addition to the losses experienced by people on long-term sick leave, there are also a number of unexpected dividends. Some people find that the illness and the life-crisis that comes with it open up new opportunities and ways of communicating. All of a sudden, time that can be filled with new meaning is available.

Even Burned-out Women Can!

Malvorna is a health project that directs itself to ten women-dominated public sector workplaces in Jämtland. The aim, according to the colourful information leaflet, is "to develop models and methods as early warning systems to prevent work-related illness among women in the public sector". Work is already in full swing when we arrive at the spacious premises in an old yellow stone-built house in central Östersund. Pictures and posters challenging you to grasp life's possibilities, work towards a society of equal opportunities, and acknowledge that women are equal to men, hang on the walls. Associations with the Swedish "Women Can" movement of the 1990s can be made. A group of middle-aged women sit around a large conference table and draw up the weekly plan. A total of ten women are involved in the project; six of them being present today. Kristina, who leads the work, leafs through her diary and hands out photocopied papers. Eva takes over from her when she later disappears from the room. It is clear that she is an obvious leading figure. She doesn't need to ask for attention. She also establishes her neutrality in both words and

actions – she too has experienced long periods of sick leave and is still signed off sick half-time. But she's not one of them. She is their manager. When we later leave the premises, Eva apologises for their insatiable need to dwell on their problems. During the meeting I get a glimpse of what Eva means. I ask everyone around the table to briefly describe their case history and quickly realise that it can't be described in brief. It needs time – a lot of time. It has to be recounted in full and in detail; otherwise it's not a case history. Hours pass. I scribble notes as quickly as I can. Five out of the six women present have stress-related diagnoses and one has cancer. A woman who has been diagnosed as suffering from "stress and pain-related depression" looks at Majvor who has cancer and says:

"I sometimes wish that I had cancer so that people would at least believe that I'm unwell and am ill. It's terrible to think like this, but it would make things much easier."

Majvor adds: "Yes, I can understand that and its true. Cancer is a recognised illness, so I can go to town and walk around – even though I'm tired of people feeling sorry for me all the time..."

Maide, who has been diagnosed as having stress-related depression, says that strangely enough she was glad when she started to have problems with her heart and it was registered through an ECG-test. "I remember thinking that people might now believe that I was ill."

Sally has had a number of diagnoses and has therefore experienced changes in people's attitudes: "When I had a slipped disc in my neck, nobody thought it at all strange that I was signed off sick. When I was later diagnosed as having tennis elbow [lateral epicondylalgia], that was also OK. But when it comes to stress and pain-related depression, people just think it's crazy."

Eva says that stress-related depression is a low-status diagnosis, while cancer is almost a select diagnosis. Lack of knowledge creates uncertainty and prejudice, she says. Everyone just thinks that those suffering from burnout cost the taxpayer money. A person's social worth vanishes when they are worn out and depressed, because it means that they have nothing to contribute. The women suffering from burnout agree with that: it would have been easier to look people in the eye, to go out and about and talk about your illness if it had been of a physical nature. They say that they constantly feel themselves belittled by people. Folk show a lack of understanding and think that people with burnout are too preoccupied with themselves.

"But you don't choose to be signed off sick because you're lazy, for God's sake! The losses are too great for that", says one woman indignantly.
(From field notes)

East, West, Home is Best

Having an invisible illness with psychological and psychosomatic symptoms does not bode well, at least in this particular region. It would have been different if it had been a matter of a broken leg rather than a broken soul. Burn-out, or stress-related depression as it is often described on the doctor's medical certificate, is a state that leads to raised eyebrows. Trying to give adequate responses to people's questions can be difficult, especially when you yourself are not really sure how the whole thing came about. Why did this happen to me? Why am I dizzy, have headaches, fainting fits and palpitations even though the medical examination of my body showed that I was physically fit? Why can't I get myself together and go to work, like a normal person? Richard Shweder expresses the duality between the strength and transparency of feelings in a sympathetic and poetic way:

frayed nerves, tired blood, splitting heads, and broken hearts [are] metonymies of suffering; they give...expressions by means of body-part metaphors to forms of embodied suffering experience through the body parts used to express them... [but] splitting heads do not split, broken hearts do not break, tired blood continues to circulate at the same rate, and frayed nerves show no structural pathology (Geertz Clifford, *Available Light*, 2000:212).

Feeling ill isn't always the same thing as being ill; at least not if you look at it according to the physiological concept of illness. In many cases, the burned-out patient can demonstrate their fully functioning physical constitution to medical science at the same time as feeling as if their body is letting them down; that their legs don't work, that their heart beats unevenly, that they haven't got enough air in their lungs. However, it becomes less meaningful to try to dismiss the condition as something invented or constructed by regarding it as a psychosomatic complaint, a cultural disease, or a socially transferable condition (Ferrada-Noli 2004). This type of derivation doesn't lessen the intensity, or the authenticity for that matter, of the affected person's experience of illness. A psychosomatic state of mind, deep anxiety or depression is just as real as any other illness in the sense that it is *lived* and *experienced* by the patient. It is well-known that a protracted psychological affliction can also affect bodily functions; a depression can, for example, manifest itself physically through repeated colds as a result of a lowering of the body's immune system. In similar vein, a physically broken body is just as likely to give rise to psychological problems.

Body and soul are not two separate zones with mystical and cause-effect connections, but a holistic whole, says the philosopher and phenomenologist, Fredrik Svenaeus. In the book, *Sjukdomens mening* (2003) [The Meaning of Illness], he likens the formulation "psycho-somatic" to a dualistic spectre that leads our thoughts in the wrong direction. Svenaeus rather regards illness – irrespective of whether it is cancer or stress-related depression – as a phenomenon that tears life's patterns of meaning apart. The body is our place and space in the everyday and in the world, it is our home; a centre for our home-being, he says. It is this that is torn apart in and with illness and throws us into involuntary exile; a state that Svenaeus calls *homelessness*:

> It's about homeless feelings where taking your place in the world finds great resistance. The world's strangeness not only makes itself known around us but also within us. The body appears as something incomprehensible, something that hinders my home-like way of existence, something that in addition to being myself is also something that I am not the master of (Svenaeus 2003:82).

The world is a pattern of meaning, a reference structure between mechanisms (things). The body plays a central role in the maintenance of these structures in that it is mobile, it relates to and uses the things that surround it. It is the body that makes my life happen. When the body fails it becomes a stranger, while at the same time it is still me; it throws me into a lost, homeless state that I can't find my way out of because I remain in my body (Svenaeus 2003:83).

In the book entitled *Stigma* (1972), the social psychologist, Erving Goffman, formulates his ideas about the deviant's role and identity that differs from Svenaeus' philosophy in several respects. Where, for example, Goffman takes great interest in practises and categories, Svenaeus devotes himself to experiences and moods. But Goffman's more resolute view of the stigmatisation of those who are ill, and in some way deviant,[6] is still applicable to Svenaeus' concept of homelessness. The stigma makes the sick person homeless, and at the same time as the stigmatised person experiences their homelessness, life takes a new direction with a new tacit goal: to search for, and hopefully also find, a new home.

Goffman would very probably have categorised the stigma of burnout as "stains on a person's character" (Goffman 1972:14).[7] On the basis of knowledge about these stains, "the

normal" makes certain assumptions about the person affected, which in turn often leads to discriminating measures of various kinds. The main aim of such discriminating measures is to reduce the sick person's life possibilities. We – the normal ones – create an ideology, or a stigma theory that amounts to explaining the affected person's inferiority while at the same time convincing ourselves of the danger that he or she represents. It probably has something to do with unintentional processes, but that nevertheless define the person encumbered with the stigma as not completely human; i.e. they don't belong to Us Healthy, but instead represent The Others, or The Sick. So in which direction should those who are stigmatised turn after losing their home and their citizenship in the kingdom of the healthy?[8] When contact with "the normal" becomes increasingly strained and on the verge of untenable, it is natural, maintains Goffman, for those who are affected to seek out others who suffer from the same stigma as themselves. It is as though the members of a certain stigma category have a general tendency to gather together in socially closed groups, recruited from that particular category alone:

> The first group of sympathetic fellow beings are, of course, those who have the same stigma as the person themselves. As a result of their own experience, they know just what it is like to have that special stigma, some can offer guidance as to how you cope with the stigma, and the availability of a group of sympathisers to which he or she can turn to for moral support and to feel that they are at ease and at home, and acknowledged as being as normal a person as anyone else (1972:28).

In the company of "their own", those who are stigmatised can relax, feel at peace and be accepted; they can feel at *home*, writes Goffman. Informal association is often developed over a period of time into a more composite organisation, with an explicit policy, carefully prepared ideology, political aspirations, spokespersons and publications. Today, in Sweden, you can find established organisations for everything from shopping addicts and single fathers to dyslectics and those hypersensitive to magnetic fields. Perhaps the network Malvorna, in Östersund, can be regarded as a way of creating a sense of belonging in an otherwise homeless existence, and the possibility of working out new patterns of meaning in the brokenness of humanity's presence-in-the world.

Inside Outsidership

Changes associated with the stigmatisation contribute to the affected individuals being placed in new relations with regard to those rules and regulations that are taken for granted when it comes to human interaction (Goffman 1972:137). A number of interpretations and reinterpretations of the social rules occur when the affected person is increasingly obliged to identify with their isolation or 'outsidership', mainly because it is constantly being confirmed by the 'insidership' of others. Through their very existence, the normal – in this case working, healthy individuals – emphasise the deviant person's subordinate position. Those who are stigmatised are forced into resorting to new survival strategies. The development of networks can, as has already been mentioned, be seen as a way of creating a sense of belonging in an otherwise homeless existence, although it is probably also a survival strategy where the network meetings become a kind of acceptable, alternative work. Devoting yourself to organisational activities is, in all respects, a socially and culturally accepted form of occupation, both in the kingdoms of the normal and the deviant.

Network colleagues can be likened to deputy workmates. You drink coffee with

them, open your heart, exchange gossip and news, plan and carry out projects. A sense of response and sympathy is created within your own group, where every member demonstrates empathy and sympathy for the other person's situation and mood. But what actually happens to recovery when sick people keep company with others who are ill, day after day, month after month, year in and year out? What are the benefits – and the losses – of such female groupings? Kristina, one of Malvorna's leaders, talks openly about the advantages of being on sick leave, as well as the disadvantages and risks of being off sick on a long-term basis and being part of a network where you only meet people who find themselves in the same predicament:

All of a sudden you have time for the family, husband and children that you perhaps felt were neglected previously. You also have time for yourself. And you think that it's really nice to go to network meets where there's lots of support, appreciation and care.

We sit down at the table and I ask whether it is OK if I take notes. She nods, and says almost to herself:

I wonder whether this network is really very worthwhile. It might perhaps be good right at the beginning when you feel at your worst because it is then you really need to talk about it. You think that going to network meets is great because you get attention and are cared for. It's good in that first, acute phase. But after that, you shouldn't really need to keep going!

The network shouldn't become an institution for members who sit and dwell on their problems year out and year in, says Kristina. The risk of getting stuck in that is great. Perhaps there should be a time-limited membership, she muses.

"If you have decided that this is all there is, you stay in the network in order to convince yourself that you can develop, within the network. But just meeting other people in the same situation is not always very healthy. I can get so tired of just going over and over the same old things."

"What do you mean by deciding that this is all there is? I ask.

"Oh, well that's just what it's like. With illness you have a choice. Either you put your efforts into getting well again or you give up. There are only two ways to go. If you want to get well, you have to struggle and make an effort all the time. I mean that you make a conscious or subconscious decision to continue being ill or to get well. But it's really a very sensitive issue! I can't say such things to Malvorna."

Kristina says that the women who suffer from burnout would never return to the association if the leadership suddenly started talking about these options.

"We have to take care of them so that they feel they can come here, and they have to be able to delve into their problems when they are here", she says. Discussing these issues openly with people who have been ill for a long time and whose self-esteem is at rock-bottom is not easy, explains Kristina, who has some understanding of escaping from recovery. Identifying yourself with illness can sometimes be the only security there is to hold on to.

(From field notes)

From Burnout to Stress Pedagogue

Kristina has herself been through a stress-related depression that led to a long-term sick leave period of four years, but today she has almost completely recovered. Training as a stress-pedagogue during sick leave was the turning point for her and meant a return to work. She says that after the initial and acute phase of the illness and being off sick, she decided that she wanted to recover; a decision that meant a daily struggle with fatigue, anxiety and pain. Slowly but surely, she made her way back to the kingdom of the healthy, at the same time as she, ironically enough, became well enough to devote her days to taking care of other people's vulnerable identification with illness. She had previously worked as a systems analyst and painter, but now, as a

former burnout patient, has also become a leader for others in similar situations.

Eva has a comparable background. She set up *Malvorna* and is one of its leaders. She is an enthusiastic, energetic and articulate person, who today uses her experiences of long-term sick leave and burnout for business-like purposes. Through her eagerness to formulate and her desire for debate, she has become the outward-looking face of people in the local community suffering from burnout and on long-term sick leave. She appears in public, writes articles in the local newspaper, has been interviewed by the national press and gives lectures at seminars and conferences. She has, to borrow one of Goffman's metaphors, stopped using her stigma as a crutch and has instead started to play golf with it (1972:35). At the meeting with Malvorna, it was quite clear that Eva didn't identify herself as one of the women in the network, but as their leader, even though she herself is on half-time sick leave. She practices what might be called conscious or subconscious distancing strategies, through talking about the network members as "them" and being critical of "their" never-ending need to talk about their problems.

Eva is a little more talkative and more well-known than the other members and has thus become a natural representative for her group, as well as indirectly becoming the spokeswoman for an entire stigmatised category. Parallel to the shaping of the role of main representative, a gap also appears between the leaders and her group; she suddenly finds that the activities demand all her time and that she has become a specialist in the field. Through her professional approach and participation in social life with "the normal", she in some ways ceases to be a representative for the people she represents (Goffman 1972:34f). Her stigma becomes all the more invisible – both to her and to other people – the more her role is recognised as a real job, for example through financial remuneration and regular working hours.

Appetite for leadership is something that has developed slowly for Eva. Acting as representative for other sick people was not something she regarded as self-evident. On the contrary, for long periods she has also been completely exposed to the ravages the illness made on her body and soul. During the long periods of sick leave for pain and burnout, she took refuge in the illness itself. She says that she became the illness:

"I was the actual diagnosis. It might sound strange, but in being off sick there was nothing else. My sense of self-esteem, which was already low, became even lower. You simply don't know who you are. You're not worth a scrap. You know yourself what's it's like when you meet people you don't know. "And what do you do for a living then? they ask. Well I'm off sick, you answer. It's as if you've become the actual illness and you get stuck in it. You continue to be ill. It's a vicious circle."

"Does that mean that the illness gives a sense of security?"

"Yes, absolutely! It's a kind of identity that you feel safe with and where you feel at home. It's easy too because you get out of doing a whole load of things. When you're ill you can say no to everything and everybody without having to apologise. From being a very social person I became very antisocial. When you've been at home for a long time with a rather peculiar diagnosis that people don't really understand, you just don't have the energy or the inclination for meeting other people."
(From field notes)

Eva says that the illness became an identity that she felt safe with, and where she felt herself *at home*. So if a stigmatising illness can seem to be excluding, it can also be including in that the identity of being ill becomes a working – although in certain respects a diminishing – identity which has to suffice when there's

nothing else on offer. With time, a new feeling of being at home can arise in the sick body, and the new identity of being ill gradually brings opportunities for meeting and working with other people affected by illness. It makes room for previously unexplored arenas for action and reflection; ways that were not available when you belonged to the kingdom of the healthy.

Cast adrift from the traditional frame of interpretation of everyday reality suddenly gives the affected person the freedom to find a sense of belonging in new narratives and new contexts, writes Jonas Frykman in his book, *Identities in Pain* (1998). Illness disturbs the well-rehearsed relationship between the individual and their everyday life; the natural course of events ceases, but at the same time you are given a valuable chance to create and recreate reality. Vulnerability and isolation make the sick person sensitive to new impulses. Frykman calls this type of transfer "the entrance to a new community":

> It is a community in a secret society with knowledge not available to those outside. Membership simultaneously brings an alienating distance. For anyone who has been initiated, everyday life will never be the same again (Frykman 1998:17).

Membership and isolation go together, says Frykman; stepping towards something automatically means stepping back from something. In parallel to the establishment of the strong fellowship within the group, alienation in relation to the rest of the world also arises. The transfer from the kingdom of the healthy to that of the sick, and the "us-feeling" that follows those affected on the journey can – which has already been indicated above – lead to your own state of illness becoming permanent. If network gatherings assume great significance in a person's life, it is reasonable to suppose that he or she will continue to be connected to the activity, and the only way to continue to be engaged in a network such as Malvorna is to remain on sick leave, because the admission ticket to and for burnout is burnout itself. The affected person can, so to speak, *become dependent* on their stigma. They can start to make use of their anomalous position in order to procure "secondary gains", as Goffman expresses it (Goffman 1972:19). Taking up employment after having being on long-term sick leave can mean suffering considerable losses.

We Shut the Door

In his book, *När karaktären krackelerar* (2003), [The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism], the sociologist, Richard Sennett, sketches the new economy's creation of a new type of person who is obliged to adapt themselves to the modern capitalist labour market with its constant demand for flexibility. The new flexible working life, with its teamwork, dissolved hierarchies and choice of working hours, makes people disoriented, argues Sennett, to the extent that they seek recognition, identity, security and pride in other directions.[9] One of the chapters is entitled, "The Dangerous Pronoun". Here, the author alludes to the sense of *we*. He writes that modern capitalism has awakened a longing for fellowship and solidarity which has resulted in the unintentional consequence that local rootedness becomes even stronger. There is the impending threat that a person won't be able to find fulfilment in the world, "create a life" and be unable to find themselves through their work. This drives people to search for new arenas of belonging and meaning, says Sennett (2003:193). These arenas, associations or groupings often have a defensive character about them which is con-

nected to profiling yourself as being *against* rather than *for* something, which in turn has a tendency to conjure up a kind of ideological trench warfare between groups and society at large, between Us and The Others. The debate about vulnerability, safety nets and social rights becomes all the more bitter, and is also characterised by a suggestion of parasitism, which is received with a kind of righteous anger on the part of the injured party, writes Sennett. Indeed, the more ashamed you are of your dependency, the easier it is to react angrily (Sennett 2003:199). This is in line with the ongoing Swedish public debate about the compensations levels of social insurance; the tone has hardened, the gap between accuser and accused has widened and the number of critical voices that are raised in public around the phenomenon of burnout has increased. The more the illness is questioned, the more the people suffering from burnout seal themselves into their own stigmatised category.

Elements of defence are woven into the stories that the network members tell about their illnesses; something that I also later came across in interviews with individual informants. Many argue that it is the fault of "society", "the politicians" or "the labour market" that they suffer burnout; demands are too high, and both tempo and stress have increased while opportunities for recovery have diminished. These arguments, which in the main revolve around conditions in the labour market, are often woven together with ideas concerning social progress in general. Here the "information-society" often emerges as something to push against. Many of those affected talk about how we in modern society have become overwhelmed with information, how we drown in what the media has to offer, that we can't stop the flood and that this is why we finally become exhausted and worn out.

This loose theory development is not only cherished by those who are ill, but also by a long line of experts who have the task of analysing the phenomenon burnout; journalists, therapists, politicians, consultants and researchers have all contributed their ideas regarding the tougher social climate, the higher rate of production and the uncontrollable flood of information as being possible reasons as to why so many people suffer from burnout today. The relevance of this cluster of ideas is difficult to assess, although it seems clear that a kind of discursive understanding of the problem has arisen - a "this is how it is". However, the fact that there are clear parallels between today's discussion on burnout as a reaction to a society on the slide and that which took place at the turn of the 20th century gives a certain perspective to the debate.[10] Cultural illnesses are regarded as occupying a distinct place in humanity's 'presence in the world', in that they constitute a *continuum* across time and space. An ethnologist's main task is, however, not to determine similarities and differences between cultural illnesses of the present or past, but instead to try to understand what a condition such as burnout means in terms of the individual's daily reality: how do they feel at dawn, at dusk, and in the early hours of the morning? How do people cope with the illness? What kinds of things become important in the everyday life of the affected person?

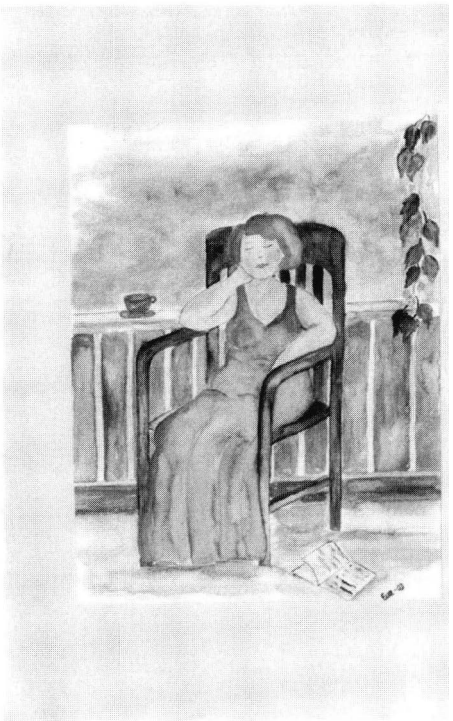
With Brush in Hand

In Eva's case, the illness has meant unexpected personal challenges and conquests. The experience of burnout and chronic pain led her to write a book about her experiences. While she has painted and written for as long as she can remember, it wasn't until the periods of sick leave that she started to show her work

to others. You could say that the actual illness gave her the opportunity to develop her artistry and enough reason to take her talent seriously. Her experiences were suddenly in demand, and they became realistic ways of communicating with the world that had seemingly closed in on her, and that had forced her into involuntary homelessness. Eva published the book about her experiences of pain herself, and it has become an important component in her work as leader of other people on long-term sick leave. The book meant that she became recognised by a wider audience, so that she started to give lectures and was repeatedly interviewed by the media. In addition to marketing and selling the book, she has also produced postcards of her paintings to be sold in different parts of the town, such as *Malvorna*'s office and local shops.

Eva's artistic talent is obvious, but when I ask what painting means to her she doesn't quite know what to say. The conversation becomes stilted and punctuated by long pauses. I repeat the question several times during our meeting, and eventually she tells me that painting gives her a great sense of joy. Standing beside the easel with brush in hand evokes a kind of genuine, childish joy that makes her body tingle: "It means so much to be able to use my hands, to potter about in the garden, bake and paint… time just flies by when I'm painting", she says. "I get completely absorbed in what I'm doing and it makes me happy. I even forget that I'm hungry!" Being creative means that you don't need to think, explains Eva. Painting offers a temporary respite from herself; from the eternal, persistent ego.

It is interesting that something that is ascribed such great importance can be so difficult to put into words. Perhaps the essential nature of happiness lies in the transparency of the process. It happens rather than is thought about, while the body becomes one among many tools, a thing among things: hands, brushes, paint, a white canvas. Cilia, turpentine, lactic acid, cloth rags, fingertips, water, sweat. It becomes not only impossible but also unimportant to determine where body finishes and thing starts. We think *with* rather than *about* the things that surround us in the everyday. By using things, being with things, and thinking with things, we turn them from silent matter to working things. They become stable components in life's patterns of meaning and expression.



From the collection "Everyday Angels" by Eva Grelsson.

Several of the burnout sufferers I have met devote themselves to some form of artistic activity. They embroider, make pottery, paint and try their hand at wrought-iron work, write poetry, verse and stories. Some seek seclusion in their creativity, while others see it as group

activity. At times *Malvorna*'s office is transformed into a painting workshop, although Eva prefers to be alone with her paints and brushes. Nothing much is said about her paintings during our meeting. They decorate the walls of her home and inspiration is drawn from everyday life: the turn of the century farmhouse where she lived for more than twenty years, her beloved dog, the Jämtland countryside, etc. Another recurring theme is solitary women. Several pastel coloured pictures depict amply curved women bearing angels' wings performing different tasks. Eva calls them "everyday angels" and she has printed a number of the pictures to sell as postcards. When we look at the pictures together and talk about them, she changes their name to "everyday heroines". There are small text-boxes on the back. One picture depicts a woman standing beside a sea of outstretched arms and accompanied by the following text: *"This is Kerstin. She's on Fårö*[11] *and it's holiday time! The winter has been difficult. Kerstin has worked a lot of overtime as there's a lack of auxiliary nurses where she works. Now she's finally able to take a break. She can enjoy the wonderful scenery and weather, and can swim and sunbathe."* Another postcard represents a well-rounded woman pottering in her flower bed. The text on the back is similar to that mentioned above: *"This is Lena. She's had to face many difficult years – divorce, a full-time job in child-care and three children of her own to look after. The children have now left home. Lena has bought a little cottage and goes there whenever she feels in need of peace and quiet. Gardening has become her greatest passion. When she's pottering in the garden and getting her hands dirty, she feels happy and satisfied with life."* A third picture shows a woman taking a sled tour through the winter landscape. The text reads: *"This is Karin. Her work involves caring for old people. She's on her way to see Albert, who is 82 years old. She's done his shopping. It's a beautiful winter's day and Karin is enjoying her tour through the village."*

Eva's everyday angels are altruistic, self-sacrificing women who, like herself, have had traditional nursing care jobs and have also been responsible for home and children. There is a tacit bitterness in the tone of the texts on the back of the pictures. The harmless pastel colours are contrasted with the sharpness of the black and white printed text. Implicit criticism is directed against those who assume that women should automatically volunteer to take care of others, that they should deny their own needs, and that they should always be at the beck and call of others.

Multi-tool

It is interesting to observe how Eva uses her experiences of long-term sick leave in order to discuss a political issue such as equality. Once again, burnout paves the way. It becomes sufficient an argument to be able to take part and argue the case; a reason for getting involved in the debate. The fact of having experience of the illness gives her the right and freedom to express her thoughts about women's subordinate role in relation to men. It gives her reason to question and criticise the patriarchal system with its inherent rulers and power structures. The illness becomes the forum through which she can operate. During our meeting she humorously and ironically describes how Jämtland women compete to be "real" women; a competition that only has one winner - the good housewife who manages to get the Christmas curtains ready in time:

"If you put up newly ironed Christmas curtains every year at the end of November then you are a good housewife. A good woman. Just before Advent it's

common for women to ask other women 'Have you put your Christmas curtains up yet?' Sometimes it's said jokingly, sometimes seriously. My mother gets mad at me because I don't bother with Christmas curtains. She thinks that she's failed totally in her attempts to turn me into a proper woman (laughs). I'll never be the proper woman that she's always been. In addition, people air their wardrobes here in Jämtland! Twice a year – in the spring and in autumn. It's the same there in that Mum thinks that it's really shocking that I don't air my wardrobes. She does that faithfully, every spring and every autumn. My sister-in-law does it as well."

Eva says that she tried to live up to this women's role when she was younger. When the children were small she too hung Christmas curtains up at the windows. Her conscientiousness fizzled out after a few years, however. But she was still a real kind of housewife. She took care of her big family – husband, three children and dog – in the old farmhouse where her husband was born. Her parents-in-law lived in a house on a nearby plot of land, some 300 metres from their own house. Eva and her husband did what was expected of them: they took over the family plot of land and kept the family line going. The family lived there for 21 years, then it all became too much for Eva. The house and land were sold to her husband's sister, and their relatives made a terrible fuss about it. How could they do something like this? How could they forsake their ancestral home for a flat in town?

On one occasion, during her third period of sick leave, the weekly magazine, Året Runt, came to the house to interview Eva in connection with her book. A large-scale photo shows her in the farm bakery, apron-clad and stirring a wooden ladle round a large bowl that she's holding in her arms. The light streams in through mullioned windows. Eva says that she doesn't really like the photo because it makes her look too grand.

"I just look like someone who's put up their Christmas curtains", she exclaims, half jokingly, half seriously.

(From field notes)

Even though it isn't articulated during the interview, I understand that Eva finds a large part of the explanation for her and other women's psychological and physical suffering in the lack of equality between the sexes that characterises modern society. She leads the women's rights struggle through her pictures, contributions to the debate, poems and the network. She has determined the direction of her sick leave. You could say that she thematises burnout in that she fills it with meaning, her meaning; using it like a Swiss army-knife in that she unfolds the tool which is the most appropriate for the occasion.[12] The concept's flexibility and its infinite possibilities are fascinating. It seems relevant to suggest that this openness has contributed to its tremendous popularity (Lundén 2004:22). Burnout has become the multi-tool of our times; just as useful, difficult to define and ephemeral as melancholy, nostalgia and neurasthenia.

From Financial Manager to Recreational Artist

Thoughts turn to Baudelaire-type melancholy when Björn describes the feelings and emotions he experienced just before he was officially signed off sick. He says that he felt totally weary of life, and that he was sick and tired of everything. Everything seemed pointless. His body ached, work had lost its meaning, the family's demands and expectations became a source of irritation. At the time of meeting him at his home in Uppsala, he had been on sick leave for four years for stress-related depression – a diagnosis that he thinks very well reflects the state he found himself in at that time:

Björn: I think that stress-related depression is actually a good description, you know. For my condition anyway. I feel .. I felt exhausted and I was depressed. So that, yes,.. it sounds right. It sounds better than burnout.

MM: Nevertheless, you use the word burnout when you meet other people, in order to explain ...

Björn: Yes, sure.

MM: Is it accepted anyway?

Björn: Yes, well, in some ways. It might be that

people suffer more from . . .this is perhaps the diagnosis that you get more often these days than previously. On the other hand, it might always have existed, but nobody really knew what it was all about. People might have died. They might have had heart attacks, or had high blood pressure and been given medication. They might have been depressed, been treated and carried on, and so on, that kind of thing. But it might also be the case that people had the chance ... that they have more opportunities to think about themselves more today than they had before. Now you have the possibility, as in my case, to paint and do things that there was perhaps never any time for before.

For Björn, who had happily devoted himself to painting as a hobby for a number of years, sick leave meant an opportunity to devote more time to his hobby. At the beginning he was, like so many others who suffer from burnout, in a bad way, both physically and psychologically. He suffered from high blood pressure and was so moody that those around him were terrified of his outbursts. Gradually, however, he found a way of rehabilitation at the easel in this studio, and when he talks about the relief of no longer having to be an economist, no longer suffer the stress and press and could dispense with his suit once and for all, you realise that burnout is not only a state of illness, but also a kind of protest against an identity that has always seemed false – a role that was admired by those around you but despised by the increasingly lost and stray ego. The illness, and later also painting, signify a decisive breach of one's own and the surrounding ingrained conceptions of a person who was a successful financial manager, but who cherishes dreams about being a priest – or an artist.

So we went to the first painting session and I thought it was great fun. That must have been in 1999, I think.... and first of all we had to sit at a table and draw something using the colours that were provided .. coloured paints and .. then we continued with a small canvas to give a little structure and used sand and stuff like that .. kind of messing around. Then after that we could work on something bigger and start to paint with our hands .. and all that kind of sense of freedom stuff – you know, ever since childhood I'd always been the one to be very careful about my appearance, with nice clothes and creases and ... should be so damned perfect and not get dirty and so on. So this was a real barrier to get across, to be able to mess and .. without any limitations. That's when it all started, that's when the painting started to take shape. I've always liked drawing, at school art was my favourite subject. So that .. and so it continued so that it finally became a must, I just had to go down to the studio.... We were able to hire this studio and get on with it on your own and mess around [...]. So this is a kind of painting where you just start without having any kind of purpose or intellectual idea about what you are going to paint .. and I like that .. it's made me feel good. Just working with it. And I feel as if I'm really at home in this milieu too, with all those people that are part of all this.

Björn says that he *feels himself* at home in the circle of artists; something he never did when he was among economists. In an attempt to take Svenaeus' homelessness concept further, it could be said that stress-related depression put Björn in a state of *dual homelessness.* Throughout his entire life he has felt himself to be inappropriately placed in a job that, in many ways, became a part of himself and consumed all his energy and waking hours. When the illness then took possession of him, he was thrown into yet another kind of homelessness; now he was not only an economist but a weak, different and broken-down economist.

With the course of time, Björn has created a new identity that is largely founded on being an artist. Painting has been given more scope in his life, and he readily recognises that being on sick leave has brought opportunities that would otherwise never have been available. Like Eva, he has chosen to recount his stories of burnout to the media. He admits that he would like to spread knowledge about the condition,

as well as having the possibility of showing his paintings in public. On his own initiative, he contacted a variety of journals and finally got one of the trade journals to bite and publish a big feature about him and his art.

Even though he feels himself divided about the fact that he lives on state benefits, and that he sometimes feels self-contempt at no longer being self-supporting, he still maintains that the several years on sick leave, and the financial security that it brings, has opened new doors in his life.

MM: Has painting become an important part of the healing process for you?

Björn: Yes, I think so. Definitely. I certainly think that it has. At the same time it has also set things in motion that might make it harder to return to my professional work as an economist. Those forces that painting has released might restrain that. So in a way, it's both a good and a bad thing.

MM: These forces you talk about, do they take your energy away from other things?

Björn: Yes, that seems to have been the case up to now, but it might be possible to combine those things as well. That's really that point, I think. The freedom and sense of security that comes with this can be useful in other situations, even working with figures and so on [...]

MM: But being on sick leave gave you the chance to ...

Björn: Oh yes.

... to develop your painting ...

Björn: Yes, I think so. Absolutely!

It is interesting that Björn thinks that the self-rehabilitation he is involved with has taken him further away from working life. While painting has had a healing effect on him and has made him feel better, it has also increased the distance between what he was and what he feels himself to be now. If the main aim of being on sick leave is to help the individual to return to work as soon as possible, painting appears – at least in this case – to be a rather dubious kind of rehabilitation.

Art Therapy

One particular area of therapeutic work has been designated the name of *art therapy*, which includes art, music and dance therapies. The idea is to combine the patients' aesthetic expression with classic psychotherapy; a combination of non-verbal and verbal communication that facilitates a broader picture of the patient's problems. Advocates of the method maintain that non-verbal communication is a valuable complement to speech. Verbal form of communication is only one of many possible ways of expression. Through dance, music or art, the patient is able to communicate a form of symbolism that is almost impossible to put into words. Ideas about such silent language are neither controversial nor original. That it can be both healing and curative for a person to express themselves through art seems completely reasonable, especially according to the more articulate sections of the literature (see e.g. Arnheim 1986, Robbins 2000a, Robbins 2000b, Simon 1992).

It is significant, however, that the relatively inclusive literature on the subject takes the effects and consequences of art therapy as almost self-evident and expected; the authors being united in their convincement of its sense of release, liberation and self-healing potential. Critical voices are lacking. Some of the production is also characterised by a specific type of rhetoric, which can be linked with New Age genres. This can be illustrated by an extract from the book *Konstnärliga terapier* [Artistic Therapies], written by Ann Mari Lagercrantz:

Art therapy can be seen as a pilgrimage to a centre – or to the source. To the unspoilt child with its unspoilt emotions. It takes a long time and a lot of energy to walk that path. It follows a secretive and mysterious pattern through a landscape that is difficult to anticipate, where you meet thorn bushes, high

mountain-tops and dark and gloomy woods.

What's even worse is that there are big dragons and evil spirits to struggle against. The first step is to dare to feel fear for the dragon. The second step is to dare to look it in the eye, and the third is then to dare to express that in a picture, which means that the dragon can be destroyed. Great courage is needed to accomplish this.

Alone it might be impossible, but together with a therapist the path can be followed, all the way into the patient's innermost being – where the unspoilt child waits for its liberation. Then the path leads from the innermost out towards life in a landscape that can be surveyed, and where the pilgrim creates his or her own and new paths (Lagercrantz 1998:95).

Mythological terms and therapeutic concepts combine to fill page after page, so that for the uninitiated it can be difficult to see the point of such profuse imagery. When it comes to Eva's and Björn's artistic expression, it nevertheless seems as though verbal communication can lead us on the right track in an attempt to understand what is really happening in the actual painting. Painting is a process, a verb, whereas a painting is a thing, a noun. That which is analytically interesting is perhaps not to be found in the finished product, but in its actual creation and the movements of the body; the controlled breathing, the beads of sweat that appear on the forehead, the trembling hand. How did Eva explain painting as a process? Painting means forgetting myself, she declared, when trying to clarify the feeling of happiness she experiences standing at the easel with brush in hand. Björn describes it in a similar way:

MM: Can you explain exactly what happens in .. when you paint?

Björn: I forget myself. Totally. I have no idea what time it is, no concept of time or place... only that it is complete.. I am very involved in what I am doing. It's the kind of feeling that I think people would like to reach when they talk about meditation and .. that total presence in something. Without feeling that you are being observed or have lots of junk that ... yes, everybody is carrying some load or other I think .. more of less. And the feeling that you only, so to speak... that you experience the here and now and nothing else exists. Just timelessness and nothing else.

MM: You get a kind of respite from yourself.

Björn: Yes, exactly. I think so.

Isn't it remarkable that an activity or action that makes a person forget their own body and their own thoughts can make them happy? In his interesting book, Flow – *Den optimala upplevelsens psykologi* (1992) [Flow – The Psychology of Optimal Experience], psychology professor, Mihály Csíkszentmihályi, outlines possible reasons as to why people experience happiness when they devote themselves to occupations that make them temporarily step out of time, space and the ego. One particular explanation concerns the sense of self-absorption; people's inability to relinquish their own anxieties and worries and liberate themselves from their own thoughts. If your attention is constantly directed inwards and the larger part of your mental energy is taken up with the ego's cares and woes it is difficult to notice what is going on around you, writes Csíkszentmihályi. It becomes difficult to concentrate attention on the world. On the other hand, if interest is turned away from the self, the feeling of frustration has less chance of disturbing consciousness. If instead of concentrating on the innermost disorder, you pay attention to what is happening around you, negative thoughts diminish, argues the author. The person who allows his or her attention to be completely filled by their surroundings becomes a part of it; they become a part of its system by creating a connection with it (Csíkszentmihályi 1992:234).

To Come Home is to Go Away

Björn's studio is on the ground floor of an ordinary block of flats. It is cluttered with

things – tubes of paint, twigs, brushes, glass jars, tins, rags, cups, frames, canvases, notes, postcards, easels, glass bottles, jars of glue, tools, rolls of tape, sandals, clogs, refuse bins. It's full of bits and pieces. Here, on the grey concrete floor, he stands and paints. He is right here, alone, in contact with his surroundings and the things that surround him. He can paint for hours, but is not aware of his body until he puts the brush down, cleans his hands with turpentine and walks towards the door. He can finally escape from the body that has failed him so many times in recent years. It is of course present, in the room, but it has ceased to be interesting. In front of the easel, Björn is something as unusual as a happy, burned-out economist. He's a complete person, in contact with the world. At the same time as being at home with himself, it is as if he has actually gone away.

There is a catch, however. Society has greater use of an unhappy financial manager who has mastered the art of mustering self-discipline and going to work every day, than a happy recreational artist living on sickness benefit. Questions concerned with alternative forms of rehabilitation present themselves. Is it more important that people feel better during their rehabilitation rather than being quickly forced into what amounts to laborious and painful occupational training? Can devoting yourself to personal development at society's expense with a view to being healthy be justified? And is it national economics or human relationships that provide us with the answers to these questions?

The benefits of being on sick leave, however, only manifest themselves to the individual after they have made the trying and involuntary transfer from the kingdom of the healthy to that of the sick, and come to accept it. In continuing to develop Svenaeus' concept of homelessness, you could say that there is good reason to try to prevent people from hanging up curtains in their new home in the land of the sick. They should not be given the opportunity to make themselves at home there. While this analysis has been concerned with the advantages of long-term sick leave, all the informants certify that the losses are always much greater than the gains can ever be. For the majority, being on long-term sick leave involves a sense of vulnerability, a feeling of being lost and an anxiety that they would rather be without. To say the least, they would rather have been spared the shame. Not many people want to relinquish their citizenship in the kingdom of the healthy, few people want to live on benefits, and not many want to be off sick with burnout instead of going to work.

This article has been concerned with the new cultural patterns that take shape in the tracks of burnout. The condition is not only a phenomenon of modern times, but for those who are affected it is also a way of living and behaving; it becomes a strain on the everyday, a strong limitation, as well as sometimes being a tool and a possibility. While many others have also tried to find answers to what burnout is, few have directed their attention towards what it is like. Following the meaning creation processes that emerge from burnout's tracks might not only lead to new knowledge about the needs of the individual, but also create a new understanding of a society that is increasingly characterised by individualism. The central question is how an antiquated welfare system can best be adapted to the increased demands of individual citizens in terms of tailor-made solutions and individual consideration. If a person who is already affected and vulnerable doesn't feel themselves to be respected, heard and believed, the risk is that they will move into the kingdom of the sick for good.

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Notes

1 The rate of illness rose from 33,6 in 1998 to 43,2 in 2003. In May 2005 the figure was 42,2 (reflecting the number of days of statutory sick pay, sickness benefit payments, injury benefits, disablement benefits, rehabilitation benefits, early retirement pensions and social insurance disability pensions). A survey of the number of people on sick leave (from 30 days up to 2 years) in November showed a steady increase: 1997 – 127.522, 1998 – 158.809, 2000 – 236.978, 2002 – 275.717 (ref: the journal rfv.se, nr 1 2003). In December 2004, sickness/activity benefits (previously early retirement pension) were made to 539,000 people; 51,000 more than in 2002. Women vouched for 70% of the increase. Many who are signed off work on a long-tem basis go direct from being on sickness benefit to taking out early retirement.

2 This study is part of a postgraduate dissertation and based on comprehensive material collected as a result of fieldwork and interviews. Up to now, most of the fieldwork has taken place in Östersund and Gothenburg where interviews and participatory observations have been combined in an attempt to acquire knowledge about the network of those who suffer from burnout. Six additional and longer interviews have also been conducted with people who either are suffering from or have suffered burnout. What is common to these interviews, over and above the actual diagnosis, is that they have all, at some time or other, talked to the media about their burnout. The dissertation is also concerned with so-called "personal stories"; ordinary people's hopes of conveying their message via the media.

3 Statistics with regard to burnout vary according to different reports. According to one report, two percent – 1 percent men and 1 percent women – of the almost 290,000 people receiving sickness benefits were on sick leave as a result of burnout in 2002 (RFV report 2003:4). Another report on the number of people on long-term sick leave with psychological illnesses gives an average figure of 3.3% with burnout in 2000 – 2.3% men and 3.9% women (RFV analysis 2002:4). The attention directed towards this group appears to be unproportionally high I relation to the number of those affected. On the other hand, there has been a general rise in the number of people on sick leave who show some degree of less serious psychological problems, such as neurosis and depression; from 18% in 1999 to 26% in 2002. The increase is greatest among women (RVF report 2003:4).

4 See Lundén 2004 for an analysis of the concept's establishment in the Swedish media. The word burnout is seldom used in diagnosis, however. Doctors instead use the term stress-related depression on sick leave certificates.

5 This project is financed by the Social Insurance Office (formerly RVF) and involves ethnologists from Lund University and political scientists from Gothenburg University.

6 Goffman mainly talks about the area of tension between "normal" and "deviant". However, I translate his argument into the concepts of "wellness" and "illness".

7 Apart from "bodily deformities" and "'tribal' stigmas such as race, nation and religion" one of three possible stigmas (Goffman 1972:14). According to Goffman, stains on one's personal character are concerned with stigmas that are to some degree invisible, such as alcoholism, unemployment, homosexuality or what people experience as signs of being weak-willed, psychological disturbances or peculiar tendencies.

8 In the introduction to *Sjukdom som metafor* (2001) [Illness and Metaphor], Susan Sontag describes this transfer as "emigrating to the kingdom of the sick". "Every single person who is born into this world has dual citizenship, one in the kingdom of the healthy and one in that of the sick", she writes. "Even though everyone prefers to just use the positive passport, every single one of us at some time or other will be forced, at least for a short period, to identify ourselves as citizens of the other kingdom" (Sontag 1981:5).

9 It might be worth pointing out that Sennett takes his analytical starting point from American society.

10 For example, around the latter part of the 1800s, Charles Baudelaire and his contemporaries sought an explanation to their emotional suffering in the light of society's rapid development; the deep melancholy that affected them was a reaction to industrialism's sweeping changes, where large-scale replaced small-scale, where community was replaced by the collectiveness of large cities. Just as today, the composite clinical syndrome was given a special name: le spleen (Baudelaire 1930, 1963). See also Karin Johannisson (1990, 2005) for more advanced studies of the history

of cultural illness.

11 Translator's note: Fårö is an islet, and part of the island of Gotland.

12 With this argument it is not my intention to suggest that the lack of equality is not relevant to the occurrence of burnout. There are reports that clearly show the contrary (see for example Renstig & Sandmark 2005)

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The Sport, the Club, the Body
A Study of Ultimate Fighting
By Ann-Helen Sund

Ultimate Fighting

Ultimate Fighting[1] is one of many names for a new form of combat sport on which this article focuses. It is one in a series of new sports where the common feature is that different styles are combined into new wholes. Ultimate Fighting is considered the "hardest" form of all, since it has the largest number of techniques and the smallest number of rules. The sport resembles a *simulated street fight*,[2] including both standing techniques (punches and kicks) and lying techniques (wrestling).

This is a new and controversial form of martial art which is banned in several countries. In Finland the sport is permitted, and there has been no major public debate about it. Despite this, Ultimate Fighting is far from being culturally approved. Numerous tricky questions about a concept as charged as violence are raised by Ultimate Fighting. The indignation, accompanied by a fascination, that I have heard in the way people talk about Ultimate Fighting, "where you can do anything you like", was one reason why I began to take an interest in studying Ultimate Fighting. What is so problematic? How is Ultimate Fighting positioned culturally? Where there are conflicts, we can see differences in values and ways of thinking more clearly than we usually see them. Using Ultimate Fighting as a way to describe, analyse, and try to understand a world of male experience has been a demanding task for me, and here I have been inspired by men's studies. The text below is based on literature, Internet material, interviews with six practitioners of Ultimate Fighting in Åbo (Turku), interviews with two spectators, participant observation as a spectator at two contests, and observations and conversations at the Finnfighters' Gym in Åbo.[3]

Practitioners of Ultimate Fighting stress that the sport is "like a real situation" and that it "works in reality". The "genuineness" or reality in Ultimate Fighting takes on different meanings in different contexts. Which reality and whose reality are we talking about? With its link to "reality", Ultimate Fighting is problematic. Ultimate Fighting refers to something outside the sport itself. Proceeding from the practitioners' point of view, this consists in the fact that Ultimate Fighting functions in reality, precisely because the framework of the sport has been made almost synonymous with that of "reality". I would nevertheless emphasize that one should not forget that Ultimate Fighting has a system of rules, and training takes place on set premises and at set times. As Mats Hellspong has pointed out, *official rules* are one of the most important factors distinguishing sport from play, and also distinguishing sport from "real life" (Hellspong 1982:211).

Jesper Fundberg argues that sport as a whole can be viewed as "a world within the world", partly separated from the rest of society, and with its own rhetoric and practices. The forms of aggression, violence, and rhetoric found in sport are in many cases unthinkable, and sometimes even criminal, outside the arena. Problems thus arise when the practice and language of sport leave the field of sport (Fundberg 2003).

It is the emphasis on *reality* that makes Ultimate Fighting suspect in the eyes of many people – since sport should be a mimetic, "as if" activity. People feel uncertain about what category Ultimate Fighting should be placed in. The ways in which Ultimate Fighting is discussed and categorized in the public discourse also emerge in the interviews that I conducted with the practitioners, since they must take up a stance on them. How can Ultimate Fighting be linked to tendencies in the rest of society?

Starting Points for My Case Study

Finland is the only Nordic country where Ultimate Fighting matches are permitted. Åbo is the location of Finnfighters' Gym, the leading club in the country in Ultimate Fighting. Here people practise not only Ultimate Fighting but also submission wrestling, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, and shootfighting.[4] All the practitioners I interviewed had their first impression of Ultimate Fighting via video cassettes from the early Ultimate Fighting Championships held in the USA. These are described as rough. Many reacted with surprise, scepticism, and even revulsion. Why then have the same persons been fascinated and captivated by Ultimate Fighting – is it because something strange and dangerous is enticing and offers something new?

About ten competing ultimate fighters train at Finnfighters' Gym, and 40–50 men do more or less regular training. For most of the practitioners in Finland, Ultimate Fighting is a leisure pursuit. I am interested in what it is that makes people, specifically men, come to Finnfighters' Gym and practise Ultimate Fighting, what the training and contests give them and do to them, and what meanings are negotiated in the sport.

In our society, different belongings are much less taken for granted or "innate" than in the past. In leisure time one can choose from among many different pursuits, but it cannot be taken for granted that one can thereby be part of a community or feel a sense of belonging. It has been claimed that leisure has become one of the most important foundations for identity and meaning creation, especially for young people (Berggren 2000:18). The modernization process dissolves some of the traditional patterns of identity, and it has been claimed that identity, belonging, and meaning now must be created by the individual. The lack of collective frameworks for identity formation has left a vacuum in which there has been a development that has been called tribalization, which means that society disintegrates into different tribes based on different aspirations in "identity politics", which can be ethnic, religious, regional, and so on (Johansson, Sernhede & Trondman 1999:8). Leisure pursuits have often been viewed in relation to work, as something "unreal" that people do to recover and keep in shape in order to be able to work. But leisure interests have a function not just in relation to work, or to some other part of life, which is then regarded as more important (Elias & Dunning 1986:151ff.). Leisure interests, such as Ultimate Fighting, are a reality in themselves – not just a reflection of something else, as sport and other pursuits have often been viewed (Frykman 1998:311).

What aspirations unite the practitioners of Ultimate Fighting? How do they understand the sport? Moreover, how do the Ultimate Fighters understand themselves? For one can regard the practice of Ultimate Fighting as a process where certain male identities are created. Thomas Johansson (1998:15) argues that one tendency today is to create polarized gender roles; it is fashionable once again to affirm one's "masculinity" or "femininity". What kind of masculinity do the practitioners affirm, and what kind do they reject?

The sociologist Arto Jokinen (2000:48), who has studied the association between masculinity and violence, has shown how men's violence in Finnish culture is normalized and portrayed as a desirable male behaviour. Jokinen uses the concept of cultural masculinity to refer to culturally shared perceptions of what is masculine. Cultural masculinity is not something that one receives automatically; it must be earned and proved. Masculinity is

earned, among other things, through tests of manhood, in which a crucial feature is danger and the ability to withstand physical or mental pain (Jokinen 2000:68–69).

Robert Connell, a sociologist working in men's studies, claims that changes on the labour market, with increased demands for technical expertise, have created a new crack in hegemonic masculinity, where a polarity arises between dominance and technical expertise. Today these exist side by side, sometimes in opposition, sometimes in interaction (Connell 1995:193). In Ultimate Fighting the practitioners seem to want to combine the two.

Finnfighters' Gym – A Masculine Space and Its Fighters

Finnfighters' Gym is presented in an article written for and published on the Internet site SFUK (Submission Fighting UK) as an "NHB ideal" – "as it should be" (Fisher 2003). In the article the club stands for a kind of authenticity within the NHB world. Authenticity is constructed by being linked to different margins: a last outpost in a basement in Finland, where tough fighters stand their ground to defend their bastion, sticking to the genuine form of NHB. The war metaphors are obvious, and they are also frequently used in sports journalism. Symbolically active in defining hardness are certain tough and dangerous techniques such as head butts. The hard warriors are presented in the article as simultaneously dangerous and good, tough but friendly. How do the practitioners themselves relate to his description?

Apart from the fact that the club is the place where people practise their activity and where they have their community, one can see the interior arrangement of the premises as a frame around the activities and as a staging of identity within the club: what is our history, what do we want to be like? This is partly expressed through the club's conquests and those of the sport itself, which are manifested in the gym.[5]

The gym consists of a single, relatively small room along with a changing room. The floor is covered with padded mats and part of the room is delimited as a match ring. Next to it hangs a punchbag. At the door there is a small counter, behind which a stereo plays hip-hop music at high volume. On the counter is a television set. I am told that the members watch matches on it. Many trophies won by members or by the club are also displayed on the same counter. A match belt hangs from a shelf. Along the walls are a great many posters from competitions in different countries. Most of them show fighters with bare torsos. One of them shows a viking. There are also a couple of posters from the film *Gladiator*, along with some newspaper articles about Ultimate Fighting, where different practitioners at the gym have been interviewed.

Finnfighters' Gym is a fairly small group of people. The openness and friendliness, the fact that anyone at all can come here and feel that they are a part of the community, is both an aspiration within the group and an aspect which those whom I interviewed highlighted as their own experience. One feels at home there. Even people who are on a break from training go to the gym to watch the others train, because they enjoy being there. The club members also want to avoid hierarchies, and the trainers in the gym are simultaneously participants in the club, and they receive no payment for leading the training sessions.[6]

There seems to be a sense of being part of something novel, which as a club member one is instrumental in introducing, and which one is eager to promote. This aspect strengthens

"Situated in a basement underneath the local Ravintola (late licence bar) in Turku city centre, lies the Finnfighters Gym; no signs alert the average passer by to its presence and many walk by in total ignorance to the fact that some of the world's most fearsome NHB fighters are trading heavy leather under their feet"..."The gym is one of the last true NHB outposts, a place where more or less anything goes, a place that lives up to the initials of NHB, with NHB competitions banned in Sweden and Norway, Finland is the last bastion of hardcore fight mayhem and every year Marko Leisten and Jari Ilka host the fearsome Finnfight event, a competition devoted to the spirit of real NHB fighting. Head butts and elbows to the head are still allowed and the event attracts some of the toughest warriors in Europe..." This is the start of a report "from the inside" with the headline "Finnfighters' Gym – NHB as it should be", published on website of SFUK (Submission Fighting UK). The photo is from "Finnfight", an annual competition arranged in Åbo by Finnfighters' Gym.

the sense of solidarity. The fact that there are prejudices against the practitioners can also help to bring them closer together. These aspects unite, and make the practitioners equal. But this equality need not extend outside the gym, where each person has other interests and other ambitions. One practitioner says: "at the gym everyone is the same, but then outside everybody is different..." (SLS 2026, vol. 2002:18). The fact that the solidarity is strong and the club community special was something that emerged from the interviews. One practitioner explained this in a conversation by saying that "it's a sport where you have to be able to trust one another".

However, entry to this group takes place in stages, or perhaps rather through tests. Daring to go to Finnfighters' Gym in the first place seems to be the first test. Beginners first have to take a basic course, after which they can decide whether to continue and take part in the training together with the practitioners at Finnfighters' Gym. At this stage of incorporation into the club there is a rather large dropout, since many people are scared off. Because the admission process is self-regu-

lating, so to speak, the community remains quite small. As a practitioner one then trains with or without an ambition to compete. A distinction is made here; it is stressed that training and competition are completely different things. It is the competitors who are Fighters. A recurrent theme in this career is how they overcome fear and search out greater challenges, which seems to be necessary if one is to be able to get the better of oneself. Perhaps it is the case that people seek out insecurity to feel security?

According to Anthony Giddens, actively seeking out risks is an important part of today's risk climate. Institutionalized risk environments, such as dangerous sports, offer frameworks for voluntary risk taking, where certain types of risks – "cultivated risks" – are actively created, mostly in the form of a contest in which individuals are pitted against each other or against obstacles in the physical world. Central elements in voluntary risk taking are the individual's active mastery and the circumstances that both demand such mastery and allow it to be expressed. Fear creates tension, and the fear is transformed into control, since the encounter with danger and its resolution are parts of the same activity. In this way the situation differs greatly from everyday routine, where the result of strategies one chooses in various important situations is often not noticed until much later (Giddens 1999:150ff.). One practitioner who has trained for a while and wants to start competing says: "Always when you're training, even though you know that you will be inferior to the person you're training with, you're still secure, you know that he won't hurt you. You can always submit and then you know how he will behave… you're afraid of the unknown, basically" (SLS 2026, vol. 2002:18). The same practitioner says that by competing he wants to see whether he can manage to act under the pressure that a competition involves and see how good or bad he is compared with others.

One practitioner who trains at the gym but does not fight in matches positions himself partly as an outside observer in relation to those who compete. He describes the atmosphere and the banter in the gym as follows: "there's such an easy atmosphere… They make fun of the stereotyped image of how they're supposed to be tough and they can, sort of, jokingly hit their head against the wall for fun and say 'ah let's get started' and things like that… So it's a bit like they're making fun of this whole image of a tough fighter that you often read about and hear about, a man that doesn't think so much" (SLS 2026, vol. 2002:16). The stereotyped image of the tough Fighter is thus something they cannot identify with; instead they distance themselves from it by playing with this image. It can be understood as a way to cope with prejudices against the practitioners and the criticism of the sport.

The atmosphere in the gym is often described as "macho", but sometimes also as intimate. It is an interesting question how these two aspects relate to each other.[7] One of the beginners at the gym said that what was new and different about the sport, above all, was the physical closeness to other men in the wrestling. For him it felt strange, since "you're used to keeping other men at a distance".[8]

It has been claimed that it is typical for men to form groups and subcultures around some cause, activity, or object. In these groups masculinities are built up both as distinct from femininities and in relation to other men (Jokinen 2003b:240). Homosociality has become a frequently used concept in men's studies. It means that men primarily show their masculinity to other men, compare themselves

Finnfighters' Gym. A group of young men in shorts and T-shirts sit along one wall waiting for the start of the basic course. Here they practise different movements and grips, singly and in pairs, according to the leader's instructions. All are concentrated. This is followed by heavy fitness exercises, and the sweat flows. The air is very damp. In the match ring a couple of men sit talking. Another couple are involved in physically close exercises with each other. They are training movements together and teaching each other. They are wearing tight black "fighter shorts", which seem to be the "right" kind, bought and worn by the men who have made most progress. The brand of shorts is also the right one; the label at the back says "hunter" and "bad boy". Many of the men have shaved heads, and tattoos are common (cf. Svensson 1998).

and compete with other men for a place in the men's internal hierarchy. Men need other men's approval and respect, and are simultaneously afraid to fail in this. Masculinity is in large measure regulated and demonstrated homosocially, through male comradeship in gangs of lads and gentlemen's clubs.

What casts a shadow over heterosexual men's homosociality is the fear that the sociality will be eroticized. Homophobia is more than fear of homosexuals; what men are primarily afraid of is that other men will expose them as not being masculine (Jokinen 2003a:15–16). Homophobia is then tackled with different strategies (Forsman 1995:278; Dahlén 1995:209). I believe that the "macho atmosphere" prevailing at the gym can be understood against this background; as a strategy to master homophobia (cf. Fundberg 2003:176). Men create a framework, a "relaxed atmosphere", around the activity which means that it feels comfortable, because it is filled with the "right" meanings. The community at Finnfighters' Gym can thus offer a space for a masculine intimacy and confirmation; a space where men can trust each other.

Arto Jokinen says that most men acquire a notion that masculinity belongs by nature to men. Yet masculinity must be produced culturally, it must be earned and proved, for example, through tests of manhood, even at the risk of losing one's health or one's life. Violence, according to Arto Jokinen, can serve as one instrument with which one men earn and prove their masculinity (Jokinen 2000:212).

"Proving something" is a matter that is relevant among practitioners of Ultimate Fighting in a somewhat ambivalent way. No longer needing to prove anything, which means becoming calm and self-assured, is regarded as a positive result of doing Ultimate Fighting. Yet it is considered wrong to start or continue Ultimate Fighting just to prove something. It can be interpreted as a reluctance to expose the fact that masculinity must be demonstrated and earned; that masculinity is not given by nature. A man who wants to prove something is portrayed as arrogant and reluctant to train hard. This all seems to be self-contradictory, for surely the whole idea of training and competing is to earn and prove one's masculinity? I think that we must keep the concepts of "earn" and "prove" separate here, and also the terms "demonstrate" and "prove". It is accepted that a man can start Ultimate Fighting to demonstrate something to himself, but not to prove something to others. "Proving something" is thus associated with dependence, while "demonstrating to yourself" is an assertion of independence. A man who "wants to prove something" thinks that he is something special, but he does not play according to the rules and thus according to these cannot be something special – a fighter, a man.

Sport, Reality, and Cultural Legitimation

The Dutch sociologists van Bottenburg and Heilbron (1997) claim that Ultimate Fighting is neither a sport nor a fictitious show, but a pure fighting combat that is close to reality. This is in many ways the core of Ultimate Fighting, regarded from the viewpoint of both the practitioners and the general public. This basic idea is significant for the question of how Ultimate Fighting is positioned culturally.

What the interviewed practitioners unanimously claim is that Ultimate Fighting is the same as "what works in reality". They see Ultimate Fighting as a "pure combat", but also as a sport – but definitely not as a fictitious show, which another American invention, wrestling, can be described as. On the contrary, the practitioners say that Ultimate Fighting is "as close to reality as one can get", or "like an authentic situation".

Perhaps combat sports have always extended outside their context as sports in a different and more direct way than other sports? Combat sports also have uses outside the field of sport, in the training of soldiers, police officers, security guards, doormen, that is, within institutions where violence is legitimated as the maintenance of order. Many of the practitioners at Finnfighters' Gym work in this particular field, as bouncers at various pubs in Åbo.

Arto Jokinen says that a discursive battle is being waged about violence. Violence is not an unambiguous phenomenon; it is divided into what is legally permitted (official violence) and what is illegal and unofficial. Different discourses of violence, ways of talking and thinking about violence, each contain notions about what violence is due to, what is violence and what is not, who is guilty and who is the victim, and so on. These discourses about

violence negotiate with each other and struggle for the dominant position. Different cultural products represent this negotiation about what violence is, and through representations of violence, violence becomes a part of everyday human life (Jokinen 2000:49–50).

It is interesting that two types of *places* are often mentioned in the interviews, when the practitioners explain Ultimate Fighting: the gym and the street. The gym represents the sport; the hard training and the personal development, the comradeship. The street is understood and used in the practitioner's explanation of Ultimate Fighting as the scene of (uncontrolled) violence,[9] and it is peopled by men. The street is both affirmed and rejected, and as a concept the street seems to be necessary in the construction of the sport of Ultimate Fighting. The street is affirmed in the sense that it is a reference point for "what works in reality". One can thus understand the street as being what the practitioners consider as reality. This is a problematic connection, and there is therefore also a great need to differentiate "the street" from "the sport".

The street is – as we know – a place of uncontrolled violence and assault. Jochum Stattin, who has studied the typical fears of our time, identifies the street and its violence as one such fear. He believes that the main reason for the fear is changes of attitude, not that the violence itself has increased. We have instead become less tolerant towards violence. The mass media reinforce and specify the image of street violence, telling us who is dangerous (which categories of people) and where and when danger can threaten. In this way cultural boundaries are drawn *vis-à-vis* other individuals or groups, which are easily stereotyped (Stattin 1990:110f.). The process of categorizing, evaluating, and comparing with the past has to do with the need to draw boundaries between right and wrong, between permitted and prohibited, and to establish order, to soothe collective worry in times of turbulent development, and to ensure a better future. Classifying means conceptualizing and building up a special understanding that shapes our reality. Since the abnormal is defined, ideas are created about the normal (Swärd 2000:303ff.).

Since Ultimate Fighting is generally regarded as uncontrolled violence, a practitioner of the sport is often regarded as a dangerous and violent man, the kind who is a potential threat to others in a public space like the street. But this is a masculinity that practitioners expressly reject and do not want to be associated with. The street is then used in turn as a concept for handling and averting the prejudices that practitioners of Ultimate Fighting encounter from other people. They use the reality of the street to explain what the difference is between street violence and Ultimate Fighting, and what distinguishes an untrained rowdy from a practitioner of Ultimate Fighting.[10]

For women in particular, combat sports are held up as a way to get training in self-defence, often against the violence encountered "on the street". It might be thought that, if Ultimate Fighting is what functions in reality, it ought to be the perfect self-defence. Yet the self-defence aspect is not emphasized by any of the practitioners. Something in the cultural meanings attached to Ultimate Fighting perhaps makes them refrain from speaking of self-defence. Perhaps any talk of self-defence would be too direct an emphasis on the link to reality, since Ultimate Fighting otherwise balances precariously on the borderline. The rejection of this link to reality probably also has to do with the fact that Finnfighters' Gym, where my informants train, wants to profile itself as

a sports club with its own contests which are the purpose of the training. But perhaps it is ultimately because the masculinity that is expressly constructed in Ultimate Fighting does not in itself permit any talk of self-defence. Is self-defence "feminine"?[11]

Power in the different spheres of society is concentrated in men. This does not mean that every single man has power, but that the exercise of power, like power in general, is associated with men and that the use of power is a way to construct a masculine subject (Jokinen 2003a:14). In this way one can understand why self-defence is associated with women, or is culturally reckoned as feminine. Self-defence presupposes that one is an object of the exercise of power, the reverse of exercising it.

The self-defence aspect emerged in an "inverted" way among the interviewed practitioners; through training in Ultimate Fighting one is pacified and becomes calm, secure, and self-confident.

Ultimate Fighting is in line with modern sport and shares the same values as modern sport, but in an intensified way. Since modern sport has always set out to measure who is best, in Ultimate Fighting the idea is to find out not just who is best in the sport, but who is "best in reality", because they have "torn down the old frames around combat sports" as far as possible. The demand for discipline exacted by sport in the form of hard training is also found in Ultimate Fighting, and this is something the practitioners want to emphasize, even to the extent that they count Ultimate Fighting as one of the most demanding sports, in terms of the need for both physical and mental preparedness and technical skill. They always stress that Ultimate Fighting is comprehensive and complex and that it takes brains to learn the techniques. Abilities such as analysis and precision are valued more highly today than brute force, since strength and manual labour have declined in importance (Feldreich 2000:298).

A Simulated Street Fight – Controlled Uncontrol

The fact that Ultimate Fighting is described as and aspires to be "like an authentic situation" means that Ultimate Fighting can be referred to as a simulated street fight. The traditional combat sports with their ritual forms, stylization, and set rules for movements, have been abandoned in favour of this new combat sport with many techniques and greater bodily freedom. But it is a freedom that has to be learned by training. Here is what one practitioner says: "I have had to rethink completely, I suppose, if you think about my repertoire as it was before. So it has been a challenge for me to try to erase the things I brought with me from my karate, 'don't do like this, do like this', because I know that it's bad in this sport... I suppose you're always reshaped by what you are doing, in one way or another, how you think, how you move" (SLS 2026, vol. 2002:16).

Freedom in the sport also means that there is room to make it into your own combat sport and develop a personal style. People choose and learn different techniques from different combat sports, proceeding from their own ability. Ultimate Fighting is not just an individual sport, but also – as one practitioner says – a personal sport, which means that the practitioner makes and embodies his own style. "Ultimate Fighting doesn't need to be the same thing for me as it is for someone else ... I view it as a personal form of combat sport... and my personal style is shaped after a while too, so that it becomes something more. I have no name for my style, it's just me, you

know, it's a part of me, what I do and that" (SLS 2026, 2002:19).

Modernity is associated with a breach with tradition. Jonas Frykman (1998:300) has pointed out that this breach was not just an intellectual project. The aspiration for change was and is a physical impatience as well. This is something that can also be seen in Ultimate Fighting. At the same time, things seem to become "traditional", in the sense of old-fashioned, at an increasingly rapid pace when new challenges and sensations are constantly being sought. The sociologist Peter Dahlén emphasizes the connections that exist between youth, sports, and cultural modernization. Sport today has become synonymous with youthfulness and youthful eroticism, pulse and vitality, he claims. It has become more difficult to draw the border between sport and youth culture or popular culture, since sport in today's media-based society is being liberated from its institutional ties and is adapting to individualizing needs for experiences. The new youth sports intensify the opposition between, on the one hand, competition and demands for discipline (which working life requires) and on the other hand acting out and intensive experiences rooted in the body (which is a part of popular and youth culture), thereby enhancing "the sense of now" (Dahlén 1995:212 ff.).

"Testing one's limits" has become something of a cliché today, in that it has become an empty phrase and simultaneously a concept containing a great many meanings. "Testing one's limits" and individual qualities associated with them (including readiness to accept challenges) is very positively charged in our society and in demand in working life – to such an extent that we have to test our own limits. This is also an aspect highlighted by Niels Kayser Nielsen when he comments on Zygmunt Bauman's theory of the postmodern "fit body"[12] in connection with boundary-transcending bodily practices. According to Kayser Nielsen, these practices with their cultivation of physical and mental fitness are not boundary-transcending but both conforming to the system and typical of our times. Although expressive sport may seem unbridled, it presupposes an intimate knowledge of the codes. The new standard is a combination of abandon and self-control; being both controlled and uncontrolled (Kayser Nielsen 1997:114).

As I see it, this is precisely what the "freedom" in Ultimate Fighting is about. The techniques in Ultimate Fighting may be viewed as codes, which build up the sport. What may look from the outside like an uncontrolled fight, since Ultimate Fighting is quick, rough, and not very stylized, is described from within by the practitioners as a game of chess – the person who makes the first mistake loses. "Perhaps it is not until you try it yourself that it feels so completely different, you don't see it as violence any more... but then again those who don't do it but just come to watch, maybe they want to see fighting. They want to see violence, but now that I've been doing it for over a year, I just see nice techniques and how someone can combine punches and kicks well, that it's not violence, it's more like sport, like any other sport" (SLS 2026:18).

All the different reactions to Ultimate Fighting that the practitioners describe encountering from people around them seem to blend into a highly charged figure, which one can call the "hooligan", against which practitioners of Ultimate Fighting contrast themselves. The hooligan has no control over himself but is steered by emotions, he is lazy and not willing to train or to learn techniques since he is not intelligent, and he wants to as-

sert himself at the expense of others, while he is simultaneously dependent on others. The hooligan is both cowardly and arrogant at the same time. The hooligan is someone who wants to prove something, without having earned it. It becomes necessary to exclude the hooligan from the sport and banish him to the street, both literally and figuratively. In addition, it is interesting that Finnfighters' Gym is viewed as a place which can "transform" men with elements of the "hooligan" or rowdy in them. Through Ultimate Fighting a hooligan can become a fighter, a self-assured friend, and hence the boundary drawn *vis-à-vis* the hooligan is not just a boundary drawn against an external image. It also seems to reveal an internal struggle, within the club and within men.

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Notes

1 Other names for the same sport or variations of it are NHB (No Holds Barred), MMA (Mixed Martial Arts), and freefighting. However, Ultimate Fighting is not a uniform sport and its outlines are not fixed. Different rules apply in different contests, which is also due to the legislation in different countries. Throughout the article I will call the combat sport "Ultimate Fighting", which was the name used by practitioners and spectators in my interviews. In the course of the study, however, I have noticed that people in the sport, perhaps increasingly often and possibly as the sport is becoming established, call it NHB. The spectators at the Finnfight 6 event in 2003 were welcomed to the Scandinavian open championship in "Ultimate Fighting NHB". The dual name was thus used to address all those present. For the general public Ultimate Fighting is a more familiar term than NHB, and is associated with the "Ultimate Fighting Championship" (UFC) in the USA, created in 1993 in the USA and broadcast on television as a pay-per-view programme. The practitioners themselves trace the origin of the sport to ancient Greece and one combat practised there, the pankration.

2 In Swedish I used the word *slagsmål*, which refers to a fight outside the framework of sports.

3 I have interviewed six practitioners at Finnfighters' Gym in Åbo. They were born between 1974 and 1981. In terms of age they are representative of the club, where most members are aged 20–30. Boys under 16 and women are not admitted for training, according to the club's website. Two of my informants compete and the rest just train, apart from one who has quit. I have also interviewed two men who are interested in Ultimate Fighting, who have given me their view of the sport as spectators. They are all Swedish speakers, apart from one Norwegian. The Swedish speakers are students and have all come to Åbo to study. Some of the practitioners have therefore deliberately looked for a leisure pursuit and new acquaintances in the new city. One of the practitioners was among the founders of Finnfighters' Gym in 2000.

4 In Finland the new combat sports seem to have spread rapidly. The website "NHB Finland" has a list of seventeen different clubs in towns all over the country where new combat sports are practised, often at the same time as they offer training in traditional combat sports. The clubs that concentrate solely on new combat sports, such as Finnfighters' Gym, are not so numerous. In Finland Ultimate Fighting is still a small, and for most people invisible, combat sport. Before 2000 there was a small group in Åbo training in Ultimate Fighting, but with the aim of expanding the sport in Åbo and Finland they founded the Finnfighters' Gym. The organization and also the sport itself have been tightened. The contests held in Finland are organized by the clubs themselves and not much money is made from them. But competitive fighters regularly take part in events aboard, where the prizes can be valuable.

5 The location of the gym is something of a secret to outsiders. One of the owners and founders explained that no signs are needed; those who want to find the Finnfighters' Gym will do so. People are often introduced through friends. The address is stated on the club's website.

6 The club, as one of the leading examples of its type in Finland, also has an international orientation and cooperates with corresponding clubs abroad. The gym belongs to "Team Scandinavian", which is an organization comprising other Nordic clubs. This means that foreign practitioners also come to

the gym to train. Ultimate Fighting and the other new combat sports practised at the Finnfighters' Gym are new and malleable, and the interaction with other clubs also involves an exchange of techniques.

7 Formerly the gym was not open to everyone – women were not allowed in. One practical reason is that the premises are small and that there is only one shower room; another reason sometimes claimed was that the tough training includes techniques that are not considered suitable for women. The idea that hard techniques suit men rests on the notion that physical combat, blood, and bruises are "natural" for men, but alien to women. This idea also legitimates violent sports (Boyle & Haynes 2000:137). Although the rules have been changed, there are still no women training at the Finnfighters' Gym. It can be described as a masculine space.

8 The categorization of the techniques and the different combat sports into "hard" and "soft" is made according to the danger and risk, and also according to how close or distant the combatants come. "Soft" techniques (wrestling) are close-up techniques, while "hard" techniques (kicks and punches) create distance.

9 The practitioners talk about *violence* solely as something uncontrolled. On the other hand, they did regard Ultimate Fighting as a *violent sport.*

10 Yet another way in which the urban public space emerges in the interviews is seen when the informants bring up problems that practitioners of Ultimate Fighting can encounter. Other men sometimes come up in pubs and want to fight and seem provoked by the fact that someone does Ultimate Fighting. There is a cultural association between men and violence, which I think becomes visible in this case. Being provoked by the fact that someone else claims to be "best at fighting", and perceiving one's own position as challenged by it, seems to suggest that the ability to fight can act as a hierarchizing factor among (young) men. The fight itself is moreover a hierarchizing act in which one man wins and the other loses. It follows from this that it is also possible to boast that one does Ultimate Fighting, and boasting is viewed in the club as being incompatible with the manly ideal. "I don't tell people at once that I do it or boast or anything like that" (SLS 20206:18:8).

11 Here is how one of the practitioners reasons about self-defence: "Mm, it probably is, of course. Good, that you feel safe, of course, that if someone comes on to you, but not in that way. I dunno, it's probably better self-defence than these common kinds... Especially, they don't have it in Finland, but in the USA, [for] women... it's really good [for] women too, as self-defence" (SLS 2026, vol. 2002:20:16).

12 Zygmunt Bauman argues that, whereas the modern body was that of a producer and soldier, disciplined and forced to follow a specific pattern of movements, the postmodern body is primarily a receiver of sensations and an instrument for pleasure. This ability is called fitness. "'Fitness' stands for the individual's bodily and spiritual capacity to absorb, and creatively respond to, a growing volume of new experience, ability to withstand a fast pace of change, and ability to 'keep on course' through self-monitoring and correcting the inadequacies of performance." The body is now private property, and it is up to the owner to cultivate it. This puts the owner in a difficult situation. He must have control, but it is he himself who must be controlled (Bauman 1995:154).

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Biographical Note

Thomas Højrup, Professor in Copenhagen

Thomas Højrup was appointed professor of ethnology at Copenhagen University in 2004. He was born in 1953 and took his M.A. in European ethnology at Copenhagen in 1981. He held a postgraduate scholarship 1982–85 and in 1985 became lecturer at the Department of Archaeology and Ethnology, where he took his doctorate in 1995.

Højrup has published many scholarly works, with the focus on structural life-mode analysis. Other interests are the study of maritime communities and discussions of the relevance of ethnological analysis for politics and public planning.

As an independent theorist Højrup is unparalleled in Nordic ethnology. In this role he has found theoretical inspiration far beyond ethnology. His works on life-modes have been translated into several languages, inspiring researchers in other disciplines. The approach was first presented in *Det glemte folk* (1983). From ethnographies of different life-modes he has analysed the ways in which perceptions of work, leisure, family, and career are linked.

Another crucial work is his doctoral dissertation *Omkring livsformsanalysens udvikling* (1995), where he extends his theory to state formations in a broad comparative perspective.

Like few other ethnologists, Højrup's interest in planning problems has put him in contact with a wide range of actors outside the discipline. He has shown that ethnology can provide material for political debate and concrete public planning. In recent years he has led a major interdisciplinary project on the growth of the Danish welfare state and its challenges today.

The scope of Højrup's work is evident from the volume *Dannelsens dialektik*, where he has collected a number of studies from very different fields.

Thomas Højrup combines his interest in theory with empirical studies of both present and past, and he has played a central part in the development of ethnology in Denmark in recent decades.

Orvar Löfgren, Lund

Information

Mediterranean Food and its Influences Abroad

The International Commission for Ethnological Food Research has held its 15th conference since it was started in 1970. Some forty delegates from all over Europe, from Ireland in the west to Russia in the east, from Norway in the north to Greece in the south, along with participants from the USA and Japan, gathered in late September and early October 2004 in Dubrovnik, Croatia, to discuss the theme of "Mediterranean Food and its Influences Abroad".

The chair of the conference, Professor Patricia Lysaght, Ireland, began with a tribute to Anders Salomonsson, who died in spring 2004, praising his contribution to the ethnology of food and also his significance as chair of the conference 1985–94. This conference, held almost every other year, assembles two types of participants: those with their base in university research in ethnology or neighbouring disciplines, and those working with the practical presentation of ethnological findings, for example, in the museum world.

During the conference there were about thirty lectures on as many Mediterranean-inspired topics. Most of the lectures will result in articles in a coming book in 2005 (preliminary), and there is room here to mention some of the presentations. Antonia Leda-Matalas, Harokopios, University of Athens, began by summing up the historical background to the idea of the healthiness of the Mediterranean diet that is widespread today, much of it based on studies of the habits of Cretan *men* in the 1960s. Macaroni, spaghetti, and pizza are typical of the spread of Mediterranean food over the world. Pizza, which has a flexible status and can function as both everyday and festive food, is examined by Ann Helene B. Skjelbred of Norwegian Ethnological Research. The significance of French cuisine as a political tool for the opening of Japan during the shogunate of Tokugawa, and also the interest in Italian spaghetti among consumers who wanted to show their orientation to the west in post-war Japan in the fifties and sixties, was discussed by Minami Naoto, Osaka International University. Konrad Köstlin, University of Vienna, pointed out in his paper that the Mediterranean cuisine can be understood as a modern-day construction from contexts such as charter tourism to the Mediterranean and the desire of home-coming tourists to show off their food experiences in order to enhance their status. William Lockwood, University of Michigan, and Yvonne Lockwood, Michigan State University Museum, presented parts of their research on *culinary creolization* with examples from Arab immigrant groups in Detroit, Michigan. Some of these groups, according to Lockwood, mix dishes from the homeland with American elements. Others distance themselves from the food habits of their homeland, wishing to abandon the culture of the old country and avoid reminders of their origin, and also wishing to be as American as possible and proudly show off their new identity.

The lectures varied a great deal in quality, probably due to differences in ethnological research traditions, not just as a consequence of different outlooks on knowledge but just as much as a result of twentieth-century political development in Europe. Many articles were descriptive and filled with various kinds of observations and personal reflections. Research findings were presented without any reference to research methods or theories in cultural studies or related approaches. The lectures did not give the impression of being the outcome of any specific research projects. Consequently, the discussions and conclusions are not really transferable to any other context than the one described by the author. Little attention was paid to the significance of food and cooking for social and cultural relations or the connection to issues of power and gender, to name just a few areas of topical interest in ethnology.

The introduction of new dishes and changes in the culture of food and meals are often described as logical and without conflict. No tension was noticed between the defenders of tradition and the coming of modernity. It was frequently observed that an ingredient or dish was adopted by a culture, but there was no discussion of why we humans are interested in adopting this new element, or what we wish to communicate with it. It was seldom made clear whether the reference was to the peasantry, the rural proletariat, social outsiders, an urban middle class, or the nobility when ingredients and dishes were discussed.

The presentation of the articles was usually done by reading the manuscript aloud, more like popular radio lectures than interesting public presentations of new research findings. The conference did not allocate any time to workshops or the like, where ethnological methods, theories, and use of material could be discussed. In this respect an international conference could raise methodological questions

and give an opportunity to see how others have succeeded in situations where you yourself have failed to get anywhere.

With a more explicit ethnological and scholarly approach and a vitalized programme – without throwing out the baby with the bathwater – the conference should be an important research tool giving opportunities to encounter alternative outlooks. It feels very important to improve the understanding of today's global culture. More discussion of the methods of ethnological food studies, the use of theory, and the relevance of different sources for our research questions would be an important addition. The next conference will be held in Innsbruck in September 2006, on the theme of "Foodways and Lifestyles in the Search for Health and Beauty".

Richard Tellström, Grythyttan

New Dissertations

The Genre of Trolls

Camilla Asplund Ingemark, The Genre of Trolls. The Case of a Finland-Swedish Folk Belief Tradition. Åbo Akademi University Press, Åbo 2005. 328 pp. Ill. Diss. ISBN 951-765-222-4.

■ Camilla Asplund Ingemark's recent study of folk narratives from Finland-Swedish tradition concerns encounters between humans and trolls. Although the title of the work proposes an approach to understanding figures from folk belief as "genre," that is not what Ingemark focuses on in this challenging work. Rather, she explores the construction of the image of the troll in traditional expressive genres and how that image is influenced, and in turn influences, other modes of cultural expression. She bases her theoretical approach to the question of how the image of the troll is constructed on theories of intertextuality, primarily those of Lotte Tarkka (1993) and Laura Stark (1998). These theories derive from the earlier work of Julia Kristeva (1978) and other, predominantly French, literary scholars. Ingemark weds her discussion of intertextuality and the impact of "intertexts" (particularly Biblical intertexts) with discussions of power based on the theories of Michel Foucault (1980), discussions of dialogism and discourse based on the theories of Mikhail Bakhtin (1986), discussions of genre based primarily on the work of Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs (1992), and discussions of parody based on the theories of Linda Hutcheon (1985). The resulting study is one of significant theoretical complexity that pushes the boundaries of earlier considerations of traditional narratives about human encounters with supernatural beings. The underlying premise that these texts exist neither in a cultural or historical vacuum, nor in generic stasis is a sound one, and one that Ingemark is able to document quite thoroughly.

Trolls are an ill-defined group in Nordic folk belief because of both (a) the different features that accrue to beings that have similar names in the various Scandinavian languages and dialects and (b) the different names used in these languages and dialects for beings that exhibit similar features. Early on, Ingemark explores some of the conflicting characterizations of these supernatural beings throughout Scandinavia, pointing out scholars' continuing inability to reach consensus on what characterizes these beings both across genres and across cultural and linguistic boundaries (pp. 6-10). Recognizing the complexity of the taxonomy of these supernatural nature beings, she relies on the work of Elisabeth Hartmann (1936) and Jan-Öjvind Swahn (1984 and 1995), and situates the beings as essentially cognate with the bjærgfolk of Danish tradition (p. 7). In passing, she notes that these beings are not witches (p. 8); given that Danish law used the term "troldom" to designate witchcraft, this is an important distinction to make. Ultimately, she decides that the "troll" of her study is "a supernatural creature inhabiting the forest and bearing this specific name" (p. 86).

The book is organized in a manner that is fairly standard for academic dissertations. The first chapter presents the overall research question, and suggests a series of theoretical frameworks that are taken up in later chapters. The second chapter provides a wonderfully thorough overview of folklore collection in Swedish Finland, and includes a well informed and useful critique of each of the collections that she uses as her empirical data in subsequent chapters. Ingemark explains how she has selected narratives that most closely align with Honko's notion of a "thick corpus," an idea that derives from Clifford Geertz's anthropological refinement of Gilbert Ryle's concept of "thick description." In a "thick corpus," the tradition participants are readily identifiable, a great deal is known about the historical and social context in which the collections were made, and multiple variants of stories were collected. Ingemark uses the few thick corpora that she is able to identify to explore the "intertextuality" that is the linchpin in her theoretical approach. Overall, Ingemark is able to identify 123 primary records, and 98 secondary records as the core of her empirical research material (p. 46). The overwhelming majority of these stories are legends and folk tales.

The third chapter describes the various types of encounters between humans and trolls that occur in her narrative material. Ingemark proposes that in these stories "the troll and the supernatural sphere may be viewed as instruments for thinking about one's identity and place in the world, and for orienting oneself in a larger, complex reality" (p. 86). Ingemark does some excellent and necessary descriptive work in this chapter, detailing the time and place of encounters with trolls and the differences between men's, women's and children's encounters with the trolls. Her discussion of the different types

of interactions with the trolls is both thorough and well documented; she maps the interactions onto a continuum defined by two poles—tolerance and conflict—and includes a discussion of narratives that move from tolerance to conflict and vice versa. She notes that in general the contact between humans and trolls is initiated by a transgression of the boundary separating the two realms. Order in the two worlds is reinstated through a process she labels "dissociation," in which the boundary separating the two realms is restored. Dissociation is most commonly initiated by men (p. 120). Ingemark emphasizes that these stories of encounters with the supernatural often inform each other, and tradition participants are aware of the rich and diverse array of stories that describe these encounters. Summing up her material, she proposes that, "[t]he corpus of material presented here can be regarded as a large-scale intertextual network, and as such the interrelation between the texts constituting it is characterized by association and disagreement" (p. 135).

Chapters four through seven carry the theoretical weight of the work. In chapter four, Ingemark turns the discussion to intertextuality and the relationship between stories of encounters with trolls and Biblical stories. The underlying premise is that tradition participants were aware of both groups of narratives, and that this awareness meant that narrators used the stories to comment on one another; in short, the stories of encounters with trolls and the Biblical stories that tradition participants encountered in church, in informal and formal religious education, and in lay preaching formed part of a complex, on-going negotiation of cultural ideology. Drawing heavily on the work of Tarkka, Ingemark focuses on narratives about encounters with trolls that include the blinding of the human protagonist and examines how these narratives interact intertextually with Biblical narratives that deal with illumination. Although the goal of the chapter is to show that "the intertextual relations between the folk narratives and religious texts constitute a network of associations spanning several thematic clusters: paradisical existence, vanity, shame, illumination, reform, captivity and fratricide" (p.176), Ingemark provides little clear evidence that the particular Biblical stories that she chooses as intertexts for the troll narratives were well known by the tradition participants in the communities in which the stories were collected, that they were used in the preaching of local ministers or lay preachers, or that they were stories with which the narrators were intimately familiar.

In the fifth chapter, Ingemark continues along the same theoretical path, but directs her attention to stories about clergymen who fail in their attempts to banish trolls. She indicates that, in these stories, the intertextuality forms the basis for a social, rather than ideological, critique. Most of the stories that she explores in this chapter are well known variants of ministers' encounters with the Devil or ghosts, and the role of the trolls in these stories seems to suggest an intriguing degree of motifemic equivalence between all of these supernatural beings in Swedish Finland folk belief tradition. Ingemark does not explore this equivalence to any significant degree, but rather reads these stories against another set of Biblical stories. She departs, however, from the structural schemes that were at the basis of the intertextual analyses in the preceding chapter and instead situates the stories and their intertexts against the shifting terrain of power relationships between the rural populace and the church.

Ingemark switches theoretical gears in the sixth chapter, and engages a discussion of genre and parody in her analysis of Johan Alén's stories, all of which were collected in the nineteenth century by Jakob Edvard Wefvar. The theoretical discussions of genre, parody and Bakhtin's notion of chronotope and novelization that form the theoretical core of the chapter are quite dense. While the discussions of parody and intertextual gaps are thought provoking, as is her exploration of the applicability of Bakhtin's chronotopes and novelization to oral narrative, they could perhaps have been developed in a slightly clearer manner.

Early in the chapter, Ingemark uses a theory of parody to explore a variant of "Three Princes." She considers the story parodic based in large part on a single interjection at the close of the narrative that reveals that the prince has married a troll. Although the argument is quite interesting, Ingemark does not consider the possibility that Alén's seemingly parodic remark may not be his own. In her discussion of Wefvar's collection methodology, she notes that, "his field notes were often imperfect and vague drafts, while the submitted manuscripts were clean copies and edited to some degree" (p. 49, citing Häggman 1992:81). This characterization of Wefvar's methodology also undermines Ingemark's proposition that Alén's storytelling is marked by "carefully selected

phrases" (p. 243).

In her final theoretical chapter, Ingemark brings up Bakhtin's concepts of "unfinalizability" and "finalization." In densely argued prose, she suggests that these concepts help elucidate the relationship between humans and the trolls. She concludes that "unfinalizability is an important ingredient in the construction of the troll," (p. 277) and that this indeterminacy in the nature of the troll is a source of anxiety for humans who long to "finalize" the troll. The best way to "finalize" the troll appears to be to kill it.

There are a few unusual features to Ingemark's work that should be noted, but that do not detract from the overall theoretical scope of the work. The title of the work seems poorly chosen, since genre is only a small part of her overall discussion of troll narratives; perhaps "The Image of the Troll," would have been a more fitting title. Also, Ingemark's writing style is at times awkward, although this may be an artifact of the complexity of the arguments she presents. Finally, even if one appreciates her attention to detail in the bibliography, the use of no less than four separate spellings of Mikhail Bakhtin's name could have been handled in a more orderly fashion.

Although Ingemark provides an excellent summation of her general arguments in a concluding chapter, the book does not end there. Rather, there is some intriguing material in the appendices and the figures that are printed at the end of the book. The long Appendix B, selected narratives from the repertoire of Johan Alén, is interesting for two reasons. First, she includes the Swedish language originals of the stories, allowing one to get a sense of word choice and language use over a series of his narratives—of course, this might be the word choice of Wefvar and not Alén. Second, the narratives as a whole provide an interesting glimpse into the overall repertoire of Alén, whose stories form the core of chapter six. In this context, one perhaps could have hoped for an exhaustive presentation of the repertoire, perhaps in the order in which the stories were recorded. Nevertheless, the materials in this appendix could well be the basis of a larger, more substantive repertoire analysis of this engaging narrator. The pictorial materials that follow the appendix are equally fascinating. Ingemark provides little discussion of these engravings of Biblical scenes, restricting herself to short captions. These pictures, as she notes, clearly provide additional "intertexts" to the written intertexts that inform her discussion of the relationship between Biblical stories and stories of human encounters with trolls. A consideration of the differing impact between written and pictorial intertexts would have been an interesting addition to her argument, allowing an exploration of the interplay between the oral, the written and the visual.

Ingemark's study opens numerous intriguing avenues of inquiry concerning folk belief, genre, the image of supernatural beings and the applicability of modern literary theory to the study of traditional storytelling. Although some of the theoretical discussions are burdened by elaborate, and at times obscure, terminology, the underlying propositions are worthy of consideration. The notion that stories of trolls were greatly informed by other aspects of contemporaneous cultural endeavor—in particular, the religious expression of ministers and lay preachers—is likely correct. According to Ingemark, "narratives of trolls and Biblical texts [were] part of the same network of associations" for the tradition participants (p. 76). Furthermore, the notion that stories of supernatural beings, particularly trolls, stand in a complex relationship to other narratives and representations external to folk tradition is an important one. Finally, Ingemark should be lauded for her engagement with an individual repertoire, a repertoire in which a playful attitude toward tradition underscores that folklore emerges in the dialectic tension between the individual and tradition.

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On the Borderlines

Jari Eilola, *Rajapinnoilla. Sallitun ja kielletyn määritteleminen 1600-luvun jälkipuoliskon noituus- ja taikuustapauksissa.* (On the Borderlines – Boundaries between the Accepted and the Forbidden in Finnish and Swedish Witchcraft and Magic Cases in the Latter Half of the Seventeenth Century.) Bibliotheca Historica 81. SKS, Helsinki 2003. 381 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 951-746-550-5.

■ The Witch-hunts belong to the classic research subjects of European cultural history. They have been the objects of serious analysis since the latter half of the 19th century. Special attention has been paid to the court proceedings against so-called witches that ran rampant in various parts of Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries. These events have been associated with terms such as witch epidemic, hysteria, and

doctrine as well as witches' Sabbaths and witchcraft in general. The phenomenon is interesting in as far as its occurrence and the judicial, religious, political and psychological evaluation of the period are parallel matters. This offers the opportunity for a contrastive study of, for example, the content, structure, logic, and life strategies derived from the private and public world-view of the 17th century.

After all, in 1678, the physician, chemist, and author Urban Hjärne had already placed the court proceedings against witches in Stockholm under the scrutiny and spotlight of sceptical examination. Witchcraft phenomena have understandably enough been at the centre of attention in several fields of research such as cultural history, social and economic history, psychology, legal science, folklorism, theology, and ethnology. As early as 1913, the Swedish psychiatrist Bror Gadelius presented his shrewd analysis of the phenomenon in conjunction with his study of the well-known case of the charges brought against the wife of the vicar of Gävle (Eilola's case no. 5, Gadelius, new version 1963).

Eilola has therefore had a wide range of descriptions, analysis and interpretative material at his disposal. This includes the research of scholars such as Rafael Hertzberg (as early as the 1880s), Antero Heikkinen (1969), and Marko Nenonen from Finland, Bengt Ankarloo, Linda Oja, and Marie Lennersand from Sweden, Gustav Henningsen from Denmark, and Bente Gullveig Alver from Norway. Henningsen and Alver are folklorists and the aforementioned scholar's doctoral thesis *The Witches' Advocate. Basque Witchcraft and the Spanish Inquisition (1609–1614)* (1980) is still one of the most important analyses and interpretations pertaining to the theme. The main emphasis here, however, has been placed on an examination of the court institution itself. Most of the research in the field deals with the origin, causes, consequences, and prevalence of the persecution of witches as a collective phenomenon. Eilola has critically evaluated the theories of researchers such as Wolfgang Behringer, Robin Briggs, Stuart Clark, Richard Kieckhefer, Brian P. Levack, Alan Mcfarlane, Robert Muchembled, Eva Pócs, W.F. Ryan and Robert W. Scribner. This has enabled him to develop his own viewpoint.

Eilola's idea is to use the belief system that emerged in the form of the proceedings against witches as a key to exposing the world-view of 17th century man (i.e. 'the contemporary belief system of the time'). Herein lies the originality of the work.

His influences come from the so-called historical mentality studies that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, and whose aim was to find and structurally analyse the collective and shared features of a people during a specific period. These features could include shared experiences, associations, beliefs, fears and sources of anxiety in as far as they emerged in the light of central rituals and annual rites having to do with birth, death and rites of passage. Research under the rubric of mentality studies by Jacques Le Goff, Carlo Ginsburg, Marc Bloch, Philippe Ariès, and Michel Foucault has provided tools of analysis for the author. Folklorists and anthropologists have also been a source of inspiration; especially the work of Mary Douglas, which deals with the drawing of mental boundaries in various cultures, as well as the work of Seppo Knuuttila and Anna-Leena Siikala on magic, belief systems, the hereafter, metonymy and shamanism have provided a critical apparatus of terms.

Eilola has nonetheless internalised a wide frame of reference and used it as the building blocks for his study, thus complementing and deepening not only the picture of the phenomenon itself but also the approaches of the various researchers.

The subject of the research is therefore not the witch-hunts themselves, but the individual as both the cause and subject of these persecutions. How did a person become a witch in the eyes of the other members of the community?

Indeed, the main chapter headings of the work such as 'Witchcraft and magic as part of the thoughts and actions of people', 'The household and victims of witchcraft', and 'Being branded a witch as a social process' are indicative of the nature of this study.

Eilola's analysis involved a close reading of the judgement books of the three towns of Gävle (Sweden), Nykarleby and Vasa (Finland) during the period (c.1650–1700) in which the 81 cases were heard. The author has chosen urban communities as he sees them as compact social arenas. The reason he has chosen towns in the province of Gästrikland in eastern Sweden as well as the coastal towns of Ostrobothnia was to ascertain whether there were any differences in the kingdom at large. This is something he does not return to at the end of the study, however.

The main lynchpin of the study is the speech or 'discourse' of people and the perception or world-view, which is gradually built thereof, taking on the shape of general knowledge and finally truth.

This again generates further speech, which leads to further perceptions and so on. Thus, the stage is set for a vicious round of allegations, self-allegations, and criminal and punitive proceedings.

The viewpoint is the same that Foucault employed in most of his studies. Eilola is an unknowing disciple of Foucault, however. He adopts the term 'discourse' only as a variant of speech, although the other immediate operative, critical tools such as context, episteme and transgression are splendidly 'realised' without the author knowing it. This is the second original feature of the work.

Eilola has undertaken a considerable task whence clarifying the differences between magic, witchcraft, and charms in 'popular belief', the eyes of authority, as a means of interpretation and examination, and as a corpus of stories (p. 45-217).

This is necessary, however, to foreground the main question of the study, i.e. to delineate boundary areas and make them possible as an area of interpretation. Concepts such as witchcraft (the supernatural ability to hurt others), magic (as both a ritualised and verbal activity), and the witch (the subject and object of this activity) start to form a multi-faceted network where on the one hand the local community and its crises, quarrels, kinships and various relationships, and on the other hand the amount of personal happiness and fortune, body-centeredness, thirst for power, disease, and fear of death serve as the ingredients of a life strategy.

Eilola's text and various diagrams (p. 88, 337) splendidly illuminate this strategy and the inherent logic it follows as the contemporary reader is brought closer to 17th century man.

This scenario includes both inherited traditions such as stories and dreams, (the productivity of tradition), as well as the use of the most heterogeneous means of manipulation.

By analysing a cultural semantic field with the express view of identifying the boundary between the accepted and forbidden, the author is able to demonstrate when people viewed magic as 'normal' and when the line unto dangerous witchcraft was crossed, and 'witchcraft gained a foothold' (p. 141). The drawing of boundaries was related to both the individual and situation, which in turn led to insecurity in all camps, and not least within the elite and governing circles. These proceedings could carry on for decades. As far as I can see, previous research has not on the level of primary material been able to draw distinctions between the negative and positive connotations of witchcraft and magic as well as the integration of both these phenomena into the social community and its 'metonymic' extension in the form of the body.

As the author proceeds to study the status of the individual and the role of witchcraft in the world in the second and third main chapters, the reader is granted an explanation as to why women in particular were subject to witchcraft accusations and children were used as witnesses.

The author emphasises the importance of safeguarding basic sources of livelihood (household items such as milk, beer, and bread) as the substance of the concept of personal 'happiness' as well as the female role of wife, mother, and housekeeper (western Finland). The questioning and challenging of this role signifies according to the author both the destabilisation of the entire societal hierarchy as well as the undermining of 'the collective good' within the state. Individual arbitrariness or deviance was seen as a threat to the equilibrium of society. This becomes obvious in not only the hierarchy of gender, but also when witchcraft was used as a tool in political power games. The exposure of individual 'identity' and networks of power as background factors to this phenomenon deepen the picture of the thought and actions of 17th century man. The distinction between 'external' and 'internal' reality (p. 272) locates Eilola in the same reflective position of modernity as the sceptical commentators of the witch-hunt phenomenon.

Being branded a witch was also a process of social exclusion, and therefore the individual was cast out of society into a liminal zone where the brand of evil was transformed into an impulse to survive and 'internal' negativity became destructive aggression.

In addition, here in the third main chapter, the author is able to reveal how honour, hearsay, quarrels, curses, threats and finally stigmatisation played their roles as on the one hand fuel for the destabilisation of a world-view and the other hand as a painful remedy for the re-integration of society.

This is the detailed approach that Eilola's study allows and precisely this kind of material makes possible. The following scheme can be obtained as a kind of summary of the study:

The Collective Good – Public Scrutiny – Knowledge, Stereotypical Images of Witches

Personal Quarrels – Public Scrutiny – Other Individual Traits, 'Defects'
The Upset Balance of Society – Societal Coherence – The Guilty Party
The Constructive Significance of Speech – Group Belief – A Truth Schema

This kind of multi-faceted analysis of a cultural semantic field is revealed as the 'outcome' of Eilola's study, which the author reiterates in the final chapter heading of 'Interpretations, meanings and drawing of boundaries'.

One could go further and be as bold to assert that there never existed any witchcraft other than 'normal', traditional witchcraft and magic used as an efficient and deftly employed instrument of power (Foucault). This type of 'outcome' would be the purpose of a consistently carried out discourse analysis.

Historically speaking this does not explain the origin of these ingredients, however. A more detailed and biographic approach to the individuals is not possible with the documentary material available. Eilola has been able to elicit sympathy for the witches, which the use of the word "victim" also implies. The study thereby dissects both parties and strips them to the bone.

It is a pleasure to read a text, which unlike many other theses rises above the explanatory level of mere compilation and commentary and due to the original thinking of its premise and execution emerges as the work of a true author, i.e. forging new paths of possibility without abandoning the virtues of previous research.

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Political Culture and Societal Engagement

Jan Fredriksson, Politisk kultur och samhällsengagemang. En etnologisk studie av den parlamentariska vardagen. Carlssons, Stockholm 2003. 223 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-7203-574-9.

■ One sometimes hears people talking about politics as if something distinguished this phenomenon from everything else in life, and often in negative terms. It is frequently journalism, the academic or the artistic world that makes politics something different, indeed something ugly.

It therefore made me happy when the introduction to Jan Fredriksson's doctoral dissertation from 2003, on "Political Culture and Societal Engagement", described in positive terms what is meaningful about political involvement and pointed out that politics originates in a civic ideal, that is, in "the individual's right and obligation to take part in political life" (p. 9).

My happiness was short-lived. For then came all the talk about untrustworthy politicians, their scandals and apathy, and finally the implicit question: is politics necessary? I understand that the idea and the text are cited here from research, the media, and informants' statements. The different discourses are thus a kind of necessity. They force themselves on the researcher precisely through their character of social facts. And such testing or proclaiming images help to increase our understanding of later parallel discussions. So Fredriksson knows what he is doing. For he has been there – in the centre of political events, if we may allude to the essence of ethnological fieldwork.

The reader is immediately informed, in a lucid manner, of what "political culture" is about. The author also links the aim of the study, its arrangement and implementation, to the questions: what, who, and how. WHAT asks about matters of shared concern. Children's upbringing and education and the care of the elderly are considered important. WHO concerns the right of definition. Should a group of elected politicians decide with absolute authority what is important? HOW concerns power and political leadership. This is the author's main question. However, this whole classical battery of questions leads us astray. Or more exactly, it is not until the last chapter that it becomes clear what Fredriksson thinks. So I wondered all the way through the dissertation: what is he trying to get at?

The fact that the research is based on many years of fieldwork and a larger intellectual collective (the ethnological community) shows that the author is thoroughly familiar with the world he is studying – in a dual sense. He has been an active union member and has done political work, and he has done research. Hence his detailed knowledge of the everyday reality of politicians. The research work has been conducted on the basis of a series of smaller studies, each of which serves as a piece in the jigsaw puzzle. Several studies are about politics and politicians, and from these it is observed that there are interested citizens who can envisage working with politics. These studies involve 60 informants (30 of

them are Social Democrats – but two chairmen are the main informants). In addition he has collected a huge number of newspaper articles.

What then are the grounds for my doubts? It is possibly the fact that the author does not declare at an early stage where he stands, that is, that he questions the "antipolitical stance". He should have had the courage to make that confession in the introduction, but all he revealed there was that he felt some sympathy for politicians. My doubts may also be due to the caution (there are far too many reservations in the text: *perhaps*, *possibly*) and the slow way in which the book is written (which I find appealing). And it is not "unputdownable" – I can manage only 50 pages at a time. Yet the dissertation is easy to read. "Reading slowly", as Arne Melberg (1999) says in his book of the same title, means understanding the words and the changes of meaning: they often contain a whole philosophy. This could mean that Fredriksson's question "What does politics do to politicians?" is really intended to shed light on something quite different from the question of democracy (in the sense of equality, solidarity).

The understatement of the dissertation is that politics is important, and this strengthens my opinion that the distrust of politicians (known in Swedish as *politikerförakt* or "scorn for politicians") is exaggerated. As an active researcher in the world of politicians and authorities, I do not find that politics no longer has a part to play. It is still regarded as highly meaningful. Nor does the sociologist Adrienne Sörbom, to whom the author refers, regard politics as obsolete. But it would be beneficial if the gap between citizens and politics could be reduced, she says. One recipe is that the pattern for politics should "perhaps" be changed, and a new meeting place could be the square or "agora". In ancient Greece political activity took place in a temple located in the centre of the square. Outside this public space, people could stand and listen to the rhetoric of the speakers. And a short distance away in the same square there was trade and bustling city life. There are scholars who believe that "everyone" took part here, performing a collective act.

Fredriksson's dissertation has some fascinating angles. Interesting key words are: pragmatism, modernity, anti-politics (pp. 31ff., 79f., 116ff., 121ff.). It is impossible to highlight all these ideas, so I shall confine myself to the term "political culture".

The methods – a set of techniques – and theoretical perspectives used here are not traditional ethnology, as the author stresses. This is probably because he wants to collect more knowledge, for example, by contrasting participant observation and ethnography against interviews (informants speaking for themselves) and archival material (political documentation) and thereby focus on two ideals: politicians' narratives and the discourse. If one separates participant observation and ethnography, viewing the former as an observer's role and the latter as description – after a brief visit to a studied group, this together becomes something more than traditional participant observation. The interviews show this too. They function not just as proof of the researcher's presence; the quotations, phrases and sentences also signal that he has reflected on the informants' answers. One disadvantage of the main informants is their position and power: both are chairmen, but on two different committees (one hard, one soft). Are these representative of committee members as a whole? The other members and deputies on the committees should surely have been interviewed. The focus is after all on local politicians (not professionals).

Otherwise the approach of cultural analysis is successful, combined with Pierre Bourdieu's concept of fields. Through this the author tries to write from a different platform, in fact two platforms: the levels of actor and structure, with the aim of deepening the study and providing both explanation and understanding.

Both theoretical perspectives are open and can be combined without contradictions. Regardless of how an author arranges his text, the relationship between the theoretical (ideas-based politics) and the empirical (practice) is always problematic. That is why the ethnologist's perspective of the individual or the politician (subjective narrative) is salutary, especially when it is broadened with the analysis of fields (objectively shared understanding). Not unexpectedly, I now see much more with Bourdieu's eyes than with my own: how the structure, like the political ideology, steers the layman's life-world and becomes an "institutionalized power game".

Politics is presented as a "social field", a sphere consisting of politicians: leisure-time or part-time politicians. (Occasionally the term "amateur politicians" is also used, which I dislike for evoking "dilettante, lover" rather than the task that politicians have to perform.) A characteristic of these is that they embody one and the same system of norms and values in the field. This is essential if they are to take

part: everyone must acknowledge certain values. It is therefore important that elected representatives build up the right capital: social capital (via the organizations in their own movement), organizational capital (knowledge about administration and regulations). A credible politician is one who is regarded as possessing "political capital". Only then is one fully qualified and in command of the procedure, the language, able to perform the right actions and keep all the rules in one's head.

In short, it is in this "field of politics" that politics is produced and practised. People fight over matters of common concern. From this perspective the sphere is a field of struggle or competition. As an actor (chairman) this person heads a committee, has the right to make decisions on urgent matters, to sign contracts, to grant remunerations, and to entertain. To commit an entire administrative department to a decision is too hasty. Against that background one can understand why citizens get angry when wrong becomes right, black becomes white, and different groups can be turned against each other. The voice that says "Show the bastards" naturally feels powerless and wants to protest.

On the other hand, Fredriksson declares, representatives of the media must understand that politics is "the art of the impossible".

In the final chapter the author discusses "the scope for renewal or innovation in politics", and he does so in connection with the attempt to judge the consequences of choices and attitudes to civil society. There is great fear of the market, which means that researchers look for new patterns. Fredriksson also asks whether the view of the individual as a consuming being has led to the notion that the market can take the place of parliamentary policies. Perhaps politics is not needed any more; it seems that problems can now be solved individually. Everyone can buy health care, education, social insurance. Similar thoughts have been considered by the political scientist Stig Montin, who interprets the concept of citizen in a new light. He expresses this in two extremes: "political and private citizenship". The former is interested in shared concerns, while the latter leaves decisions to professional producers and is mostly interested in his or her own problems.

In this context I connect Sörbom's ideas about the new subpolitical groups (like the nineteenth-century movements: free churches, temperance lodges, trade unions, etc.) as proceeding from the private citizen, which she believes can give politics new blood. This is where the idea of the agora enters the picture. People should be able to appear there and try to establish their private issues. However, my last wonder is whether this is not a culturalization of politics. According to the lifestyle pattern, people share opinions and dreams of a better life in keeping with their material interests and hence a longing for identity, whereas the political citizen wants to act according to common concerns.

The dissertation is noticeably up to date and relevant. Practically all politicians, at all levels, are discussing issues of democracy just now. Democracy, like everything in society, is dissolving, old issues are fading, and the wheel evidently has to be reinvented.

As my reading proceeded, I became accustomed to Fredriksson's "slowness". He has chosen to adopt a matter-of-fact stance and exerted himself to be impartial. All through the book, however, I have wondered: what thesis is he arguing, and what kind of results does he want to achieve? "Perhaps" Fredriksson wants to describe the mood prevailing in certain circles and announce that Utopia – in the form of the politicians' visions – represents, as it did in classical antiquity, general well-being and should be ascribed the highest value.

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Making Heritage

Lizette Gradén, On Parade: Making Heritage in Lindsborg, Kansas. Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis Studia multiethnica Upsaliensia 15. Uppsala, 2003. 246 pp. Ill. Diss. ISBN 91-554-5724-X.

■ Expressions of ethnic, regional and local identity have long played important roles in American civic and political life. And in the region of the country that unselfconsciously proclaims itself as the "Heartland" – the American Midwest – this fact is abundantly evident. In fact, in small towns like Lindsborg, Kansas, the site of Lizette Gradén's fine study *On Parade,* these various expressions of culture may fuse into a powerfully hegemonic self-assertion of unity that both accentuates and erases tropes of difference, commenting in the process on the locally sanctioned "proper" way to be American. This assertion of cultural unity, grounded in a constructed collective heritage, is buttressed by the deceptively simple and

seemingly homespun phenomenon of the local heritage festival. Gradén explores the complexities of this variety of public display event both in its enactment and in its planning.

Lindsborg is no stranger to researchers in the fields of ethnology, history, or folklore studies. Originally founded in 1869 as a colony for Lutherans following the teachings of pastor Olof Olsson (1841–1900), Lindsborg attracted a cohesive community of rural Swedes, particularly from the province of Värmland. As such, Lindsborg was one of numerous collective migrations that characterized nineteenth-century Swedish immigration and colored the subsequent experience of Swedish Americans in the United States. By the early 1900s, Lindsborgian Swedes were already writing accounts of their town and culture, enshrining the memory of the original inhabitants (termed the *"settlers")* and their culture (termed *"heritage")* as the unique and valuable legacy of the town. By the 1930s, Swedish researchers such as the ethnologist Albin Widén had begun to take notice as well, and came to Lindsborg to document processes of acculturation. Yet from the 1940s onward, Lindsborgians responded to the seeming inevitability of cultural assimilation through creating a public display event, the Lindsborg *Svensk Hyllningsfest*, with a parade, other festive events, food, dance and crafts. Its success, both regionally and nationally, has attracted a broad range of researchers, so that, as Gradén notes, from the 1950s, Lindsborg became "the subject of at least one doctoral dissertation in the humanities and social sciences per decade" (35). In particular, Gradén's work updates and expands on the earlier dissertations of Larry Danielson (*The Ethnic Festival and Cultural Revivalism in a Small Midwestern Town,* 1972) and M. Steven Schnell (*Little Sweden U.S.A.: Ethnicity, Tourism and Identity in Lindsborg, Kansas,* 1998), although she draws on the entire range of writings on Lindsborg as well. In a very real sense, studying Lindsborg is studying the very image of American ethnic festivals, particularly as they unfold in the culturally loaded construct of "Small Town USA."

Given the wealth of previous studies, a good portion of Gradén's first chapters are necessarily devoted to reviewing the extensive literature to date on Lindsborg, American public display events, and frameworks for their cultural analysis. In addition to a host of classic theorists on the topic from both the USA and Scandinavia (e.g, Abrahams, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Klein, Stoeltje, Linde-Laursen), Gradén makes use Don Handelman's concept of *interface* as described in his *Models and Mirrors: Toward an Anthropology of Public Events* (1998). This concept allows Gradén to discuss not simply the features associated with the public display event itself but also those other activities that surround and ultimately produce it as a framed event: planning meetings, committee formation and behavior, and emergence and maintenance of communal norms regarding the event's characteristics. By following the planning process for the parade portion of the Lindsborg *Svensk Hyllningsfest* in detail over the course of the 1997-98 planning process (supplemented by return visits to the event in subsequent years), Gradén is able to explore this complex and often contentious interface between normal life in Lindsborg and its creative representation in the *Hyllningsfest* parade.

Reflexivity is an essential component of the modern ethnography of identity construction, and Gradén's study provides valuable perspectives on issues of authenticity and idealization as they unfolded in her own interaction with Lindsborgian festival planners. With a contemporary Swedish urban identity and yet rural Värmland roots, Gradén herself became an element of the event planning that Lindsborgians sought to deflect, define or deploy for their own purposes. Gradén's own, sometimes uncomfortable experience of this process is chronicled in the study, particularly in the ways in which she related to issues of *exclusion* that rendered some community members (and their cultural backgrounds) ineligible for celebration within the *Hyllningsfest* framework. Lindsborg, as much of the American Midwest, has experienced an influx of new immigration, in part from Mexico and other parts of Latin America. Clearly, as Gradén demonstrates, this new migration to the area has not been received with unanimous enthusiasm. The local contrast between the valued original migrants (the "settlers") and their disvalued contemporary counterparts (the "immigrants") provides an ambivalent, and sometimes markedly xenophobic backdrop to the Swedish cultural festival as depicted in the study. The linked economic and political underpinnings of this process of exclusion are deftly presented. One senses in reading the study that Gradén could furnish many more examples of the experiences she recounts, and her future work in this area and topic will no doubt furnish further valuable insights.

Another fascinating aspect of studying Lindsborg is the degree to which scholarly constructions become

part of the community's own self-perception and strategy of self-presentation over time. In addition to the plethora of dissertations written specifically about Lindsborg itself, Lindsborgians have attended to many of the classic voices of Swedish ethnology as well, reading and employing the works of, for example, Sigurd Erixon, Nils-Arvid Bringéus, and Åke Daun in the ongoing evolution of the festival and its components. In this sense, Gradén's own study becomes part of a longstanding transnational process in which scholars in both the USA and Sweden have pondered the extent to which people like the Lindsborgians and places like Lindsborg are – or are not – "Swedish." And the use of the *Hyllningsfest* as a potential model for planning cultural display events in Sweden lends a further transnational and economic dimension to this decidedly postmodern state of affairs.

Through it all, Gradén's keen eye for significant detail makes her work readable and insightful. We read of both the conflicts and the fun of creating a parade float, the stated and unstated norms of selecting a king and queen for the festival, the lingering persistence of particular floats as items of idealized memory in festival planners' minds, the playful and sometimes satirical elements of festival as enacted, local ambivalence about tropes of Sweden vs. tropes of Swedish America. Through her analyses of such details, Gradén reveals how a parade can function to reinforce hegemony and to enforce the status quo in the realm of communal and even personal behavior, while at the same time giving voice to subtle criticisms of the same. It can also become the ground on which issues of identity are forcefully debated: the nature of heritage as volitional or hereditary, attitudes toward cultural change, the role of commercialization in expressive experience.

Well-argued and informative, Gradén's *On Parade* represents a valuable addition to the ongoing scholarly investigation of Swedish Americana and a exemplary exploration of the intricacies of the modern public display event in the USA.

Thomas A. DuBois, Madison, Wisconsin

Doing the Street

Elisabeth Högdahl, Göra gata. Om gränser och kryphål på Möllevången och i Kapstaden. Gidlunds förlag, Hedemora 2003. 276 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-7844-647-3.

■ As the title – which means "Doing the Street" – suggests, this book is about how people interact with the places where they move. A place is more than its physical form. The basic idea in Elisabeth Högdahl's dissertation is that people constantly create places by using them both physically and mentally.

No place can be freely created by the individual, however. A person's use of a place always occurs as manoeuvres in relation to a context. To tackle this problem, Högdahl turns to the French philosopher Michel de Certeau, who introduced the concepts of strategy and tactics in his book *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) as terms for two essentially different ways of regarding a city. Strategy is the superordinate vertical power perspective, which tries to understand the city as a whole, something which can be mapped, planned, and controlled – the city as a structure. In distinction to this, tactics is the individual's everyday movement in the city. While strategy is characterized by superior, long-term planning, everyday tactics are typically improvised, changing direction from one situation to another.

Högdahl's empirical field consists of three places: Möllevången in Malmö in Sweden, and Woodstock and Long Street, both in Cape Town in South Africa. But how can one study the individual's tactical relationship to the city? Högdahl ends by using what she calls "walking interviews", accompanying her informants and letting them tell her about the memories that places contain for them, while simultaneously observing – and participating in – the way the informants use the city. The narratives about these walking interviews are very good.

One of the both amusing and interesting stories takes place in Möllevången, where she walks with a boy called Rami, who has promised to show her a hole in the fence around Folkets Park (People's Park). At Rami's hole they meet a drunk who asks them reprovingly what they are doing. After a little talking back and forth he allows them to pass through the hole, but just this once; tomorrow the hole will be closed, he says. Rami is dissatisfied with the situation; he feels that the drunk has taken over his hole. So, when they are leaving the park again, he wants to go

back to the hole to get out that way. There they meet the drunk again. They slip out through the hole but the drunk follows them. They manage to get away, and Rami is pleased again: the old drunk's power is broken, the hole is Rami's again.

The hole in the fence illustrates two of Högdahl's most important points. One is that a city needs what she calls "loopholes" – spaces and ambiguities which give the individual the opportunity to act tactically in relation to the city. The other is that boundaries are constantly being created and negotiated in a city. These two points are related, because the negotiation between different people can only take place if there are loopholes in the physical space of the city, and in the normative landscape of meaning that is associated with the space. If the city is planned and administered with the idea of closing all the loopholes that exist, then we also lose the possibility to take active part in what she calls the landscape of learning – or in even stronger terms, the democracy of the city. A similar message can be read in Zygmunt Bauman's book *Modernity and Holocaust* (1989). His point is that modernity's fascination with rational organization and worship of technology, order, and unambiguity deprives the individual of the possibility of relating morally to his actions. The most extreme expression of this is in the Nazi concentration camps.

The question that remains is how urban planning can incorporate this knowledge about the necessity of the daily tactical relation to other people *qua* the city's loopholes. If one follows de Certeau, urban planning is precisely characterized by being a modern organizational practice with a strategic purpose. Can one plan a city space that is filled with loopholes and good tactical potential?

Søren Møller Christensen, Copenhagen

Differences in Scandinavian Habitus

Frank Meyer, Dansken, svensken og nordmannen... Skandinaviske habitusforskjeller sett i lys av kulturmøtet med tyske flyktninger. En komparativ studie. Perspektiver og praxis. Unipub forlag, Oslo 2001. 404 pp. Ill. Diss. ISBN 82-7477-062-5.

■ In the 1930s women and men mixed with each other in very different ways in the three Scandinavian countries. In Sweden women and men were mostly separated in everyday life. They formed segregated groups with their own autonomous conventions. The interaction between Swedish women and men was therefore strongly formalized through various instructions, rituals and ceremonies (pp. 246f.). In Norway the social distance between women and men was not as great as in Sweden, and the gender roles were consequently more liberal (p. 253). The Danish way of being social across the gender barrier was, in its turn, in an intermediate position between the Swedish and Norwegian ones. At the top of Danish society the gender relationships were strongly formalized, as in Sweden; among the rest of the population these same relationships were more liberal, like in Norway (p. 256).

This is what you learn when you read the social and cultural historian Frank Meyer's investigation of national habitus differences in Scandinavia between 1933 and 1940. In his dissertation *Dansken, svensken og nordmannen...* (here published in a second edition) Meyer offers a model of how cultural differences on a national level can be studied by using the concept of habitus or, more specifically, national habitus. Initially Meyer defines his key concept by making it into a mixture of the concepts of mentality and national identity. Most fundamentally the concept of habitus refers to a way of being; it stands for how individuals think, are and feel on the basis of collective dispositions (p. 16). Looking at it in this way, the concept of habitus, like mentality, concerns relatively unconscious phenomena in people's everyday life and, likewise, plays a relatively permanent role in historical processes. What makes it different from mentality is the close links of habitus to the social structure of society. Together with the concept of national identity, habitus relates to different forms of symbolic practice. With habitus in focus, the analysis will lean more towards symbols on the everyday life level, while national identity refers to a more official use of symbolic meanings, such as flags and the commemoration of historical events or personalities (pp. 17f.).

In the final chapter of the book the concept of national habitus is discussed further, now with the application of the sociologist Norbert Elias's classical studies of national character in France, England and Germany. Meyer centres on Elias's formula "social character becomes national character". National character, that is, national habitus, is said to be a product of social and historical conflicts between receding aristocratic ways of thinking, being and feeling and emergent bourgeois ones (pp. 272f.). Translated into

the Scandinavian context, this formula makes national habitus differences a consequence of different societal and historical structures and processes of modernization (a word that Meyer does not use).

Frank Meyer's way of exposing the three different forms of national habitus has an elegant touch. The material he uses contains a large and varied number of stories that German-speaking refugees (escaping Nazi rule in Germany, Austria and the Czech parts of Czechoslovakia) have told about their years in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. By being different from their hosts, these refugees – or foreigners (*de fremmede*), as Meyer also calls them – made observations that were concerned with and often reflective of cultural and social differences, a kind of anthropological observations of social encounters across cultural barriers.

Constituting chapter 7 in the book, the example of national gender differences mentioned above finishes the empirical analysis of the study. In the previous chapters Meyer has penetrated five other aspects of the national habitus differences in Scandinavia. In chapter 2, to begin with, he describes how the Scandinavian state bureaucracies reacted when faced with the flow of German refugees. Three concepts originally coined by the sociologist Max Weber catch the essence of the national differences that Meyer is interested in. The Swedish state proved to be very effective when it came to controlling its own borders from unrestrained influx and its refugee politics consequently can be seen as an example of what Weber has qualified as a way of using rational means to rational ends (*målrasjonalitet*) (pp. 49–50, 56). Denmark was not as efficient as Sweden, and unlike its neighbouring countries, it also raised ethical concerns about the Jewish refugees. The Danish refugee politics therefore pointed to a more value-rational approach (*verdirasjonalitet*) (p. 49). Norway distinguished itself as quite restrictive to refugees, but fought at the same time for humanism in the international context (p. 77). Meyer describes the Norwegian refugee policies as an example of an affectional or emotional rationale (*affektuell rasjonalitet*) (pp. 49f.).

In chapter 3 Meyers concentrates on how the foreigners that were received in the three Scandinavian nations were represented in each of the state bureaucracies and what effects this representation had on the different "habitual alarm systems". The focus is on how the state authorities directed the lives of the foreigners by enforcing different kinds of control procedures. The more threatening the representations of the foreigners were, the rougher the control systems became (p. 84). The Swedish alarm system showed greater distrust of the foreigners than the Norwegian and Danish ones, and thereby developed a more elaborate control organization than its neighbours. In the investigated period Sweden was moreover the only one of the three that organized special internment camps for its refugees (p. 121). As in other parts of the book, Denmark came in between the strong control systems of Sweden and the more open or even loose measures of Norway. Denmark showed greater distrust of the foreigners than Norway, but was not as successful in regulating their lives as Sweden (p. 102).

Social differences are discussed in chapter 4. Meyer focuses on how a distinction is made between different groups in the three Scandinavian countries through the use of different forms of addressing in social interaction. Being short, the chapter does not contain as much empirical data as the previous ones. One conclusion is that the use of titles existed only in Sweden (pp. 159, 166). Again we see a pattern in which Sweden is supportive of more formal and hierarchical relationships, while Norway especially is less so and Denmark has an intermediate position (p. 170).

In chapter 5 Meyer discusses how the refugees experienced the general order and the formal procedures in the three Scandinavian countries. Sweden was seen as a highly organized society on both an institutional and a social level – this to such great extent that the Germans noted that the Swedes were more formal even than themselves (p. 180). In Norway and Denmark formalism was more rare, and in the eyes of the German refugees Norwegians and Danes could be both chaotic and undisciplined. In this chapter Meyer dwells on a second kind of material for his investigation: national etiquette books, which complement the outsiders' perspective on the Scandinavian societies by putting forward a more self-reflective picture of the studied socio-cultural forms.

Another thematic reasoning is presented in chapter 6. Here the concepts of collectivism and individualism are the analytical tools for furthering the discussion about national habitus differences. Collectivism and individualism are defined as two forms of social gathering. Collectivism refers in this respect to a special kind of community, in which people feel related to each other spontaneously. Individualism, on the other hand, is about how people strive to transcend

the collective conditions of community. Meyer does not see collectivism and individualism as exclusive to each other. On the contrary, they often exist in a certain kind of integration with each other in each society. Still, the collective communities are the oldest ones in history, while individualism is an example of more recent ways of shaping communities (p. 203). In this way individualism becomes an indicator of how modernized a society is. Through the observations of the German refugees, Meyer identifies individualism (or modernism) as a more distinguishing trait of the Swedish national habitus in the 1930s than of the corresponding Danish and Norwegian ones. In Sweden this meant that the German foreigners saw the natives as relatively reserved and formal in face-to-face interactions, sometimes even unfriendly (pp. 205, 207). In Norway and Denmark the experiences of the cultural encounters were of a different kind. Especially Norway was the opposite of Sweden; here the German refugees found spontaneous openness, friendliness and hospitality in their contacts with the others (p. 214). By polarizing Norway and Sweden and their respective orientations to collectivistic and individualistic ideals, Meyer is here close to falling into a reductionist trap. He balances on a slack rope, but saves himself by explaining that collective qualities, like solidarity, were not extinct in Sweden just because they did not appear in public contexts. Meyer concludes that he cannot rule out that Swedes did different and even opposite things in public and private contexts, since only very few of his "informants" – the refugees – actually had experiences of the private spheres of the Swedes (pp. 210–212). Also the Norwegian habitus is somewhat complicated by Meyer when he discloses that even in Norway the German refugees, at least temporarily, could feel lonely and isolated in their face-to-face interactions with the natives (pp. 215f.). Denmark is again in between Norway and Sweden. The German refugees experienced a greater public openness and friendliness in Denmark than in Sweden. At the same time these experiences were often mixed with feelings of distance and reservation in a way that was not known in collectivistic Norway. When it came to social interaction in Denmark, the German refugees thus experienced ambivalence (p. 238).

This not altogether obvious dispositional order of analytical aspects has its origin in a proposition by the Dutch anthropologist Geert Hofstede about how national habitus may be investigated. In a study published in 1991, Hofstede gives six different categories of how national habitus may be analysed: virtue versus truth, intercultural encounters, inequality, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, and gender roles (p. 34). Meyer is explicit about this, but does not explain how the model functions in his own study, how the parts are connected to each other as well as to the whole. In the final chapter of the book, chapter 8, his discussions of Elias's theories about national character are indeed informative, but I would also have liked a scrutinizing view of the reading trail that I have just finished, which has taken me from the different rationales of the refugee policies in chapter 2 to the different gender roles in chapter 7. What is the main argument in this examination? How are, for example, the menacing representations of the foreigners in chapter 3 related to the different ways of addressing each other in social interaction in chapter 4, regarding the discussions about national habitus differences? And so on.

More satisfying is Meyer's detailed reflections on his comparative method in chapter 1, on his way of reasoning when selecting the three Scandinavian countries as research objects and the period of 1933 to 1940 as a time demarcation for the study. Here he concludes that the systematic character of the comparative method is dependent on the commensurability of the phenomena that are studied (p. 32). In his search for national habitus differences, Meyer sees it as heuristically rewarding to work with countries that have a lot of common cultural traits, but which nevertheless manifest differences (p. 30). Regarding the time span of the study, the national habitus differences are only commensurable up until 9 April 1940. After that, the German invasion of Norway and Denmark changed the conditions for the socio-cultural encounters between the German refugees and the Scandinavians so radically that a further comparison of the three nations is not possible (p. 32).

Missing in the book is a more thorough discussion of the gap or the connections between the institutional dimension of the national habitus differences and the corresponding social dimension. The material that Meyer presents contains data which are both very institutional and very social or interactional in character. In what way do these two dimensions contribute to the national habitus differences? Meyer seems to conflate the two dimensions, but can this really be done? Is there not a risk that society (or culture) is described as too homogeneous and one-

dimensional if institutional structures and changes are synonymous with how people interact with each other in everyday life? This is a question that follows me after my reading of this interesting and enjoyable book; a question which makes me not altogether convinced that habitus is the best term of all for analysing national differences and communities. Why give up "identity", for example?
Markus Idvall, Lund

With Regard to the Political Consumer

Christine Sestoft, Med hensyn til den politiske forbruger. Akademisk Forlag, København 2002. 187 pp. Diss. ISBN 87-500-3741-2.

■ I have a vague recollection of having listened to George W. Bush shortly after Al Qaeda had attacked the World Trade Center (and the Pentagon). Bush's eyes wavered as he searched for words; what was he supposed to say to a nation that was in total shock? How would he sum up a nation's anxiety and fear while simultaneously urging concerted national action? It was a difficult situation, so it was hardly surprising that Bush fumbled after words, and when he finally found them I was amazed when he urged that the deed should not deter consumption. That was roughly how the speech began. The American people had a patriotic duty to fulfil, to go on consuming in the moment of danger, not to let themselves be deterred from doing their duty as consuming citizens.

At first the president's choice of words seemed somewhat odd, but after having read Christine Sestoft's fascinating book about the political consumer ("With Regard to the Political Consumer"), I understand – albeit rather reluctantly – George W. Bush slightly better.

Sestoft does not discuss the situation in the USA; instead the focus is on Denmark and the EU. Her very interesting hypothesis is that the increasingly profound interaction of the nation state with the EU has had an unforeseen consequence: an idea of a new subject – the political consumer – has been established. Nationalistic flag-waving has been supplemented with a less conspicuous identification process: You make yourself Danish through the consumption of Danish goods or through the consumption of goods produced in accordance with what is perceived as good, rational Danish tradition. While cooperation in the EU proceeds, transforming Europeans into potential citizens of a future European state, there arise what Sestoft calls neo-national identification projects. The point is that the neo-national processes are not always perceived as political projects, consumption seems instead to follow a neutral and rational logic: you consume commodities that are good, beneficial, and healthy for the individual, for society, and for the environment. Herein lies the strength of the subjectivization process, neo-national identities arise through the cunning of reason, they are conjured up with an irresistible rhetoric and logic: Who wants to consume goods that are not good for the individual, society, and the environment?

In the light of this, Bush's speech about consumption becomes slightly more comprehensible. The speech made it clear that the political consumer is both a spearhead and a foundation in the defence of the democratic state; it brought the political consumer out of the grey and seemingly apolitical shadows. It was this category of citizen that was to defend the nation.

What the Danish and the American examples have in common is thus that in both cases there is an international dimension – an external threat – which helps to create and highlight the political subject, the political consumer as a neo-national citizen. In Sestoft's study, however, the political subject comprises not just the individual but also the state as subject. Sestoft is to a large extent influenced by Thomas Højrup's theory of the state, according to which it is understood not just as the government and authorities but also civil society, families, and the individual. According to this theory, the state subject is in negotiation, conflict, or dialogue with other state subjects (or the EU), as a result of which either friction or change can arise.

Højrup's theory of state is a major source of inspiration in Sestoft's study, but there is yet another one. Sestoft's book is also influenced by Foucaultian discourse analysis, which becomes obvious when she considers the discussions conducted in civil society about the political consumer.

Within the nations, according to Sestoft, there are constant debates about what can be defined as the "right" or "wrong" consumption. Researchers – whether consciously or unconsciously – not infrequently find themselves in the front line of the struggle for the preferential right of interpretation since they are ascribed an ability to distinguish true from false, right from wrong. The players who struggle for the

right of interpretation – whether they are researchers, politicians, or journalists/debaters – influence patterns of consumption, but above all the more deep-lying processes that help to constitute the new subject – the political consumer. Inquiries and studies create categories of people, some of whom are thought to consume in the "right" way, others in the "wrong" way. The latter can be subjected to sanctions and/or measures intended to educate or discipline them, to get them to consume in accordance with the norm. Notice that this is rarely done by coercion or threats; it is Good Will and reason that talk to the people, inside the people. The political consumer disciplines himself in accordance with "common sense".

How the discourse of the political consumer is established in an international and national context is, in brief and simplified terms, what Sestoft's study is about. It must be said that this is a highly ambitious and exciting attempt to launch a new theory about the relationship between consumption, politics, and cultural identity. Consequently, the book also contains a thorough analysis of the large research field concerning consumption. Sestoft dismisses almost immediately the many quantitative studies of people's consumer habits. They reflect what is consumed but can never, according to Sestoft, explain why people consume. Another problem with quantitative research about the political consumer is that the political aspect is never discussed. The political consumer seems like one empirical category among others. Research on consumption in the social sciences and humanities is taken more seriously by Sestoft than the quantitative studies, and it is above all this that serves as her springboard. She argues that there are two overall ways to understand the consumer, either as an emancipated actor or as a manipulated object. Her own theoretical contribution can be said to combine these two frames of understanding. Sestoft shows how the political consumer's self-understanding as a freely acting subject is influenced by the position that the subject adopts or is assigned in a larger structure/culture. Sestoft's theory thus emphasizes the structural dialectic where the political consumer arises in the relation between individual, society, and state.

Sestoft's theoretical aim is also intimately associated with a praiseworthy ambition to introduce a critical political dimension into cultural analysis: to reveal discursively moulded subjectivation processes in an (inter)national space. When two ambitious projects are brought together in a book it is of course impossible to do justice to it in a short review, but the witty title of the book sums up the content very well. On the one hand it touches on the theoretical ambition – to explain and understand the political consumer as a phenomenon. On the other hand the author stresses that the political consumer has become a power factor that must be taken into consideration – the "regard" in the title – by businesses and politicians alike. The political ambition, however, extends beyond the actual content of the study.

The book is based on Sestoft's master's thesis in European ethnology, for which she was awarded a prestigious prize in 1999, Copenhagen University's gold medal. The work rendered her not only a prize but also considerable attention, not least from the media. But, as Sestoft notes in the prologue, journalists differ from researchers in not striving to achieve objectivity in their texts, and when the thesis was presented in the media her results were simplified (and distorted). Because of the great interest, and perhaps with a tinge of irritation over how the thesis had been treated by journalists, she therefore decided to rewrite the thesis and present it in book form.

Sestoft's book can thus be regarded as an alternative narrative to the way the mass media describe consumption and the political consumer. The author thereby enters the public debate and thus fulfils a widespread – albeit debated – view that research in the humanities and social sciences should be an actor and debater in the development of society. In Sweden we speak about the third task of the university, alongside teaching and research: the need to unite society and the research world in a dialogue. Sestoft also expresses an explicit hope that her book will inspire the debate about consumption in Denmark.

When I read Christine Sestoft's book I thus perceive a will to take part in a dialogue with and about society, a desire not to let the media be the only arena for opinion moulding. This is an important task in a society where media representations of reality seem to have an increasing impact on the political elite and the general public alike. I am reminded once again of the US president and his way of talking about threats and risks, his way of justifying and marketing acts of war. At times it sounds as if Bush were an actor in a Hollywood production, in the genre of "wanted dead or alive" or "smoke him out". I also think about how the boundary between fact and fiction is erased on television when journalists report from the war in Iraq with the American forces behind them – both

literally and symbolically. There no longer seems to be any great difference between selling tinned porridge, launching a new film, and proclaiming political "visions" and war. But the media are not just a vacuum that is filled with content, but instead an actor (alongside, for example, school) participating in the definition and creation of civic virtues and behaviours. The media make us aware of "benign", "evil", and/or "erroneous" behaviours, and our opinions and physical postures are corrected in accordance with the prevailing discourse. This schooling is perceived as natural and taken for granted – it is Good Will, often supported with scientific arguments, that makes us prepared to accept the discourses, with no great resistance. Sestoft's analysis of the discourse about the political consumer shows with great clarity how these processes work.

In a society where reality is increasingly often described and explained through the media, a researcher like Sestoft is important since she wants to take part in the public debate while preserving her objectivity and critical sensibility; she wants to expose and scrutinize discourses – in this case the discourse about the political consumer as a neo-national project.

Sestoft thus argues, with her critique aimed at earlier research, that the political consumer is much more than an empirical category – it is a new subject. In this way the study shows distinct similarities to other research pursued by ethnologists at Copenhagen University. I am thinking above all of Tine Damsholt's fine study of how the patriotic citizen was created at the end of the eighteenth century and the start of the nineteenth. Sestoft actually hints that the consumer as a political actor has taken the place of the traditional perception of the citizen. If this is true, we face a change of paradigm concerning perceptions of what politics is and how it is done. Perhaps the very foundation of democracy is changing? The answer to this difficult question cannot be found in Sestoft's fascinating study, of course. But the fact that the question is raised in the reader is big enough.

Fredrik Nilsson, Lund

Museums Give Meaning

Solveig Sjöberg-Pietarinen, Museer ger mening. Friluftsmuseerna Klosterbacken och Amuri som representationer. Åbo Akademi Förlag, Åbo 2004. 323 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 951-765-157-0.

■ This book, whose title means "Museums Give Meaning", is the author's dissertation for the degree of Ph.D. at Åbo Akademi University in 2004, and this of course affects the character of the book. In Scandinavia we have different traditions for the publication of doctoral dissertations. Publication before the defence of the thesis, as is the case here, results in heavier books, since they have to live up to all the diverse demands and conventions of academic assessment; these conventions also differ greatly in the different Nordic countries. The author, however, has fully deserved her doctoral cape and hat, and this review is not yet another scrutiny to see whether it should pass. It can – and congratulations are due!

This review seeks to look at the work as a book in the field of museology, so let us begin with the title: "Museums Give Meaning". This is deliberately chosen by the author to be ambiguous. On the one hand it can be perceived as a defence of museums, in this case open-air museums, which have been subject to criticism in recent years, both in the museological debate of which the book is part, and in the broader public debate. As a result there have been a great many moves towards a new orientation, and we have to go all the way back to the years around 1900 to find a counterpart. For example, the Danish National Museum was assembled as different departments under one hat in 1892, mainly in order to present a broad view of the nation's history. Another founding department, however, was the ethnographic collection, so that the focus was persistently on "the alien" as well. And in 1920 Bernhard Olsen's Danish Folk Museum, with its buildings department, the Open-Air Museum at Sorgenfri, became a part of the National Museum; later the two children of Olsen's efforts were divided into separate units.

This did not take place without a fight. In Denmark we still remember the heated debate between the director of the National Museum around 1900, Sophus Müller, and the founder of the Danish Folk Museum, about when a museum is a proper museum – Müller was in no doubt that Olsen's popular approach reduced the scientific character; Olsen was in

no doubt that the museum should and would serve the people. Presentations should be done with "a sense of history and an artist's gaze", as he put it. Similar debates were waged in other countries. They show a thought-provoking similarity to the debates today about the role of museums in society, and what they are supposed to be good for. Reflection on such topics among museum people is therefore welcome.

The title means, on the other hand, that museums are meaning-creating institutions, in that they deal with representations of something else in a physical, palpable way, that is, through artefacts. The way that this is done has undoubtedly varied through time, from the Renaissance prince's cabinet of curiosities via the Enlightenment with its fondness for taxonomy, to the national idea and artefact positivism to the breakdown of the grand narratives in the 1980s and 1990s. And today, when we are still researching and curating and mounting exhibitions, artefacts are represented either in a descriptive form or as research-based interpretations in a narrative, contextual form – and everything in between: "*the* museum" scarcely exists.

Museums also give meaning in a third way. They are a part of society, not free-floating institutions. Or as the author asks: What do museum representations represent? And she introduces the term "double representation" to describe what actually happens in a museum which both represents the past and does so in interaction with society.

The study takes its point of departure from two open-air museums in Finland. One is *Klosterbacken* in Åbo (Turku), which is a craftsmen's quarter that was rescued from demolition in the 1940s and was converted *in situ* into a museum. The essential purpose is to present handicraft and technology, especially in Finland, which is scarcely surprising considering the point in time. The other example is the worker's neighbourhood of *Armuri* in Tammerfors (Tampere), also musealized *in situ*. Here the emphasis is on social conditions, interpersonal relations, and the joyful sense of "look how far we have come".

Two strong individuals founded the museums, and the author quite rightly deduces that their personalities played a major role. The description of them is one of the most interesting parts of the book. One of them was Nils Cleve, who became head of the Åbo Historical Museum in 1934, but it was Irja Sahlberg who gave Klosterbacken the powerful emphasis on crafts. In the case of Armuri, however, it was a politician, Martti Helin, who was hand-picked in 1969 by the city manager to implement the project. The two very different orientations of the museums are also traced back by the author to the political situation and to the personal interests of Cleve/Sahlberg and Helin. In addition, there is the fact – inescapable in Finland – that they represent the two different populations of the country: Swedes and Finns respectively.

The analysis of the two places is conducted stringently, in relation to the discussion of representation in the introduction, but one may wonder why the author has chosen these two examples in a book that has the term "open-air museums" in its subtitle. Open-air museums are normally not, or rarely, buildings preserved *in situ*; their characteristic feature is that the buildings have been moved. In this way, in the author's dual representation, open-air museums represent a different preservation strategy from today's penchant for rescuing buildings *in situ*. The open-air museum is envisaged as a reservation for buildings which can no longer survive outside the fence, but which one (to use as broad and impersonal a subject as possible) finds it important that posterity should know about, for various reasons, whether ecological, technical, ideological, or political.

The author herself touches on this in her introduction, and after some discussion she defines an open-air museum as consisting of "an area, its buildings and furnishings. It is a result of human activity and it can be seen as a constructed image, a representation of the past." When viewed in such broad terms, the two neighbourhoods in the book are open-air museums, and they naturally share the same maintenance problems and economic difficulties as open-air museums in the more conventional sense. Perhaps the discussion could have been strengthened by a look elsewhere, if not Germany, Norway, or Denmark then at least Sweden, of which the author otherwise shows an excellent knowledge – both geographical and scholarly – throughout the book.

The book is a fine contribution, with many useful insights into the status, problems, and attempted solutions of museums in the twenty-first century, when the museum debate, in the political field as well, is comprehensive and tricky. It is also a pleasing example showing that museology works best when pursued by people with their roots in the reality of museums.

Mikkel Venborg Pedersen, Copenhagen

Popular Movements at the Local Level

Kenneth Strömberg, Vi och dom i rörelsen. Skötsamhet som strategi och identitet bland föreningsaktivisterna i Hovmantorps kommun 1884-1930. Acta Wexionensia. Serie III. 39, Växjö 2004. 338 pp. Diss. English summary. ISBN 91-7636-407-0.

■ Kenneth Strömberg has presented a doctoral dissertation in history at Växjö University. His topic is close to ethnology, since he studies various popular movements at the local level in the municipality of Hovmantorp in Småland in southern Sweden in the period 1884–1930. The oldest popular movement there is the IOGT temperance lodge, started in 1884, while trade unions, local branches of the Social Democratic Party, cooperative societies, and lecture clubs began around 1905. These were later joined by women's clubs, youth clubs, and sports clubs. Because of the source situation, the author has to concentrate on the active members of the associations, although he has also had intentions to elucidate passive members and their outlooks. The opposites "us and them" are in the title of the book, the idea being that it will shed light on different shades within the popular movements.

The bottom-up perspective that the author wished to adopt, partly because of his own proletarian background in Gothenburg, has however proved problematic to apply in a qualitative manner. What the author has been able to do is to show how the active members, that is, the élite, viewed and treated the passive ones. The latter can also be found in a quantitative way in the dissertation via the associations' attendance records. The passive members are evident at an early stage in the history of the movements and not just later on. For example, the issue of passive members was discussed in the temperance lodge Bergsrådet Aschan as early as 1885, six months after it was founded.

A fundamental concept in the dissertation is "good behaviour" (*skötsamhet*), inspired by the historian of ideas Ronny Ambjörnsson. This concept is closely linked to the ideas of temperance, education, activity, and loyalty, which play a prominent part in the dissertation. Questions of local identity are examined on the basis of the two primary towns in the study, Hovmantorp and Lessebo. The associations are also analysed in terms of instrumental and expressive/identity-creating aims. These are borrowed from the Danish historian Sidsel Eriksen. The author proceeds from these abstract concepts and ideals and tests them against the empirical evidence in the association archives, which are preserved in the regional archives of the popular movements in Växjö. Theoretical reasoning is connected to and tested against a large body of source material which the author has penetrated. This material, consisting of minutes of meetings, membership lists, and attendance figures, has however been unevenly preserved for posterity. The largest assemblage of material comes from the temperance lodges, which play a prominent part in the author's investigation. He is careful to declare both the solidity and the absence of source material when he conducts his analyses. If material is lacking or is not sufficiently tenable, the reader is informed that the author's interpretations are hypothetical.

The references to literature in the dissertation concern research on popular movements, working-class culture, and local history. It must be said that the author has a good capacity for reflection. His theoretical discussions are not airy but firmly anchored in the reality at the local level.

For the temperance lodges, an instrumental aim meant struggling to achieve total abstention as opposed to moderate drinking. The expressive and identity-creating aim intended to remake individuals into "movement people", well-behaved and democratically active. In their aspiration for a sober society and sober people, the lodges concentrated on the battle against itinerant beer sales and moderate drinking, and on the other hand on raising the level of adult education by starting study circles. They also attracted people by holding parties and organizing games at the meetings. The parties attracted far more people than the study circles, which was a disappointment for the leaders of the lodges. The social ingredients became more important for the individual than the ideological content.

The leadership reached out by becoming engaged in local politics, especially in the municipal temperance committees formed in 1916. The same individual was often active for a long time in municipal politics, which indicates that the person in question enjoyed the confidence of the élite in the lodges. The leading activists were moreover often busily involved in several associations at the same time, which reinforced their élite status.

Internally, it was important for the lodges to keep members from breaking their pledges by consuming alcohol and not attending the meetings. Interrogation and expulsion were the sanctions available for

breach of the pledge. To detect these, there was an informing system with which the members were obliged to comply. No one had the right to remain silent if they noticed that a member had broken the pledge. Those who did not attend the meetings were suspended and the names were added to a passivity list, and they could subsequently be expelled. These passive individuals – a large share of the members – constitute an anonymous category which the author would have liked to know more about. It is not possible to ascertain, however, whether failure to attend meetings was a protest on the part of the passive members. Passivity and breach of the pledge show, at any rate, that there was a clear discrepancy between idea and practice. The élite in the associations represented the ideas, while the practice in several respects among a large share of the members failed to live up to these ideas.

What I miss in the dissertation is the link to a macro level, that is, what happens at the national level and how it can affect circumstances in Hovmantorp. At the micro level the author pays careful attention to the social and economic structure in the station town of Hovmantorp, which is contrasted with the patriarchal industrial community of Lessebo. Hovmantorp had glassworks and sawmills, while Lessebo was dominated by paper mills and sawmills. Unlike Hovmantorp, Lessebo had a significant number of women in gainful employment. In Lessebo the different workers' associations that were founded received active financial support from the company management. This patriarchal feature led to a greater spirit of cooperation and caution among the workers *vis-à-vis* the employers than in Hovmantorp. This is noticeable in the association minutes. There was a much greater thirst for discussion in Hovmantorp because the workers there had to take the initiative themselves, unlike the people in Lessebo who could rely on help from the company management.

The strength of this dissertation is the in-depth study of a broad range of associations at the local level in the early days of the popular movements in Sweden. A comparison between different associations is possible, although the focus is on the temperance lodges, because of their age and the rich source material. The author deserves praise for his basic intention, to reach the ordinary members of the associations and not just the leaders, although this intention has run into difficulties during the implementation of the study. The author displays a capacity for reflection and is able to link his theoretical ambitions with a large body of empirical material.

Anders Gustavsson, Oslo

Germanness in the USA and in Sweden

Magdalena Tellenbach Uttman, Perceiving Germanness – Changing Concepts of German Culture and History as Seen from Abroad. A Swedish and an American Perspective. University of Wales Swansea 2003. 218 pp. Ill. Diss. ISBN 91-628-6162-X.

■ In this doctoral thesis, the author deals with constructions and perceptions of cultural identity in situations of immigration, based on case studies of images of 'German-ness' in Sweden and the USA. The thesis is divided into eight chapters followed by a bibliography, a brief glossary of German and Swedish terms, and some maps. It also contains several photographs that are inserted quasi like 'plates' after chapters 3 and 4. Following a fairly standard format, chapters 1 and 2 provide an introduction to the topic and set the scene in terms of theoretical and methodological background, while chapter 8 offers a concluding evaluation. The main body of the thesis, chapters 3–7, contains the case study material, each chapter concluding with a brief résumé.

Key differences between the historical contexts of the two settings are highlighted, emphasising their relative distance in space and time – Sweden being much closer to, and having much longer historical links with, Germany. Based on a combination of ethnographic fieldwork and archival research in the two countries, employing a range of methods including participant observation, key informant interviews and content analysis, the thesis follows a different pattern in each geographical context. During five months in the USA, an urban setting with a large population of German origin is chosen and interviews are primarily conducted with descendants of immigrants (who include some of non-German origin). By contrast, people interviewed at locations across Sweden over a period of seven months were mainly temporary migrants, first-generation immigrants, and some Swedes with no German background at all. The choice of interviewees reflects, to some extent, differences between the two contexts, and highlights the contrasts between them.

The empirical chapters present a wealth of new material that should be of interest to scholars working on

the cultural aspects of migration and culture contact, especially in the new and growing interdisciplinary fields of xenology and imagology, which deal, from different perspectives, with how we define ourselves *vis-à-vis* 'others' of various kind, including our own ancestry. A particularly valuable aspect of this thesis is the author's perceptive use of historical sources to extend the time horizon beyond living memory. Rather than following the more conventional format of progressively developing an argument, the author chose to structure her material and its discussion according to different forms/versions of temporal (chapters 3–5) and spatial distance (chapters 6 & 7). This approach is quite intriguing and holds a lot of potential, not all of which is, however, fully realised in the narrative. There is evidence of a reflexive approach throughout, although the author, understandably, seems a little unsure as to how far this might be legitimate in the context of a thesis.

Reminiscent of the collage style used by anthropologists inspired by the 'writing culture' debate, this is a very pensive thesis, much more so than many I have seen, and this could be said to be at once its strong point and a weakness, as the thesis shares and reflects the current 'mood' within anthropology and European ethnology with all its opportunities and problems. The author, operating on the increasingly blurred boundaries between these two and their more or less distant cousin disciplines of cultural studies/critical theory on the one hand and folklore on the other hand, uses an unconventional narrative structure and explores her material in different directions, employing different analytical lenses at every turn. As one might expect, some of these lenses are sharper than others, and in some directions the explorations lead to clearer insights than in others. The end result presents a personal model of narrative that I find promising, albeit with room for some improvements. Some of these may well come almost naturally if the material is reworked outside the constraints of the formal examination requirements. It would be good to see, in due course, a reworked version of this thesis in book form, making the work available to a wider readership.

Ullrich Kockel, Bristol

Book Reviews

Nordic Teenage Rooms

Nordiska tonårsrum. Vardagsliv och samhälle i det moderna. Willy Aagre, Anne de Haas, Cecilia Häggström, Mats Lieberg & Sven Mörch. Studentlitteratur, Lund 2002. 235 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-44-02079-1.

■ Young people's everyday life is increasingly becoming an area for research. The early youth research that focused on spectacular cultural manifestations is nowadays heavily challenged by research that takes the personal, intimate world of young individuals as its starting point. One of the latest examples of this is the present book, "Nordic Teenagers' Rooms: Everyday Life and Society in Modernity", by the authors Willy Aagre, Anne de Haas, Cecilia Häggström, Mats Lieberg and Sven Mörch. The book is the result of a Nordic research project with participants from Sweden, Norway and Denmark who represent different disciplines: psychology, social psychology, pedagogy, architecture and sociology.

The book is based on research material collected in urban areas in the three countries, Oslo in Norway and the Öresund region in Denmark and Sweden, more specifically Copenhagen and the neighbouring Lund–Malmö area. The areas are chosen in order to get "different kinds of urbanity", and in Copenhagen and Oslo the research team has selected two separate neighbourhoods with different characteristics. The youths in the study are 15–16 years of age, and the authors justify this choice by pointing out several factors that in their view make that particular age special. They argue, among other things, that this is a time of life when the individuals have to make some fundamental choices, since they are leaving compulsory school. They have also had time to learn about the prevalent youth culture through media and other sources, and are thus able to position themselves in relation to that culture. But this would, in my opinion, be an interesting research area regardless of the age of the participating youths. Looking at 13-year-olds or 17-year-olds and their rooms might produce different results, but would be no less interesting. I can, however, see the need to limit the age range somehow in order to make the research manageable, but targeting 15–16-year-olds is not the only possible choice.

The material has been collected partly through a

questionnaire where the individuals had the chance to volunteer for further interviews. The researchers have then made a selection from those who were positive to being interviewed, basing their choice on gender criteria as well as geographic criteria. The way the material was collected and the possible difference between those who filled in the questionnaires and those who were selected for interviews is discussed in an appendix in the book. This is a successful way to include these basic facts, without making the introduction too long and complicated. Those who are interested can find it easily while those who are not can get right into the articles.

The focus of the book is thus on teenagers' rooms. In the questionnaires the youngsters were asked to describe their rooms, to describe important artefacts in their rooms and so on. The interviews took place in the individuals' homes, which made it possible to photograph the rooms, and the pictures in the book are almost as inte-resting as the text. The reader gets to see the range of various rooms that the respondents live in, from the neutral, basic room without personal details to the rooms filled with personal mementos and favourite things. Some rooms are "mini-apartments" with for example a couch and tele-vision set in addition to the standard bed, book-shelf, desk and chair, while others still contain dolls or toy cars from childhood. The pictures give readers a chance to see this for themselves. But the photographs could have been used even more. In most cases they are mainly illustrations and are not analysed in their own right. To have more of the pictures analysed in the actual text would have been a positive addition.

The articles deal with different aspects of teenage rooms. Sven Mörch and Anne de Haas, both Danish psychologists, have written three articles where they look at the rooms as an arena for the transformation from child to grown-up. Seeing youth as a transformation stage is quite common in traditional youth research and the approach is thus not so original. But there are certain interesting aspects that are acknowledged in the articles, for example, how things like bio-graphy, autonomy and self-presentation are dis-played in the rooms. In the chapter on the theory of teenagers' rooms, they discuss the consti-tution of youth and the development of a special room for teenagers (something that Cecilia Hägg-ström does to a greater extent in one of her articles), youth and its relation to identity and youth in relation to a modern or late modern society. The last of their chapters is in my view the most interesting. There the interview material becomes more visible and the discussions concern how the teenage rooms have several tasks. They say something about who the teenager is today, but they also create a social memory connected to childhood. And finally they contain tracks into the future and the awaiting adulthood.

Cecilia Häggström is a Swedish architect, and her first article is partly a historical overview of how the idea and ideal that a teenager should have a room of his or her own came to be. She has collected material from two interior decorating magazines, as well as from 50 years of IKEA catalogues. The article draws a picture where the change goes from using every room and free space in order to get each inhabitant a place to sleep, via the idea that everyone (including the mother and father) should have a room of his or her own, to today's model with the parents firmly placed in a shared bedroom and one room each for the children, at least after a certain age. The article gives a good background, but is the one that is furthest away from the common material in the project. Häggström's other article is more directly connected to this project. There she picks one of the interviewed teenagers as an example and shows how she, Karen, uses her room as a tool to present herself but also how the room becomes part of an ongoing dialogue and negotiation between mother and daughter. By using one case as an example, Häggström gives depth to the analysis and the reader gets to know one of the young protagonists a little better.

Mats Lieberg's articles are placed in between Cecilia Häggström's. He is a Swedish sociologist and the material is very visible in his two articles as well. The first text discusses the teenage room in the context of spare time and how it is used. Lieberg uses quantitative data to show what the inhabitants do in their rooms and relates this to their relationship to their families and their use of the rest of the house. He divides the youths into four groups based on whether they are oriented towards the home, friends, organized activities or being out on the town. The data from the question-naires is combined with quotes from the interview material. Lieberg's groups work as fundamental categories in his next chapter too. Here he uses "time diaries" that the participants wrote during the study. They noted exactly what they had done during one day, and the result is graphs and charts that show whether the individual was at home or away, who she was together with, and so on.

Lieberg puts forward a number of examples where we get to know what an ordinary day looks like for this person and also get to see pictures of his or her room. In this chapter the pictures are part of the analysis, in an interesting way.

Willy Aagre, a Norwegian educationist, looks at the context of the project in his first article. He discusses the material from the perspective of who the interviewed teenagers are and how they view their rooms. The basis for the article is a quantitative analysis, which is supplemented with short quotations from the interviews. In the following chapter Aagre takes a closer look at some of the individuals in the investigation and uses them as examples in order to show different views of and relations to music, computers, posters and books. These four types of artefacts are selected because they are represented in a majority of the teenagers' rooms. One interesting aspect that Aagre deals with is the role played by the family, or individual family members, for how the young participants regard these artefacts. He also discusses how the objects can be said to signal youth, adulthood or childhood.

Nordiska tonårsrum is interesting reading not least for the fascinating photographic insights into the world of teenage rooms and their in-habitants. One objection that I have is that the book sometimes becomes a bit repetitive, when different authors use the same quotations or examples. This may be difficult to avoid when several researchers use the same material. Another reservation is that the quotations do not always seem to show what the author argues that they are an example of. This is particularly noticeable with the some of the short quotations that seem to be picked only to prove the author's point, but at times fail the purpose. By using longer interview extracts it would have been possible to give the reader a better understanding of the whole conversation context that the quotation stems from, as well as a better opportunity to judge whether this actually is an example of what it is said to be an example of.

On the whole I find *Nordiska tonårsrum* a good addition to the existing youth research, and it is sure to be of interest both to the academic world and to readers who want to know more about the intricacies of teenagers' rooms.

Maria Zackariasson, Oslo

National Symbols

Inge Adriansen, Nationale symboler i Det Danske Rige 1830–2000.
Bind I Fra Fyrstestater til nationalstater, 480 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7289-794-5.
Bind II Fra Undersåtter til nation. 718 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7289-794-5.
Museum Tusculanums Forlag, Copenhagen 2003.

■ During the 1990s and the first years of the new millennium several studies on nationalism and especially on *national symbols* have been accomplished and published. Inge Adriansen's study of "National Symbols in the Kingdom of Denmark 1830–2000" is a very impressive and comprehensive work on the subject. It is published in two volumes, which include both official political expressions connected with power structures such as the Danish Kingdom and state, and unofficial cultural aspects emanating from broader groups in society and expressed in, for example, literature, music, art (mainly landscape paintings) and history. The Danish nation's cultural heritage related to the topic of national symbols in a broad sense is richly described and analysed in the second volume.

Nation-building and national symbols have been discussed in the research debate from different theoretical perspectives and interpretations. Two main perspectives have dominated the debate: *the nation as a construct* and related to processes of modernization (Eric J. Hobsbawm and Ernest Gellner) and *the nation as a "primordial" phenomenon* (Peter Lauridsen and Adrian Hastings). According to Hobsbawm and Gellner, the construction of nation and nationalism was necessary when the modern industrial societies needed more homogeneous groups of population loyal to the modern legitimate state. The "primordial" perspective stresses the historical heritage and argues that a national mentality relates to old feelings of togetherness and a common history. The nation has always been and is eternally existing.

In the first volume "From Princely States to Nation States" the focus is on the development of official symbols and symbolic language connected with early modern state formation process and the state.

The meaning of official symbols such as state emblems on passports, postage stamps and currency is discussed and presented in its historical context. The national flag, the national anthem and national holiday are other symbols which are connected with

the process of transforming a political loyalty to the state into a broader concept, the idea of belonging to a nation. The use and set of official symbols seem to be the same for many countries in Western Europe from the time when the old, more or less feudal, European kingdoms were transformed into modern nation states.

One very important complication when studying this process over the ages is the fact that the geographical territory of the Danish state, as for other European states, has varied. The author has chosen not only to discuss the development in the Danish Kingdom but also to include the Danish Realm. Studying the topic including Schleswig (Schleswig-Holstein), Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Greenland, a special political potential is interwoven in the analysis. The chosen national symbols all have political dimensions that can both separate and unite people in the different regions in the realm. It is and was of course not an uncontroversial issue to choose a date for the national holiday. In a comparative and long-term perspective we can consider the controversy of having the date for a revolution set as a national day. To choose for example a national holiday related to the events of the Russian Revolution in 1917 would not seem political correct today. Adriansen notes that the official national symbols, those for example on passports, are more important nowadays when the new European Union is developing.

The importance of national symbols is also evidenced in the wave of new studies of nationalism and its cultural expressions. But it can also be said that the interest in a phenomenon is focused when it is actually in the process of disappearing; then it is becoming history. Then studies, documentation, and ultimately the creation of museums are on the agenda. We need only think of the documentation of folk culture and old peasant ways of life at the end of the nineteenth century, documentation which among other things resulted in open-air museums such as Skansen at Djurgården in Stockholm and the Frilandsmuseum in Lyngby, north of Copenhagen. They can be seen as typical examples of this phenomenon and have also been interpreted in a context of national folk culture.

In the second volume, "From Subjects to Nation", unofficial symbols interpreted in a broader cultural analysis are central. These unofficial symbols consist of a spectrum, a repertoire of stories, myths and traditions which together have formed Danish history – the *nation's* history. One main problem is to select and discuss what is relevant and what is not; what is small and what is big. The anthropologist Anne Knudsen has pointed to three main fields with relevance for developing a common cultural ground, namely: *language*, *history* and (the cultural) *landscape*. Studying these fields, the question of what constitutes a nation's identity can be illuminated.

Adriansen has chosen to categorize the unofficial symbols with relevance for the topic of nationalism into four main groups: *Language, History, Landscape and nature, Incarnations and personifications of the nation and national heroes*. The last category seems to be possible, from an analytical point of view, to include in the second category, in History. But was it a common language, a common history and a common land?

The first category, language, is discussed mainly from the point of view of the creation of a national language, *rigssprog* or *rigsdansk*, where the emancipation from the German language was central. Problems with the different dialects – their social and cultural aspects – and also international influences on the language are mentioned. One conclusion which can be drawn is that one of the most important aspects of language is connected with *cultural identity* and not primarily with *national identity*. Culture and language live and survive the state and its political structures as, for example has been the case for nations such as Ireland and Poland.

The chapter on language also contains an extensive presentation of the *fædrelandssange* (patriotic songs) where a whole range of social and national aspects are expressed, very unlike, for example, work songs, freedom songs, folksongs, high-school songbooks, the Danish songbook and the King's songbook. This empirical material reflects how important the living song tradition once was. Everyone should be able to sing a true common *national* song, and it is important that *I* in the song can be experienced as a common *We* relating to our society, *Our Nation*.

In the same way as language is fundamental for our common cultural identity, landscape and nature are fundamental for our identification with a region or country. The Danish beech woods, the high chalk cliffs of Møn and other motifs mainly from Sjælland became typical expressions of the *Danish* landscape, for artists such as J. C. Dahl, J. Th. Lundbye and P. C. Skovgaard in the middle of the nineteenth century. Some plants and animals were also thought of as

symbolizing Denmark. Among trees first of all the Beech, among flowers the Marguerite, among birds the Swan and the Lark, among butterflies the Small Tortoiseshell.

The categories of *History* and *Incarnations*, read together, form the main empirical material for discussing how the particular Danish nationalism came into being. In these chapters we can find evidence both for the construction of nationalism during different eras, and for the primordial aspects of the subject. Obviously the old myths from ancient times, the Jelling monuments, the King Gorm the Old, and Holger Danske, all fit very well in a discussion of national symbols in history. They have a role in constructing the national history. When discussing the two main perspectives – constructed nation or primordial nation – proceeding from her thorough study, Adriansen argues for *a synthesis of both perspectives*. She notices that there have been old feelings and patterns of togetherness to build upon through the ages, and at the same time the national symbols have been effectively changed in chameleon-like way when processes of transformation in society called for it. National symbols and nationalism were created. Although a balanced and well-documented concluding discussion round off the study, there are still some points and results that could have been clearer for example:

1) The problem of the difference between the intentions behind creating national symbols and how they actually functioned. Whose interest lay behind? Which groups profited from the national symbolic language that was created during different periods?

2) The problem of ascribing a nationalistic motive in, for example, landscape painting, when may rather have reflected general trends of catching nature as it was in its naturalistic sense, in contrast to the earlier dominance of religious and historical motives. The same mode of natural painting occurred in Germany, spreading from the Düsseldorf school. For example, the landscape motifs, the cliffs of Møn and Stubbenkammer on the German island of Rügen were painted in the same artistic way, for example, by Caspar David Friedrich. When studying the biography of Friedrich and his life's work, one cannot see him as an exponent of national symbols. There is a risk that we who are used to working with our classical genres and isms read too much romanticism, nationalism etc. into the work of the artists during this era.

3) I have also noticed the dominance of men like N. F. S. Grundtvig, E. M. Dalgas and C. D. F. Reventlow as National heroes, contributing to the creation of nationalism. Were there only men no women? In Sweden the female author Selma Lagerlöf, by writing the story of Nils Holgersson's travels, as a schoolbook in geography, contributed to our common cultural and historical knowledge of Sweden. In Denmark the author Karen Blixen, in her excellent novels and essays, furnished her descriptions of the Danish cultural landscape with her knowledge of the relevant social and cultural atmospheres. It could be an interesting continuation of this impressive and comprehensive study, and corresponding to the idea of *Mother Denmark,* to focus on the mothers and daughters who also contributed to developing language and symbols of the nation during the century we have recently left behind.

Kerstin Sundberg, Lund

How Do We Know That We Are Different?

Forskellige mennesker? Regionale forskelle og kulturelle særtræk. Inge Adriansen & Palle Ove Christiansen (eds.). Folkemindesamlingens kulturstudier – bind 3. Skippershoved, Ebeltoft 2003. 254 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-8922472-8.

■ What distinguishes a Dane from a Swede, and why are people in different parts of Denmark so different? Questions about identity formation and self-perception are the common denominator for the contributions to this volume about the basic features of ethnological research into regional identity, which was also a festschrift to Bjarne Stoklund on his 75th birthday in January 2003. The authors are researchers and museum workers, mostly from Denmark, but with some from Sweden as well.

The book begins with Stoklund himself talking about his fascination with the potential of cartography and questionnaires to chart the distinctive features and distribution of peasant culture, methods which he learned when working for the National Museum's ethnological surveys in the 1950s. He then analyses how ethnological landscape analyses developed, including his own ecotype classification from 1975. His conclusion is that the regional differences have persisted, even if the analyses have changed. The diffusionist method lasted longest. Yet any analysis must be based on what resource utilization and the peasant economy looked like, since this too influ-

enced the entire living pattern. A corresponding discussion, but concerning the Swedish countryside, is conducted by Nils-Arvid Bringéus in his article, although this stresses more explicitly the significance of social factors for the understanding of spatial circumstances. Man is a complex being, and therefore culture requires several different analytical models if it is to be studied.

The question of how ecological conditions can explain a population's culture is also the starting point for Peter Henningsen's article about regional differences in Denmark in the eighteenth century. He claims, however, that one must first look at the political system that organizes people's culture. In this case it is a matter of the political economy of feudalism. Even in matters of gardening and architecture, the natural conditions have a part to play. In Peter Dragsbo's and Helle Ravn's analysis of these phenomena based on three local examples, however, it is mainly terms of ownership and lingering regional norms that have governed the form of houses and gardens. They underline the significance of the norms that exist in people's heads, especially those which are preserved unchanged in rural communities with little mobility. They are not as easily influenced by national regulation and control. The authors conclude with the observation that the concept of life-mode cannot be used when it comes to regional or local ethnology, which they interpret as showing that it needs to be expanded so that it also includes the dimension of place.

In a far-reaching cartographic analysis of a single map, the geographer Kenneth Olwig looks for the answer to whether it is the Jutes or the peninsula of Jutland itself that determines what is Jutish identity. The map from which he proceeds is from 1585, and it was the first regional map produced in Denmark. It is also identifications of this kind that are in focus for Inge Adriansen's reflections on how one can delimit what is specifically South Jutish about Sønderjylland, even though this concerns a much later date. Here the analysis is based on different artefacts, songs, landscapes, buildings, and monuments. Ellen Damgaard describes a West Jutish self-perception, which is based on distinctive values concerning both the struggle with nature and the importance of self-determination.

When one has reached the latter part of the book and wonders whether Denmark's distinctive identities are primarily shaped in Jutland, the articles then go on to ask questions about national identity. Michael Harbsmeier approaches the problem by observing that the genders and the national relate to each other in similar ways, while both Anders Linde-Laursen and Orvar Löfgren discuss how the construction of the Öresund Bridge has changed the region that was expected to straddle the Danish-Swedish border. Löfgren warns against underestimating the significance of the nation state and the strength of national identity. In his opinion, there is a powerful cultural economy in the simplification, obviousness, and summarizing force that these stereotypes carry.

To round off the main theme of identities, Palle Ove Christiansen asks how the Others can know that they are different. The book ends with a bibliography of Bjarne Stoklund's published works 1951–2003.

Birgitta Svensson, Stockholm

Living on a National Border

Mette Lund Andersen, Grænsen i hverdagen – grænsen i hovedet. Institut for grænseregionsforskning & Museet på Sønderborg slot, Aabenraa 2004. 52 pp. Ill. ISBN 87–90163–51–6.

■ The Institute for Research on Border Regions in Aabenraa and the Museum at Sønderborg Castle, both in southernmost Denmark, have published a joint study regarding inhabitant's conceptions and their daily life on the Danish-German border in the period between 2001 and 2003. The study's approach is based on the Schengen Agreement that came into force in Denmark on March 25, 2001. This term of this agreement opened the border to Germany with a resultant removal of the border barriers and the customs and passport controls at the border itself. Controls have since been effectuated by means of random checks carried out by border police and customs officers within a larger area on both sides of the border. Emphasis among the police is now concentrated on seizing illegal immigrants and criminals.

The author of the publication is the ethnologist Mette Lund Andersen, who in 2003 also carried out the fieldwork on which the study is based among Danish border inhabitants, but not among the corresponding German group of people. Interviews and observations were conducted among ordinary border residents as well as with customs officials, policemen and local politicians. The main issue discussed in this study has to do with how daily life and conceptual values concerning the border were affected by the sudden

opening of this previously closed border. What impact did this have on opinions of the neighbouring country and its border population?

Before the Schengen Agreement came into force, a certain uneasiness about the future was prevalent among the Danish border residents. Some of them reacted by installing extra locks on their buildings and cars. The feared wave of burglaries largely failed to appear, however, after the border was opened. Among the positive results of this event is the fact that leisure time activities in the other country have increased now that crossing the border is not as complicated as it once was. Now it is possible for border residents to take quite spontaneous walks or to ride their bicycles across the border. This has in turn led to an increase in cultural contacts with people living near the other side of the border. Such contacts used to be fairly infrequent. People living on either side of the border were not acquainted with each other even if they lived near one another in a geographical sense. This is, after all, a matter of quite densely populated areas lying on level country that offers excellent opportunities for seeing a good distance into the neighbouring country.

Even though the border has been opened for free passage, a mental border still exists in the minds of the border police. Danish policemen do not appear in uniform on the German side of the border, but instead send plain-clothed observers there. Similarly, the sight of uniformed German policemen in Denmark is quite unthinkable for the Danes.

The opening of the border has facilitated cross-border trade. Danes cross the border not only to purchase cheap alcoholic beverages but meat and dairy products as well. One source of gain for Danes who make cross-border purchases is that the German VAT is somewhat lower than in Denmark. The study's informants often say that small-scale smuggling has increased in connection with these purchasing trips. The risk of being caught is considered negligible. Customs personal actually concentrate their efforts on detecting and apprehending professional, large-scale smugglers.

2,500 cross-border commuters also live in this area. They reside on the one side of the border and work on the other side. The removal of border controls has been of definite benefit to them because their commuting now takes less time. These commuters are, however, not interested in changing their place of residence to the other side of the border, especially if their children are of school age, due to the fact that the border also separates the two languages.

New forms for cooperation have come about in local politics, among these a joint environmental project established by two border municipalities. Some problems do arise, however, based especially on language problems. Many Danes have an excellent understanding of the German language, while Germans, for their part, have never learned Danish. The Danes will not accept that all communication be carried out in German, however, because that could be interpreted as an acceptance of a German ascendancy in cooperative efforts and contacts. In addition, a generational problem also exists in that younger Danes are not as fluent in German as are the older of the Danish inhabitants.

As a final conclusion, it can be said that mental and cultural borders between border inhabitants do not disappear merely because cross-border passage is eased. Long-term cultural contacts are necessary if such intellectual boundaries are to be diminished and overpowered. It would be of very great interest indeed if something like the author's study were to be carried out in other areas of the Schengen region and, in addition, be repeated some few years later. Then one might be able to observe the effects of the newly opened border in different geographical areas and to study the extent to which these effects have increased over a lengthier period of time than the two years which have had relevance in this study. By means of her investigation, the author has presented an important approach for future studies on the clarification of cultural processes in regions near national borders in the new Europe that is emerging as a result of the Schengen Agreement.

Anders Gustavsson, Oslo

Looking Back at 1968

1968 – Dengang og nu. Morten Bendix Andersen & Niklas Olsen (eds.), Museum Tusculanums Forlag, Copenhagen 2004. 364 pp. ISBN 87-7289-996-4.

■ Is it going too far to say that 1968 was the first year of globalization? When the history of globalization is written, it is not unreasonable to imagine that the starting point will be chosen in that year, with its distinct signs of the inadequacy of national spaces as reference points, and the breakthrough of the recognition of the irrationality of the Cold War

and its simple polarization of east and west. And it seems likely that this change will be placed – for the sake of symbolism – in 1968.

My conviction that this may be the case is greatly strengthened by this book, "1968 – Then and Now", and by the initiative behind it. It is part of the tradition of history as a discipline to search constantly for beginnings and endings, and to characterize the eras in between. The present book is an outcome of this kind of activity, based on a seminar at the Department of History at Copenhagen University in autumn 2003.

With its division into three main sections, each with its own perspective – political, cultural, and societal – and some personal reflections, the book is an expression of the complexity in perceptions of the mythical period with its centre in 1968.

The political perspective is covered by three articles. Steven L. B. Jensen has looked closely at the so-called student revolt and shows the importance of distinguishing between the different groups involved. Klaus Petersen demonstrates in his paper that social democracy, through the organization Socialdemokratisk Samfund, was in fact influenced by the events.

The globalization perspective is present in the volume in almost every sentence without being explicitly mentioned. In the introduction the editors stress instead the parish-pump perspective of the so-called "battlefield of the politics of memory", that is, the differing right-wing and left-wing narratives about 1968 in Denmark. This is probably a reasonable emphasis – at least in the Danish context – since this battle of memory has become part of the current cultural struggle in the country. The political dimension in the concept of 1968 pervades almost all the contributions to the volume, and the battle of memory is treated in one of the most readable articles in the book, by the historian of ideas Mikkel Thorup. In "The Political Right Wing and 1968" he analyses how people on the political right have related to "the spirit of 68", from Mogens Glistrup and Søren Krarup to Ulla Dahlerup, Sven Ove Gade, and Pia Kjærsgaard. It is also this article that manages to show how the right–left spectrum in relation to "the spirit of 68" has gradually become less and less comprehensible if one does not take into consideration the changes in the right and left positions in the subsequent 30–35 years. From critique of the expansion of the welfare state to the defence of the national welfare state by the right wing in Danish politics and ideology, there is a line that does not at first sight seem completely straight, but the author succeeds in showing how it hangs together in a way that is almost harmonious.

The second section in the book begins with an article by Lisbeth Ihlemann and Morten Michelsen, in which they describe how musical life in the period witnessed the establishment of beat music as an independent genre. The most important thing in the article seems to be the emphasis on the significance of music for posterity's perception of the mood and content of the time. The subsequent articles contain no great surprises but are nevertheless important for putting a number of observations and opinions in writing. Anne-Marie Mai discusses literature in the period, especially how the rationalizing concept of "68 literature" has been downright counterproductive. Tania Ørum focuses on periodization, arguing that she can see the broad artistic transformation that is usually related to 1968 starting already in the 1950s. She succeeds in showing a line of development from the new focus on youth culture in the 1950s to the youth revolt around 1968. Michael Langkjær writes about the culture of drugs and intoxication in 1968. The result is an article about the Americanization of which this drug culture is also an expression. It is a highly readable paper, particularly for the interesting source foundation, but it could have gained a great deal by relating more closely to the globalization perspective, for example, by comparing the Danish drug scene (the author's apposite term) with other European contexts, not just America.

Sarah Højgaard Cawood and Anette Dina Sørensen analyse the abolition of restrictions on pornography and its relation to the popular perception of sexual liberation, and they examine how discourses have arisen about this which still leave their mark on the debate. In roughly the same way, Nina Kirstine Brandt looks at the ecological theme in the 68 tradition, showing how the institutionalization of ecology became politically correct.

Lynn Walter writes about the red stocking movement as a part of 68. The article has a fascinating description of the early red stocking movement, emphasizing the relatively small working groups, the anti-authoritarian character, and attitudes to the body. She succeeds in showing how this women's movement is closely tied to the time, influencing it and being influenced by it. The price paid for this was that the movement was fragmented and ended

up in the same collapse as the left-wing movement in the 1980s.

The editor of the book has interviewed Lars Jacob Muschinsky, who has helped to define the pedagogy of 68. In this interview Muschinsky makes a fascinating association which gives pause for thought. He describes how the student revolts in Paris, Berlin, and Warsaw, the Vietnam War and the Prague Spring "helped to give a sense that the world can be moved and changed". How near or far is it from this statement to claims like "everything can be changed"?

The third part of the book contains a series of personal reflections from some of the surviving figureheads of 1968 in Denmark. Morten Thing, Hans Hauge, Bente Rosenbeck, and Ole Grünbaum give us their own recollections, which of course are influenced by 35 years of life since then.

The volume contains some good articles, but it also demonstrates that the national perspective is insufficient, especially when we reach this period and even later. Bobby Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Neil Armstrong, the Black Panthers, the cultural revolution in China, and much more belong to the picture of 1968, with the temporal shifts that apply to the whole of the 68 mythology. And this is precisely one of the main points, that these phenomena also belong in the Danish version of 68. But there was no room for them in this book. That is a pity, for it seems obvious that only very little of what emerges from the articles here seems to be particular to the Danish development of the Danish 68 mythology.

Henrik Zipsane, Östersund

Twentieth-Century Children's Clothes through Grandmother's Memory and Museum Material

Viveka Berggren Torell, För stass och stoj. Barnkläder på 1900-talet utifrån mormors minnen och museers material. Forskningsrapport från projektet "Ett sekel i skylten – Barnkläder som industriellt kulturarv". Skrifter från Etnologiska Föreningen i Västsverige 43, 2003. 176 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-85838-65-9.

■ The ethnologist Viveka Berggren Torell has previously dealt with the topics of children, children's clothes, and consumption (see e.g. her articles in Skrifter från Etnologiska föreningen i Västsverige 34), and it is the same topics that are considered in the research report *För stass och stoj* (roughly, "For Finery and Fun"), although in a different way. For this report, which is one result of the research project "A Century in the Shop Window – Children's Clothes as Industrial Cultural Heritage", aims to do more than just shed light on the use of children's clothes in twentieth-century Sweden. It also has a purpose of a more methodological character, which mainly concerns exploring ways in which to strengthen collaboration between universities, museums, and primary schools. In Berggren Torell's case the means chosen to achieve this is to involve primary school pupils as co-researchers in the research process, to use mainly source material from museum archives, and to let her research project result in a travelling exhibition about twentieth-century children's clothes and the present report. The exhibition can be followed on the website of Bohuslän Museum: www.textile.bohumus.se.

The co-researchers here are four school classes, grades 4–6 from four different schools in Västra Götaland County, who spent a whole semester on the project. The pupils were first introduced to their role of co-researchers through two museum visits, where they gained insight into what children's clothes are and the history of children's clothes. Then the classes carried on working on the topic through tuition on various themes. One theme was about how museums work with their artefacts. This was intended to give the pupils an understanding of day-to-day work in museums and of how Berggren Torell could use museum archival material in her research project in addition to the information that the pupils themselves could collect. To conclude these theme projects each class drew up a questionnaire with which to interview either a grandparent or an old relative in their family about their memory of the clothes they wore as children. Each questionnaire consisted of 25–35 questions. The result of the four classes' questionnaires was 60 recorded interviews lasting from anything between 3.2 and 26.5 minutes. The informants were born in the period from the 1910s to the 1950s. Only nine were born before 1930. The co-researchers were asked to transcribe one interview each, and these transcripts were then analysed communally by the classes. In this connection each co-researcher was also asked to reflect on and describe the clothes they wore themselves and why. Berggren Torell took part in all the activities of her co-researchers and noted their reactions and statements in the course of the work. This material was then used as clues to the topics and themes to which Berggren Torell should pay atten-

tion in her continued research. The co-researchers' interview material thus provides the foundation for the report. The topics that they found it interesting to ask their elderly relatives about become the history of children's clothes that Berggren Torell tells.

The content of the report is a mixture of insight into what present-day children think about the phenomenon of children's clothes, and into how earlier generations perceived the clothes they themselves wore as children. This is supplemented with knowledge about production conditions, the history of the industry, changing advertising strategies and ways of displaying and selling children's clothes in shops through the twentieth century, which Berggren Torell has accumulated from various museum collections, university libraries, and the Regional Archive in Gothenburg.

The report falls into two parts. Part 1 tells about children's clothes from 1900 to the 1920s. Since the oral material is more limited from this period, this part of the report has the character of a discursive analysis supplemented with concrete examples from the interview material or museum archives, highlighting and describing individual items of children's clothing. A number of different questions form the basis for this part of the report. Questions include: Did ready-made children's clothes exist at all around the turn of the century? What part of a child's wardrobe was industrially produced clothing? What ideas about children were characteristic of the period? How much self-determination did children have then regarding how they dressed? What were the shops that sold children's clothes like? And who was expected to shop there?

The source material shows that there were ready-made children's clothes in Sweden around 1900, mainly for boys. These had been known since the start of the ready-to-wear industry in the mid-nineteenth century, when the production of men's clothes began. Around the turn of the century these garments were mostly advertised alongside hygiene products for children, which suggests that children's clothes were perceived as part of looking after one's children and making sure that they were healthy. The advertisements were mainly aimed at the responsible woman, who was supposed to shop for good value and quality.

The source material also shows that ready-made clothes were no longer reserved for the upper class; the masses could also buy them for their children. The difference between the wealthy and the less well-off was the quality of the children's clothes and where they were bought. Richer families bought the clothes in shops with elegant window displays, while poorer people mostly bought them from mail-order catalogues. But there was still a large parallel market for home-made clothes for children, as is evident from the many patterns that could be ordered from magazines such as *Nordisk Mönstertidning.*

What distinguished the early twentieth century from previous times was that in this period there arose both factories and shops which incorporated the word "children" in their names. The perception of children as a distinct consumer group seems to have taken shape at this time. Berggren Torell cites a couple of examples of this development. One of them is the business "Sahlins in Eslöv", which from 1894, under the direction of the enterprising Maria Sahlins, began producing ready-to-wear children's clothes, especially sailor's costumes for boys and girls. In 1900 the business expanded by opening a shop in Kungsgatan in Gothenburg. The material about Sahlins also shows that one of the biggest challenges about making children's clothes was that at this time there was no fixed system of sizes. Maria Sahlins solved this problem by assembling a large number of children of different ages to measure them and then work out a kind of system, and by going to Copenhagen to purchase a selection of children's clothes from the department store Magasin du Nord, from which she then made patterns back in Sweden.

Another topic considered in Part 1 is children's clothes for special occasions and what they looked like. The answers to the questions show that in most cases there were no special clothes, but just everyday clothes newly washed and ironed. However, the only male informant who was a child in this period remembers wearing his sailor's suit on special occasions. The fine girl's clothes that Berggren Torell encountered in her museum investigations turn out mostly to have come from exclusive shops in Stockholm or from shops in foreign cities. Berggren Torell interprets this as being due to the fact that the dresses belonged to children of the bourgeoisie in Stockholm. The fact that the clothes bought in foreign cities ended up in museums she sees as a reflection that they were kept as souvenirs of trips abroad.

Another topic is children's influence over what they wore. Here the interview material shows that it was the mother who decided what children should

wear. But it should also be remembered that children at the time generally did not have so many clothes to choose from. Children were a small but growing consumer group.

Part 2 deals with children's clothes in the period 1930–1960, and here there is much more emphasis on the oral recollections, since the interview material is much larger than in Part 1. Yet this is still mixed with a more discursive picture of the period. What is characteristic of this period is that all children's clothes were mass-produced. Everyone in this period, according to Berggren Torell, had access to cheap clothes of good quality. The main producer was Algot Johanson AB in Borås, a household name from the 1920s, which continued until 1977, when the business went bankrupt.

Another characteristic of the period is that the range of children's clothes became bigger and more varied in pace with new production conditions. The informants who grew up in the period talk about their children's clothes in relation to different categories such as everyday wear, clothes for special occasions, and clothes for school. A man born in 1954 even talks about clothes for playing in.

This statement is further supported by the advertisements Berggren Torell studies from the 1930s: These show that there was a special focus on children's clothes for sports and outdoor life, with swimwear and overalls – a favourite garment for children to play in. A new feature in this period was that the child began to be understood not just as a distinct consumer, but also as a distinct individual. Children were supposed to be active and independent. These ideas about children were materialized in the design of children's clothes. An example that Berggren Torell cites is a pair of overalls from the end of the 1940s belonging to the Västra Götaland Museum, designed with a zip. As other researchers have pointed out, this fastening mechanism is regarded as an expression of the self-help ideology of the time in relation to children. With the zip children themselves could dress and undress at an early age and thus become aware of their own independence.

The source material also shows that people in this period did not speak much about fashion with respect to children's clothes. The interview material shows that this did not start until around 1950. Children's clothes in the 1930s and '40s did not change at the same speed as adult fashions and due to its timeless and functional design, it was not perceived as particularly trendy in a commercial sense.

From 1950 onwards this changed and, as the interview material shows, children's clothes changed styles more quickly. As a child of the time, one was aware of what was trendy and what was not. Children had become consumers.

All in all, this is fascinating reading about a piece of Swedish consumer history, viewed through the child's perspective and through Berggren Torell's many interesting and sensitive interpretations of the source material. The report is a result of an ambitious project which wants to achieve many things, perhaps even too many at times. For academic readers, even if this is not Berggren Torell's primary target group, the strength of the report is in its reflections on the experiment of working collaboratively in the research process. Having said that, I must also say that this is also the weakness of the report. For even though the reader is introduced to the method of the project and learns where the idea came from – that it has to do with the fact that children's studies in the last 10–15 years has developed from viewing children as an object of research to viewing them as a subject and hence also a potential co-researcher – I would have liked to see this methodological approach elaborated. It would be interesting to read about what consequences this approach has for the collection of the oral material. To what extent is it a limitation that the head researcher has no influence on what pops up in the co-researchers' conversation with the informants and on what is followed up to get the informant to talk about things that might not immediately seem to be of interest for research but which perhaps actually is? Or about how Berggren Torell has dealt with the fact that the oral material is generated by relatives interviewing relatives, and how this influences the questions asked and the narratives resulting from this. In many ways, I would have preferred greater methodological transparency to be able to judge the value of the oral statements as evidence. Fortunately, Berggren Torell writes in her introduction that she will consider the methodological issues of the project in a future work. I look forward to reading that.

Marie Riegels Melchior, Copenhagen

The Wheel of Fortune

Nils-Arvid Bringéus, Lyckan kommer, lyckan går. Tankar, ord och föreställningar om lyckan. Atlantis, Stockholm 2004. 204 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-7486-801-2.

■ The quest for good fortune, happiness, and well-being is a general human trait. Describing luck and happiness from the perspective of cultural history is thus a gigantic task. The amount of evidence is infinite. When Nils-Arvid Bringéus undertakes to produce a general survey of the concept, we are confronted with leaps through time, place, form, and function.

"Fortune cannot be captured, cannot be touched, can scarcely even be described", as Bringéus writes in the introduction. Yet we see its reflection in images and conceptions. The concept is embedded everywhere, and with the author as a guide, the reader is taken on a tour through the history of humanity, in the borderland between religion and ethnology. The sources – both popular and learned – are copious. The ethnological, folkloristic, and theological material presented in this book paints a rich picture of humankind steered by recurrent wishes and dreams. But before we get to the more concrete expressions of good fortune –success with food, children, farming, and money – Bringéus defines the concept of Swedish *lycka*, which comprises fortune, good luck, prosperity, success, and happiness.

It is undeniable that luck is individually constructed. Bringéus, however, approaches his task in a methodical way. Even luck can be studied in its capacity as a pattern of thought structures. In twelve chapters he discusses different aspects of luck. Since luck can be rooted in time and place, it can also be analysed.

Bringéus begins his work with a detailed description of the wrath of the Old Testament God, reflected in biblical texts and hymns, and invoked in connection with disasters and calamities through the ages. Fortune as a social concept and a communal resource is also encountered in the farmer's almanac, in church ordinances, and in the catechism. The idea of "the limited good" is illustrated in numerous records of folk belief, in the quest for success with butter churning, with the harvest, and with fishing.

In his analysis Bringéus systematically checks off the different forms of fortune, from the most profound symbolic expressions to the smallest, highly concrete examples. We can read about the media of fortune (such as the celestial bodies, lotteries and dice, playing cards and the crystal ball) and about metaphors for luck (such as the wheel of fortune). We also learn about the association of fortune with different phases of life, with different jobs and situations.

The evidence comes from the records in folklife archives and concrete expressions of the view of fortune, such as good wishes in poetry albums and autograph books, well-wishing telegrams, the texts on the peasants' hand-coloured woodcuts, and proverbs on painted wall hangings.

What, then, is the conclusion of all this? The last chapter in the book is entitled "The Key to Fortune". In expressions of good luck, Bringéus sees reflections of changing perceptions of society and beliefs. Fortune interacts with and contrasts with misfortune, success has its counterpart in envy. Fortune and misfortune are associated with two fields, the individual and the collective. A change is seen in that, up to the eighteenth century, they were chiefly associated with the nation and its people. Later they become more connected with the individual's life course.

Evidence of surprising interest is found in the old hymns. Bringéus notes that in the Swedish hymn book from 1937 there were 77 hymns where the theme of fortune occurred in some form. In the new hymn book from 1986 there are only 29 examples. Hymns have been used far too little as research material for popular beliefs and mentality.

This book shows that a close-up reading of a heterogeneous and interdisciplinary body of material can yield a great deal. Proverbs, verses, blessings, and rites serve as testimony in an all-round presentation of human instincts, virtues, wishes, and dreams. The books gives us pause for reflection and arouses many associations and new insights.

Carola Ekrem, Helsingfors

The Transformation of a Harbour

Nicolai Carlberg & Søren Møller Christensen, Byliv og Havnefront. Museum Tusculanums Forlag, Copenhagen 2005. 182 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-635-0190-2.

■ It has been very interesting to read this book about "City Life and Harbour Front", since I myself, together with Björn Fredlund, have studied the port of Gothenburg from the point of view of ethnology and art history. A comparison between the harbours in Gothenburg and Copenhagen shows both similarities and differences. In Gothenburg the transformation

of the harbour has hitherto focused on the northern side of the river, while in Copenhagen it has been concentrated on the central harbour basins and canals. Tendencies to the privatization of the public environment are also more distinct there than in Gothenburg. In Copenhagen "the glories of the city", as the authors call them, are located within walking distance of the city centre. From Norra Älvstranden in Gothenburg to the centre, on the other hand, you have to take a ferry over the river.

Planners have the ambition to create "the good city", with a mixture of a wide range of different functions. The transformation of harbours shows a tendency to be aimed at the wealthier classes and those active in the information society. We notice the boundary markers and "reflecting glass façades". The many colour pictures from Copenhagen do not show much of the old industrial era, but more massive blocks, where offices, service activities, and housing are allowed to come close to the edge of the quayside.

The most interesting parts of the book, in my opinion, are chapter three, which looks at how plans were made to turn industrial harbours into attractive neighbourhoods, and chapter five, where people's dreams of quiet and safe suburbs are increasingly transferred to a vibrant city by the water. The seventh chapter adds the bold decisions to close the old industrial harbours to give attractive urban spaces. Work in the former was staff-intensive, but that is a thing of the past. The crews of ships docking in Copenhagen rarely have an opportunity to go ashore, and in Gothenburg the big ships are directed to the huge container harbours at the mouth of the river.

The new economy involves global networks, a highly educated workforce, research environments and finance centres. The old values of the industrial harbours are sometimes retained in places, but even artists "feel" for the new areas and indirectly pave the way for other groups to move in, "to live like an artist". More and more offices around Rådhuspladsen in the old city centre are said to be empty, as advanced service companies prefer the new harbour areas. In this way it has become easier to recruit staff to all that is new, with its flows of knowledge and capital. Career-oriented young people with good incomes go there and – surprisingly, perhaps – also older, well-off people, "post-parents", as they are called here. "Green insides" can be combined the liveliest "outsides".

Many different interests are thus juxtaposed and described in words and pictures in this transition from an industrial society to an information and network society.

Allan T. Nilson, Gothenburg

A Look at the New Ethnology

Åke Daun, Med rörligt sökarljus. Den nya etnologins framväxt under 1960- och 1970-talen. En personlig tidsskildring. Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposion, Stockholm/Stehag 2003. 249 pp. ISBN 91-7139-613-6.

■ The history of Swedish ethnology in the twentieth century falls into two distinct parts: the trend of cultural history/cultural geography with Sigurd Erixon as the great pioneer, with plans for cultural atlases and with a theoretical orientation towards Central Europe in roughly the first half of the century, and the "new ethnology" with its inspiration from Anglo-American anthropology, giving priority to fieldwork and contemporary studies in the second half of the century.

Åke Daun, one of the ethnologists who was active in the change of paradigm that took place in the 1960s and '70s, has now written a book about "the emergence of the new ethnology", as the subtitle says. The main title of the book means "With a Movable Searchlight", which was one of the slogans of the movement, originally formulated by Börje Hanssen. But the title can also be understood as a description of the book. It is not a systematic, chronological presentation of a course of development over two decades, but a series of chapters which put the focus on different aspects of the change. The book, however, is also influenced by the author's decidedly autobiographical ambition; as the subtitle suggests, it seeks to paint a "personal picture of the period". In this respect the author is certainly in touch with a recent trend. Modern readers cannot get enough biographies and autobiographies. I must admit, however, that I have found it slightly difficult to become involved in "the sufferings of the young Daun", especially when they are often backed up by long and detailed quotations from diaries and letters. This good documentation is of course a safety net for the memory, but it can also hamper the presentation. Another formal matter that I would criticize is the tendency to give extensive references to people who have crossed the author's path, but who do not always seem interesting or significant. Admittedly, one can

receive very surprising information into the bargain, as when we read about the Norwegian ethnographer Helge Kleivan that he had done fieldwork in Labrador in Southern Greenland (!).

It has nevertheless been fascinating to read about the formative years around 1968, as they were experienced by one of the central figures, especially since I myself have followed this development from the sideline. I clearly remember the tension and the expectation when a young Swedish guru came to our department at Brede and presented something as advanced as a model! The inspiration in the first years clearly came from the Norwegian anthropologist Fredrik Barth. In the account of Åke Daun's and Tom G. Svensson's period of study in Bergen we gain the impression of a dynamic research environment which was stimulating and at the same time somewhat regimented. Another important source of inspiration in those years was Börje Hanssen, who followed his own path as a researcher in the borderland between cultural and social studies, but who had been attached by John Granlund to the Department of Ethnology in Stockholm. Granlund is an interesting figure from this transitional period in the history of the discipline. He is at once liberal and open to new inspiration from outside, but simultaneously concerned with marking the boundaries of ethnology. Åke Daun's attitude to Granlund is obviously very ambivalent.

A characteristic feature of the paradigm shift was the major role played by the Nordic student organization NEFA and its – still running – journal *NordNytt*. A valuable initiative was the theme issues, which also appeared in book form. The first was about ethnological aspects of the study of politics, certainly a rather provocative theme to take up. The next one about ecology and culture was theoretically innovative, but it stuck more within the boundaries of ethnology; indeed, some of the more established ethnologists were among the authors. As Åke Daun writes: "We were not iconoclasts!" At other places in the book, however, the reader may be in doubt about what the "Monday group", as the Stockholm pioneers called themselves, really wanted. Were they seeking to reform ethnology, or did they want to put something different and better in its place? The latter seems more likely when Daun cites from his diary the following about Orvar Löfgren's "Galtebäcksfiskare" from 1967: "Wonderful! The first published essay in social anthropology in Sweden." Elsewhere in the book it is instead sociology that seems to be the ideal.

This is true particularly of the second half of the book. Here Daun brings the reader into a Stockholm world of applied social research with the emphasis on housing conditions and their effects on people. Again, the account is based on long reported diary entries and discussions, and we meet a mass of unknown names and incomprehensible abbreviations. It is difficult for a non-Swedish reader to stay interested. Here we are in a field that must be characterized as metropolitan sociology, involving many disciplines, including a few ethnologists. It has the effect, however, that we get rather far away from what is the main theme of the book: the new ethnology and its development.

Even Daun himself seems to have finally tired of studying housing. In the chapter "Quo vadis?" he describes in a highly personal way his own bewilderment about where he is heading, in both academic and human terms. That he ended up taking over the Hallwyl professorship in 1981 is something we are only told indirectly; the reader is evidently expected to know this. In the concluding chapter, however, we are back in university ethnology. We are given a view of the development of the discipline in the seventies and a look further on, but it is a strangely impersonal survey with just names, titles, and dates. One wishes for some concluding reflections, a discussion of the forty years of development in the light of the current situation in cultural studies. The concept of culture that is defined at the start of the book, and which has been central to the subject throughout the period, is questioned today in anthropological research. This is thought-provoking and could surely have given rise to a some critical contemplation.

Bjarne Stoklund, Copenhagen

Homo Academicus

Billy Ehn & Orvar Löfgren, Hur blir man klok på universitetet? Studentlitteratur, Lund 2004.198 pp. ISBN 91-44-03519-5.

■ Both Billy Ehn and Orvar Löfgren have in many previous studies demonstrated that they are adept at analysing their surroundings and illuminating everyday phenomena that often get overlooked due to sheer familiarity. In a joint effort they are now devoting their attention to the intimidating task of unveiling the complex world of academia. Needless to say my expectations are high. The witty cover of "Hur blir man klok på universitetet?" (depicting a

skull of the rare species of Homo Academicus) sets the tone for how the aforementioned task is approached, i.e. unpretentiously and with a great deal of humour and (self)irony.

It should immediately be made clear that a grand theory of what makes a university tick will not be presented in this book. What rather is revealed, however, is a study of ambivalence, conflict and oppositions, all set against the backdrop of the hallowed halls of academe. The world that unfolds is one filled with stark contrasts: freedom vs. restrictions, creativity vs. conformity, moments of flow vs. performance anxiety, exciting exchange of ideas vs. competition, and so on.

From the first chapter, the authors take the bull by the horns and confront the emotive and passionate side of university life. Science is routinely held to be devoid of emotions and the exact opposite of irrational passions. However, in the present study another side of academic life is presented. As the main source material for their study Ehn and Löfgren have utilized memoirs and written recollections from people with academic careers behind them. From these personal accounts, the university emerges as a virtual boiling cauldron of passions and emotions. A frequent theme in these narratives seems to be envy, bitterness and hurt feelings. In fact, as Ehn points out, this type of memoir writing might act as a kind of defence and an attempt to redress various grievances the memoir author has experienced. However, perceived injustices can potentially also have a positive impact. For some people, feelings of envy and a desire to avenge oneself constitute a source of inspiration, or motivation, for working hard and determinedly.

Dependence on acknowledgement, and the consequent feelings of insecurity, are built into the academic system. The quest for approval results in an environment where jealousies constantly lurk – even academics do not seem to be immune to the idea of the "limited good". Scholars who feel that they need to match, if not outdo, successful colleagues, might experience immense pressure and anguish. The moral of the tale, although the authors do not hit us over the head with it, is that in a world when one is constantly subject to the opinion of others there is a high risk of making mountains out of molehills, and become embittered over details that, for the most part, would seem rather petty in the eyes of the world. Nevertheless, despite images of a dog-eat-dog world, the reoccurring and predominant theme in the academic narratives is the passion for research, and the joy of those golden moments of flow and intellectual bliss.

The authors would not be true to their ethnological perspective, however, if the mundane details and routines of everyday life would not be allowed to take centre stage. With an ever so slight edge of nostalgia we are taken on a tour of the developments in the academic surroundings and its work tools, from ink and pen to typewriters and tip-ex to the latest cutting edge lap-tops. The authors go on to unveil the power and symbolic significance the smallest and most quotidian of objects and phenomena can hold. As Löfgren observes, there are codes everywhere. Seemingly innocuous text notations may speak (murderous) volumes to the initiated. Rituals may be a way for individuals to be socialised into communities, but the same rituals may also be a devastatingly efficient way to marginalise others.

The chapter discussing academic arenas is illustrated with many examples from biographies, articles and personal experiences, and is very enjoyable to read. Experience is naturally subjective and many people might not relate to the interpretation offered in the present study. On the other hand, it is almost certain that most people reading this book will do so with a smile of embarrassed recognition.

However, Ehn and Löfgren have not set out only to amuse. The university is far from a cosy idyll. It is the university as an arena of tension and paradoxes that primarily interests the authors. All in all it is a somewhat frightening landscape that appears from the pages. I catch myself thinking how on earth anyone in their right mind would want to become an academic. Fortunately, Ehn and Löfgren also provide us with some of the reasons why many people indeed prefer the university to any other work place. A university at its best offers joys of paradisical dimensions. As when one is able to devote undivided attention to a fascinating research topic or when one's project group offers a stimulating and supportive environment. In short, when one is able to do what one loves the most, surrounded by people who share that interest and passion. At those moments academia truly offers a state of blissful perfection. In reality, the authors point out, the work environment at any given university is likely to contain aspects of both heaven and hell.

Despite the many depressing scenarios of conflict and agony, this is in many ways a very comforting book. It aptly illuminates the fact that regardless of status or achievement, we are all just human.

Behind the professional and confident facade of a "superscholar", insecurities may hide. The feeling that one is only "pretending" to be an academic is a common one. Even highly acclaimed researchers are vulnerable when their latest book has just returned from the publishers, even lecturers with many years of experience can suffer stage fright, and any upcoming scholar is afraid to make a comment which will put his "university-cred" in question.

Succeeding in the academic world takes more than a keen intellect and good research ideas. Social skills and intelligence can be decisive. Personal contacts, reputation and networks are fundamentally important. Gaining a reputation as being impossible to work with may put a stop to many career moves. The core of the matter is, that the person wanted and needed for many positions is not necessarily the best scholar but the best networker. Just as ethnologist Fredrik Schoug suggests in his recent study on the university experiences of young researchers (see review in this issue), Ehn and Löfgren also underline the importance of being familiar with academic codes. Since these codes constitute a cultural capital in Bourdieu's sense of the word, budding scholars from families with an academic background have a major advantage over their colleagues who will have to acquire this subtle system of implicit knowledge as they advance in their careers.

As indicated by the choice of publishers (Studentlitteratur), this book is written partly as a "manual" for new students. However, the text might at times seem to give a nod of tacit understanding to people who themselves once saw the electric typewriter as the absolute pinnacle of text-writing technology. Regardless of generation or even if you never put your foot in a university building: read this book. You might not feel you have gained the answer to how one understands universities, but you might get one or two insights. Moreover, you will very likely have an enjoyable time along the way. Ehn and Löfgren reflect over the university as a workplace and how emotions play a vital part of academic life. Hopefully, this book will also inspire reflection over what kind of academic world we ourselves want to be part of and contribute to.

Susanne Österlund-Pötzsch, Helsinki

Changes in National Borders during the 1600s

Da Østdanmark blev Sydsverige. Otte studier i dansk-svenske relationer på 1600-tallet. Karl-Erik Frandsen and Jens Chr. V. Johansen (eds.). Skippershoved, Ebeltoft 2003. 147 pp. ISBN 87-89224-74-4.

■ Eight historians working at the Universities of Copenhagen and Lund have made a study of the historical processes that took place in the 1600s when the three provinces of Scania [*Skåne*], Halland and Blekinge in southern Sweden and Gotland Island in the Baltic Sea were transferred from Denmark to Sweden as a result of various peace treaties. Eastern Denmark thus became southern Sweden. The process of integration took, however, a very lengthy period of time. The analysis of this process is the foremost objective of the present anthology, which presents the results of a research project that has been underway since 1999.

For a period of transition, the peace treaty signed in 1658 in the Danish city of Roskilde granted the new Swedish provinces a continuance of both the former advantageous Danish privileges of nobility and of Danish law as well. These privileges and special laws were finally discontinued, however, in 1683 when King Carl XI of Sweden introduced absolute monarchy. Centralization and integration then became important principles in old Sweden and, especially, in the new provinces. With them, the new provinces became irrevocably incorporated into the kingdom of Sweden. The courts of law had begun to adapt Swedish legislation in relation to Danish laws even before 1683. Jens Chr. V. Johansen, who has used judgement books as source material for his study of legal usage between 1658 and 1683, has found that the various administrative county districts differed from each other concerning which legislation was applied during this period. After 1683, Swedish judges (*häradshövdingar*) were appointed to replace the Danish judges (*herredsfogder*) who had functioned since the period of Danish sovereignty.

The fact that Scania was relinquished to Sweden in 1658 also had consequences for the trade, previously a domestic concern, over the Öresund between Scania and Denmark proper. This sound now became border water between two countries instead of being Danish on both shores as had previously been the case. Vigorous trading operations had been carried out between the two cities lying on either side of the

Sound, Helsingør in Zealand and Helsingborg in Scania, since time immemorial. This trade, which was now subject to restrictions in the form of a new customs system, had been the province of women. Solveig Fagerlund illustrates in her contribution how butter and meat were transported to Denmark while linen and wool were conveyed in the opposite direction to Sweden. The new regulations lead to the rise of a number of conflicts between customs officials and the women who exercised trade.

After 1658, the powerful Scanian nobility gained membership in the Swedish Parliament while still retaining their former Danish privileges for a long period of time. Fredrik Persson has done a special study of the Scanian nobility's exploits during the parliamentary session of 1664. This constituted a meeting for these noblemen with the principal Swedish authority. They paid homage to the royal authority of Sweden while continuing to protect the Danish legislation dealing with their privileges. On the other hand, they expressed no wish for Scania to be reunited with Denmark. There was, in other words, no question of any form for nationalism. It was instead a matter of defending and strengthening the noblemen's own autonomy in the form to which they had become accustomed during the period of Danish rule.

A Swedish national commission travelled throughout the captured provinces in 1669 and 1670. Its purpose was to uncover any forms for local conflict. One matter of great concern dealt with the peasantry's complaints against the sheriffs (*fogdar*) and county governors (*landshövdingar*), complaints reaching in time back to the Danish period. By their actions the Swedish authorities were able to win the confidence of the peasants. Protection against the local authorities was the matter of most concern for the peasantry. Because the government authorities were able to provide such protection, the peasantry were little concerned with the fact that these authorities were no longer Danish, but Swedish instead. Nationalistic ways of thinking held, in other words, no interest for the peasantry. It was the local aspects that had prevalence.

Another way of studying the captured provinces' adjustment to the Swedish realm has been an investigation of when the clergy began preaching in the Swedish language instead of the Danish. This process of change did not take serious effect until the absolute monarchy had been established in Sweden in the 1680s. An additional period of years was, however, necessary before the final implementation of the change in language usage had been completed.

The greatest value of this book lies in its contribution to an increased understanding of the long-drawn-out process which took place on the local and regional level from the time that the provinces in question were taken from Denmark until they were integrated into the kingdom of Sweden. The central authorities of Sweden employed a prudent process in the years just after the national borders had been changed. In this way they counteracted any major open conflicts on the local and national level despite the fact that Denmark and Sweden had fought a grievous war in Scania between 1675 and 1679 brought about by Denmark's unsuccessful attempt to recapture her lost provinces.

Anders Gustavsson, Oslo

Symbols on Gravestones

Anders Gustavsson, Gravstenar i Norge och Sverige som symboler för känslor, tankar och idéer i vår egen tid. Novus forlag. Oslo. 2003. 130 pp. Ill. ISBN 82-7099-365-4.

■ In a richly illustrated book Anders Gustavsson shows the form taken by the symbolism of gravestones in the 1990s. We see a thirst for creativity here, partly with the aid of computer technology in gravestone carving. The author has travelled with his camera around cemeteries on the west coast of Sweden and the continuation of the same coast in Norway. He has found more similarities than differences. A surprising wealth of motifs display the world of private life, emotions, and leisure interests. Children's drawings of grandfather on the bench outside the summer cottage, squirrels, cats, rocking horses, footballs, lobsters and other favourite prey alternate with more conventional expressions such as profession, domicile, and hopes of a fond reunion in the life to come. Here in the cemetery the public space has been made intimate in a way that parallels what has been described in other spheres of culture. Personal details simply have to be expressed. The most striking thing is that this is done through symbols and not portraits, as happens in Catholic countries. Perhaps the latter are too closely linked to religion and to already existing traditions. In Sweden and Norway people have endeavoured to achieve authenticity of expression by selecting

something that signifies the deceased and not a shared belief of which he or she was a part.

The book is a documentary account, focusing specifically on gravestones. The living context, the use – by individuals, the family, society – is merely glimpsed in passing in the text. This is obviously more difficult for the visiting ethnologist to capture in photographs. It is, however, a seriously neglected form of folk art that Anders Gustavsson displays here. The reader browses through the material with mounting surprise over toil expended by the survivors to control the memory of the dear departed.

Jonas Frykman, Lund

Writing Microhistory

Anna Götlind & Helena Kåks, Handbok i konsten att skriva mikrohistoria. Natur och Kultur, Stockholm 2004. 214 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-27-09760-9.

■ The authors of this book have chosen to describe the aim of the book in block capitals on the front cover: "This is a handbook in the art of writing the history of the 'small', the everyday, and the individual. We have chosen to call it microhistory. A place, a person, or a group of people are the focus of our interest." In similar layout on the back cover, a blurb arouses the reader's curiosity about the fate of one woman: "Bönhus-Anna's clogs convey a story of which we can only have an inkling. Yet it is there as a glimpse of a different time. We are enticed by the unknown in it, but also the familiar. Tales about other people are always in some sense about ourselves." The block letters in black and white fill the front and back cover on a ground of red and yellow respectively.

An instructive division into methodological reasoning and empirical examples is significant for the structure of all the chapters in the book. The search for facts and interpretations about Bönhus-Anna's living conditions is the point of departure for how leisure-time researchers and students can collect data from various angles. With a thematic division into chapters, this is an accessible study in method, concerning a person who has not left any diary but a hundred or so postcards and as many photographs, about 40 letters, some 30 newspaper cuttings, a pair of clogs, some clothes, and other belongings. The source value of diaries, like various interview methods, is nevertheless something that is discussed here on an elementary level.

One of the merits of the book is that the aim involves both data collection and analysis of the sources. The authors remind the readers that accounts of local history usually are highly appreciated by the people living in the place. Apart from staging exhibitions, writing articles in the local press and local history journals, the authors make a plea for the publication of books. With today's technology it does not need to be so expensive. The historian Anna Götlind and the ethnologist Helena Kåks wish to strike a blow here for a renewal of the genre of local studies. They argue that works of local history concentrate too much on the oldest or the first. If it is not about the pre-industrial cultural heritage of the district, the focus is on innovations. The documentation concerns the first car or tractor or whatever. The authors suggest that more amateur researchers should instead focus on questions about the last working horse, and so on; when something falls out of use that too is a watershed which can be just as interesting to elucidate as the introduction of novelties. In addition, the authors, with their examples concerning Bönhus-Anna, want to discuss the role of place in local history studies. By not proceeding from a place but from a person, it is possible to follow a human life, via movements, in a region. The microhistorical perspective does not reject local historical phenomena, but in this connection it is not primarily the local space that structures the study, but the phases of a woman's life related to different places and contexts.

The authors refer eight times to the ethnologist Lars G. Strömberg's studies of Anna Larsson and other inhabitants in Främmestad, Västergötland (1996, 1999, 2000). There are also references to other ethnologists and historians in this book, but it is clear that Strömberg's approach – placing an obscure person at the centre of a local historical narrative – functions as an important source of inspiration for the authors when they problematize an individual human life. At the same time, it is not particularly remarkable from an ethnological perspective to focus on an unnoticed, unmarried, handicapped, and to some extent marginalized person. I agree, of course, that people in weak positions deserve attention, but I miss an in-depth discussion of what the unnoticed stands for. The reference to the collection *Obemärkt* ("Unnoticed") by Ronny Ambjörnsson and Sverker Sörlin is far too brief. There are many types of human destinies which do not have a given place in historiography. An example of this problem is provided by

Åsa Gillberg in her dissertation on the life and work of the archaeologist Nils Niklasson (2001).

This handbook is easy to read from cover to cover. The small format with many illustrations is enticing in itself. What makes me want to read on, however, is mostly the good balance between methodological and empirical sections and the serious ambition to interpret material artefacts and place them in local historical contexts. Because the authors pay attention to everyday things and conduct simple discussions of Bönhus-Anna's experiences and expectations, readers can associate this with other old persons they have come across. I am convinced that many readers will be inspired to look for the things left behind by dead people in order to construct their history, or perhaps even better to interview them while they are still alive. Yet I question why Bönhus-Anna's life is not problematized more explicitly from the point of view of power and class. I would not say that the story of Bönhus-Anna is romanticized; on the contrary, the tone throughout is objective and there are several examples of her hardships. People in other positions around her are absent, however. Today's reader will find it outrageous that the faithful servant Bönhus-Anna was denied free firewood by the congregation, despite her worsening rheumatism, which meant that she became unemployed and homeless. Bönhus-Anna was then 55 years old and forced to move to the old people's home. The authors do not discuss the responsibility or the guilt of the meeting-house (*bönhus*) congregation in Bönhus-Anna's case, based on local social hierarchies or contemporary evaluations at the national level. In my view, this would have enriched the book, since the narrative would then not only have resulted in an understanding of a woman who found consolation in her simple way of life. We can only speculate about why the congregation chose to be stingy rather than helpful, but the authors should have asked more explicit questions about this. As I have already said, the authors' ambition is to contribute to the renewal of local studies, and here I think they miss an opportunity to draw the attention of amateur researchers to the perspectives of power and class. It would also have been appropriate to discuss the choice of marginalized persons for this type of study. Is it possibly the intention that the narratives should give redress to people in weak positions? We feel sorry for them in retrospect and vindicate them, while the history of those who repressed them remains untold.

Although I would have liked to see an effort to study norms and class perspectives from a contemporary local-history perspective, I think that the basic method of proceeding from a person's belongings can stimulate interest and will no doubt attract new generations to the study of local history. The handbook concerns material objects. Through descriptions of the content of Bönhus-Anna's chest of drawers the reader learns about different things she owned. When it comes to objects, written sources, pictures, maps, and so on, the educational point is to get the reader to reflect on how these things and data can be interpreted and put into special place contexts related to Bönhus-Anna's life. The conclusions are often formulated as questions. Even when there is a factual basis, the authors avoid absolute statements. One example is "The family probably lived in the dairy" (p. 114). The intention is to make the reader understand the research process, how they gradually find different pieces of information which eventually lead to interpretations and conclusions. The authors are careful not to reveal anything in advance, instead dropping hints which arouse the reader's curiosity. And that is precisely the strength of this handbook, which means that it is suitable as study material in research groups and writers' circles. Unfortunately there is no index and no separate list of all the works referred to, which is irritating for anyone who wants to work with the book in the traditional way and look up things in it.

As an ethnologist I find it difficult at times to see how microhistory differs from ethnology. What the authors, one historian and one ethnologist, advocate is studies of everyday life and individual destinies. But if I think of microhistory as an interdisciplinary platform where historians and ethnologists can collaborate on local historical contexts, it becomes more comprehensible. The polemic in the book is mostly aimed at traditional history. It is considered lamentable that historical research with a national orientation has higher status than local historical studies. The authors also point out that local history in Norway has a more prestigious role than in Sweden. There is no comparable polemic against ethnology. Ethnological methods and perspectives also seem to be the main inspiration for microhistory, while the discipline of history has less to contribute. The border drawn to divide local history and genealogy from microhistory is discussed, and in this connection it is easy to equate microhistory with ethnology.

In my opinion, the handbook nevertheless shows the potential of this for development, but also, as the authors mention in the introduction, its different levels of relevance. The exchange comprises cumulative, theoretical, and existential levels. Cumulative refers to additional new data; theoretical chiefly stands for academic development; and the existential represents identification and understanding of "human experience". And it is the latter that is the chief asset of microhistory. Persons who have a general interest in history, and who want above all to get to know the area in which they live, whether they have been there a long time or just moved in, can obtain knowledge via microhistory from perspectives which bring history to life. Yet even professional researchers can work with these methods in order to problematize local historical phenomena from academic angles. The authors have experience of what they call research circles and storytelling evenings where the results of the amateur researchers' efforts are communicated to interested inhabitants. The handbook shows that there is good potential for cooperation between professional and amateur researchers via research circles and the like, which can give legitimacy and mutual benefit to both sides.

Kerstin Gunnemark, Gothenburg

Societal Ideals and Images of the Future

Cecilia Hammarlund-Larsson, Bo G. Nilsson & Eva Silvén, Samhällsideal och framtidsbilder. Perspektiv på Nordiska museets dokumentation och forskning. Carlssons, Stockholm 2004. 230 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-7203-510-2.

■ The joint project by the Swedish museums on belief in the future (Framtidstro) stimulated not only exhibitions, seminars, and lectures. It also gave rise to more profound reflection on a great many crucial issues concerning the identity and role of the museums past and present. One highly readable result is this book, the title of which means "Societal Ideals and Images of the Future". The book consists of three separate parts, each written by a different author, but clearly linked by a shared focus, namely, how the Nordiska Museet's documentation and research have been influenced by the prevailing societal ideals and utopias.

It is perhaps not surprising to read that Artur Hazelius was heavily influenced by the patriotism of his day, and that he worked strategically to create a "home for memories", which could embrace the various groups of the population. We have heard this before. The strength of the book lies in the way it continues this description of the close association between the Nordiska Museet and the prevailing societal ideas up to the present day.

Cecilia Hammarlund-Larsen begins with an account of how the Nordiska Museet was initially built up with the ideal of giving Swedish society a uniting image of a proud native land with rich traditions. The idea of patriotism as a foundation for society disappeared through time, but not the close association between the museum and the surrounding society. In the 1930s and '40s, as Bo G. Nilsson writes, modern society had acquired its character, and the radical social democratic planning ideology, which aspired to build a new, modern, and democratic society, forged a close alliance with folklife scholars and museum curators in their projects to plan the society of the future. The grand functionalistic plans were to be made capable of being realized through an intensive study of the living conditions, habits, and traditions of the people. The Nordiska Museet was simultaneously helping to create the grand narrative of the old class society and the harsh conditions for the workers, which served as a useful contrast to the prevailing visions of an egalitarian society.

In the 1950s and subsequent decades, the image of the world changed, as Eva Silvén writes in the third and last part of the book. It was not just the big map of the world that was transformed with the disappearance of the old colonial states and the new Cold War; the agenda of the cultural history museums also changed as folklife studies became ethnology, and historical studies were replaced by the documentation of the present day. Scholars turned their gaze away from the external circumstances to the relationship between people and the (work) environment – inner phenomenology became the object of study rather than the "objective" conditions, and hence the taken-for-granted way in which artefacts were collected as testimony to cultural life was suddenly debated. The critique of artefact collection as a research project grew as the focus was directed towards fieldwork and the study of the interaction between people and their thoughts and feelings. The major task of the cultural history museums – collecting – was no longer as closely connected to research as it had been. The collecting of artefacts was "downgraded" to docu-

mentation and an inherited obligation. At the same time, Eva Silvén shows that this documentation did not concern the whole of society but primarily the well-organized part that supported society, that is, those in gainful employment and the nuclear family, in other words, the "ideal Swede". The book ends with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the new tendencies in cultural studies and the museums, with research into the marginal, hence causing cracks in the image of the homogeneous Swedish society, which had been painstakingly built up, partly by the Nordiska Museet, in the decades before.

By ending just before the present day, the book underlines its aim of showing a historical perspective. How the Nordiska Museet today reflects the ideals of the surrounding society is a matter for the reader to judge or seek in other sources. With this book in hand, however, the reader is better equipped for a debate about the future role of cultural history museums. In its convincing historical analyses, the book demonstrates that the practice of research and collection will be shaped in a close and indissoluble association with the contemporary political agenda and prevailing ideals of scholarship.

Camilla Mordhorst, Copenhagen

On Cultural Identity and Identity Politics

Thomas Hylland Eriksen, Rötter och fötter. Identitet i en föränderlig tid. Nya Doxa, Nora. (Røtter og føtter. H. Aschehoug, Oslo). 173 pp. ISBN 91-578-0438-9.

■ Thomas Hylland Eriksen could be described as a Scandinavian Zygmunt Bauman, in that he regularly writes books reflecting on the state of contemporary society, proceeding from major questions about human rights, shared values, fundamentalism, radicalism, and relativism. Eriksen also regards Bauman as a heroic thinker, lauding his attempts to resolve the postmodern problem, relativism, without falling into the trap of fundamentalism. In his latest book, as many times before, he discusses people's identity formation. For Eriksen identity is a strategy, an attitude, which is most obvious among minority identities, where a powerful group feeling reinforces the sense of belonging to an exclusive community. But it takes an awe-inspiring enemy for a contrastive counter-identity to be effective. As an example Eriksen mentions how the radical left-wing identity in the USA is reinforced by the country's foreign policy since 9/11. On the other hand, those who belong to a minority are constantly reminded of their identity. White men rarely think about their gender or the colour of their skin.

Under the heading "Simplicity and Complexity" the author discusses which is preferable, fruit compote (where everything is blended) or fruit salad (where the different pieces are still distinguishable), that is, the hybrid society or the multicultural society. We like to imagine that the hybrid society, where everything is allowed to be mixed, is preferable since people here can choose for themselves, beyond restrictive categorizations, traditions, and differences. It is not that simple, Eriksen warns us; instead it is the market that makes us uniform. He describes freedom of choice as an illusion, since so many identity communities are shaped by consumption, which in turn is governed by the social structures within which we act. Although he criticizes sociologists who see people solely as actors within the framework of, say, class affiliation, unlike fellow anthropologists, who are more interested in individual variation, he himself talks about culture in the same way, as something homogeneous, from which each individual takes different parts to shape his or her identity. I do not understand what the difference is, why sociologists are alleged to simplify while anthropologists have a greater capacity for complexity. From this point of view his outlook on gender is more interesting, in that he would see gender affiliations and identities as "aspects in every person or as a continuum with extremes and intermediate positions" (p. 86).

He goes on to teach us that identification is both imperative and situational, that is, both enforced and optional. It is not just created from the inside and the outside but perhaps above all at the interfaces between ourselves and the environment. To paraphrase Marx, he observes that we choose freely within the horizon of possibilities that we see.

The most important question of identity politics today, in his opinion, is whether it is possible to be different and equal at the same time. He draws attention to the two well-known solutions which are called likeness or complementarity, and argues that it is possible to be different and have mutual respect if one embraces complementarity instead of antagonism.

The book gives us numerous examples of the problems and potentials of identity formation from such different places as the USA, South Africa, New

Guinea, Mauritius, Grenada, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Oslo, and the Öresund region.

He rounds off by observing that we must *embrace impurity* instead of distinguishing and affirming distinct cultural differences. And against concepts in social science such as integration, control, and standardization he would hold up the utopias, visions, and intellectual boldness of philosophy, literature, and the essay.

Eriksen's books are like Bauman's, in that a great deal is familiar, but they are still seductive reading, imposing a kind of order on the great issues. What makes this book particularly worth reading is chiefly Eriksen's sharp attack on an identity policy based on the simplifications of multiculturalism and his ability to show us trump cards of identity held by repressed people, since they have an overall project to develop. Unfortunately, the Swedish translation makes me wish that I had read the book in the original Norwegian instead.

Birgitta Svensson, Stockholm

Cognitive Film Theory

Film Style and Story. A Tribute to Torben Grodal. Lennart Højbjerg & Peter Schepelern (eds.). Museum Tusculanum Press, Copenhagen 2003. 252 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7289-851-8.

■ One of the major debates in international film studies in recent years concerns the relationship to "cognitive film theory". It all originates in discontent with what has been called "high theory", that is, the different theoretical systems which have influenced film theory, culminating in the last few decades: everything from psychoanalysis and Marxism to deconstruction and feminism. The criticism levelled against these theories is above all that they are considered increasingly speculative and characterized by "top-down" inquiry; in other words, the method and the theory become more important than the subject matter. If one were to discuss this in terms of relations of strength, the representatives of "high theory" are still in the majority, but their critics have formulated themselves clearly and have begun to make their voices heard in the debate on film studies. The most important international names are the two American scholars David Bordwell and Noël Carroll, who have separately and jointly (in the collection *Post-Theory*), attacked modern film theory and launched methods which most resemble those of the natural sciences.

Cognitive film theory has a laboratory approach, searching for palpable and measurable associations. There is a distinct ambition to make film research scientific. Many of the cognitive researchers are controversial, and the confrontations between the different opinions have not always been particularly fruitful. In Scandinavia the movement does not have many supporters yet, but one of the most important is Torben Kragh Grodal, who became professor of film studies in Copenhagen a few years ago. In his doctoral dissertation from 1994, since reworked as *Moving Pictures* (1997), a book that has attracted considerable attention, he declares the necessity of linking an understanding of film to biological and cognitive patterns rather than to cultural learning. Since then he has developed his ideas in a number of articles and books.

Film Style and Story is the title of a Festschrift compiled for his sixtieth birthday by some of his colleagues. It is a wide-ranging anthology, full of ideas contributed by both Danish and internationally known authorities, including David Bordwell, Murray Smith, Edward Branigan, and Peter Larsen. The subject that concerns most of the authors is film style and its relationship to the viewer's emotions and reactions. This can be Danish *film noir* and the codes of film acting. There are also more historically oriented texts, including a look at Eastern European film. The book contains a bibliography of the works of Torben Grodal.

Quite a lot of the content of the book is of an internal academic character, which means that it may not find many readers outside film studies, but it is a presentation of the present state of cognitive film theory. Even for those who do not share the basic outlook of the anthology, but who are interested in film theory, this is a useful collection of texts which invite reflection and may perhaps inspire new investigations.

Carina Sjöholm, Lund

Ye Honest Bridal Couple

Jóan Pauli Joensen, I ærlige brudefolk. Bryllup på Færøerne. Museum Tusculanums Forlag, Copenhagen 2003. 298 pp. Ill. English summary. ISBN 87-7289-808-9.

■ "Ye honest bridal couple" are the first words of a Danish wedding ballad sung at a wedding party after

supper in the Faroe Islands. It was a solemn chain-dance – even the minister joined in – before the other ballads, with a different tone, were chanted and danced till next morning. This book by Jóan Pauli Joensen, part of a bigger project at the University of the Faroe Islands about tradition and modernity, boldly "aims at clarifying weddings and traditions surrounding marriage procedures in the Faroe Islands from medieval times to the present day" (p. 253).

Sources are however rare before the latter half of the seventeenth century. From the eighteenth century there are several topographical accounts of Faroese weddings. More material relates to the end of the nineteenth century, memoirs follow and other sources such as material collected by students in the 1960s and '70s. Clergymen have recently responded to questionnaires and pupils in secondary schools have written essays on wedding celebrations.

Joensen describes the traditional village-type wedding feast that lasted for several days, where many people were involved and guests could number over a hundred. The modern wedding party lasts one day but often with several hundred guests. When only the closest relatives are invited for a meal after the nuptials it is not regarded as a real celebration.

The old accounts deal with the elaborate procedure for the marriage of wealthier people. Little is known about those of the poor, and in the eighteenth century restrictions were imposed on those who did not own land. Kinship set other limits on marriage until the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The population was small and villages scattered. Joensen refers to Svabo's estimate that there were 28–30 marriages annually in the 1780s. In his table Svabo counts 207 marriages in ten years. Anyhow, wedding parties were not held every year. Joensen reckons that with the growing population and economy, which rose with free trade in 1856, the feasts grew. Sources give the impression that the big farmers' weddings, lasting for several days, became rarer towards the end of the century and they were uncommon in the twentieth century. It would have been interesting to see some statistics on marriages and feasts.

One account says that weddings at the beginning of the twentieth century in Tórshavn are like those in Danish towns, while old Faroese traditions still live in the outer villages. Joensen follows that notion, but he has good accounts of traditional feasts from Nólsoy, a village on an island just east of Tórshavn. I attended a wedding feast there in December 1966, but it was not until I read this study that I realized how exceptional that was. Perhaps it is the case that being so close to town has made the village keep its own characteristics. Joensen records, for instance, that the congregation wanted to go on making offerings at church to maintain the desired dignity.

In the book the events connected with marriage are described, from the notion of love to the concluding party, *kokkagildi,* for the persons preparing for and staging the wedding. Joensen presents every phenomenon chronologically and compares with descriptions from other areas, sometimes Iceland for old material, Shetland for some things, Denmark and Scandinavia. He refers to various scholars when he thinks that their theories might apply, but the focus is on the narrative.

In the islands mobility was low, but there was a system of villages visiting each other in the dancing season. The traditional Faroese chain-dance was an occasion when contacts could be made and intricate customs told how to communicate in the dance. A kill of pilot whales brought many men and there would be dancing. Joensen regrets that no studies of areas of marriage exist, but quotes a note from Gjógv, where most wives were locally born, but that had not been the case earlier. From my study of Nólsoy I know that in 1845, 1911 and 1966 half of the wives came from other villages and in 1966 their places of origin were much more spread than earlier (*Nólsoy: En färöisk bygd i omvandling*, 1976).

Looking for engagement gifts, Joensen finds that little has been documented, except leather clogs with wooden soles given to the girl, and in Føroya Fornminnissavn there are decorated mangling boards. The author is happy to tell of a little-known item, a knitted pouch to protect the male genitals from the cold, given by the girl. He even shows a picture of a neat Norwegian *kallvøttur,* a wish for revitalization?

At the end of the nineteenth century the girl often practised as a servant in town and tried to learn sewing and to prepare some linen, but this is only mentioned as a detail. Any obligations the parents might have had are not discussed; perhaps it is too private, as the financial implications seem to be. It is only stated that today the couple themselves plan and hold the wedding. In the old accounts wedding gifts were coins; after a period with objects as wedding gifts the couple now wishes to receive money. Joensen does not mention any shame connected with money,

but he writes on changing views of nakedness and sex. The end of the European ceremony of leading the newly-wed couple to bed, which Tarnovius described back in 1669, is documented from Nólsoy in the 1830s. It became too private with modernization.

The author does not mention the age of the couple (today a man of thirty ought to be married,) but it must influence the forms of the wedding. When the guests on bridal day, following the wedding day, are invited to see the new house as well as the gifts, one might almost assume that both parties have a fixed income.

In the nineteenth century marriage in church was the only legal confirmation and Danish law and ceremony, in Danish or Faroese, were used till 2002. Civil weddings have been possible since 1895 and they have been fairly plain. With a new law in 2002 the right to wed is also given to communities outside the established church. New international ceremonies known from Denmark or from the media have been introduced, such as the lighting of three candles. Joensen presents these innovations and interesting reactions by the clergy as the new ideas tend to spread to the church. The setting, as well as the recording of it, tends to be the important part and there is a strong tendency to underline individuality.

Weddings were held in early winter when fresh meat was available. Sheep were bought, but there was also a reciprocal tradition of landowners donating animals. A *gávuseyður*, gift-sheep, was a special thing and the slaughter was an introduction to the wedding itself. Among the many excellent photographs in the book there are some from a revival of this custom, the family directly involved in taking care of the different parts. Now many weddings are held at Christmas, but mostly in the summer when people return from abroad to spend their holidays.

A village wedding involved many people such as wedding directors, cupbearers, cooks and other assistants, and there was a traditional pattern to follow. Several houses in the village were used for housing outside guests, coffee, meals and dancing, and all the villagers were invited; if not, family relations were a determining factor. So it was when men and women were invited to join the procession to church as the bell tolled and young men fired blanks. Until the latter part of the nineteenth century the procession of maids and men expressed the innocence of the bride. The honourable attendants also had to give lavish offerings in church.

Today the dinner and dance are held in a club or a restaurant, but the cakes are homemade. A new role is that of toastmaster, and there are new forms of entertainment at the table. Wedding advertisements appear in the papers in advance and now guests have to notify the couple of their attendance. Later on, photographs and thanks are published, which I think is widely studied.

Both food and drink had to be plentiful at a wedding. From the arrival of the outside guests, strong drinks were served to men by the cupbearers. Their skill in administering was and is very important. On bridal day the couple would serve better liqueurs and wine to women. The teetotal movement led to restrictions on alcohol in 1908, but there was an extra allowance for weddings. The amount generally estimated necessary was a litre of *brennivín* for every grown man. Now, since 1992, spirits and wine can be bought in Tórshavn and this is said to account for half the cost of the wedding. Joensen sees the drink as a social catalyst for the party, and at so-called teetotal weddings there is more work put into the entertainment of the guests sitting at the table than at others.

A traditional amusement was the *drunnur*, a decorated sheep's tail, which was passed on at late table. It was handed over with a rhyme or a poem aimed at the person receiving it and there was much laughter; here Joensen stresses the popular publicity sphere, as he calls it. This was an opportunity for teasing and abuse, but keeping the peace was vital. The school pupils also tell of their encounter with the tail.

Joensen tells of a quite recent element called the *Polterabend*, or stag and hen parties. Just before the wedding, friends take the two by surprise and arrange something for each, making them act stupidly in the centre of the town. The evening ends in a party. The ideas are similar to those in Denmark emerging in the 1980s.

Older headgear, a wreath of coloured silk ribbons, for the bride gave way to veil and myrtle in the middle of the nineteenth century and there was a notion of chastity that is now gone. The bridegroom would wear so-called Danish clothes, a dark suit, but with the nationalism at the end of the century Faroese dress, today called national costume, came into use as a festive outfit very much used. Joensen notes that the *stakkur*, a long coloured silk gown for the bride, had gone out of fashion around 1830, but there was a very early revival and it also became a sign of the awakening identity, now also in white.

It is interesting to see altered customs linked to changes in economy, as in the period after free trade, when firing blanks and *kokkagildi* came along. After World War II weddings were held the whole year round and beer was introduced. Meat was obtainable as freezers came. With roads in the 1960s cars became a place to meet. There was an economic boom in the 1970s but wedding parties were not in fashion. Then came regression, perhaps too close to be mentioned, but it might strengthen the desire for big celebrations of today.

The subject of weddings is extensive and it is very well presented. An index would be helpful for close reading, however. The photographs, both old and new, are of high quality and quite fascinating. As an appendix there is a very good account of a wedding in 1946.

A woman, born in Nólsoy in 1877, is quoted: "A wedding or two was a good way to shorten the long winter." I think that she sums up the importance of the feast for the whole village. It can be seen as the essence of Faroese folk culture with Nordic and some Celtic roots. Joensen shows that festivities are again something wished by the young seeking new forms. Another version in Faroese would give them a background to the wedding song, still central in the modern celebration.

Nanna Hermansson, Älvsjö

Changes to a Municipal Workplace

Niels Jul Nielsen, Fra væsen til virksomhed. Københavns Belysningsvæsen – en kommunal arbejdsplads før, nu og i fremtiden. København 2001. 28 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-87137-01-1.

■ In 1999 the municipal energy utility "Københavns Belysningsvæsen" was transformed into a municipally owned joint-stock company which was given the name "Københavns energi". In the following year the Copenhagen City Museum conducted an interview study with former employees of the company. The documentation has been analysed, resulting in the publication of this book. The background to the change is that the EU has decided that all companies should compete on a free and open market within Europe. The future for municipal and state-owned companies which now lose their monopoly concerns all citizens of the EU. Its decision has led to the privatization of such diverse operations as railways and hospitals. The author's aim is to capture how this rather far-reaching change has affected the working life of white-collar staff in particular.

Interviews, publications from the energy utility and a selection of archival documents are the main sources used. The text is supplemented with quotations from interviews which bring the reader close to the informants' experiences. The account is mainly about the time after 1945, with some comparisons from earlier periods in the history of the energy utility. It was founded in 1857 when Copenhagen acquired its first gasworks. Responsible officials were employed, the reason being that the city needed loyal persons to take care of vital public functions. The author points out, however, that this principle was not without exception. Several energy suppliers and comparable companies have in practice employed blue-collar workers for vital functions. This same is true of Københavns Belysningsvæsen, particularly because the operation required a great deal of manual work. Yet even the workers felt as if they informally shared the responsibility of the officials.

The key word in the officials' employment contract was the duty of always considering the best of the energy utility and of society. Employment had some advantages, however. The officials could not be dismissed, and their grown-up children could get jobs in the company. The salary was less than in private industry, but it was a secure income even in times of high unemployment. This and the guaranteed pension explains why people willingly stayed on all their working lives. The energy utility looked after its employees in an almost patriarchal spirit. Last but not least, it gave a certain dignity to be titled a public servant.

The development of society in the 1960s and 1970s led to improvements in terms of employment and pay for privately employed people compared with those of municipal officials. Even those employed as blue-collar workers in the energy utility got better pay than the officials, whose prestige and material standards fell.

The officials themselves, the general public, and the management of the utility began to realize that it was not being run in a cost-effective way, although the quality of service and the technical competence were very high. The utility had too many employees who were irremovable from their jobs. It became difficult to employ people with the necessary new competence. Positions were not filled by advertising

but by internal recruitment. It became increasingly necessary to rationalize the operations.

Nielsen writes that the major changes for the newly established joint-stock company are a consequence of the fact that all customers since 2002 have been able to choose between different suppliers when they buy their electricity. Adaptation to the market has changed the municipal economy. Each municipal company has to take care of its own economy in a business-like way. The author points out that it remains to be seen whether this is an advantage for the customers. It is not certain that private companies working for profit give priority to technology and maintenance. The author asks whether the consumers can accept less reliable operations and a lower level of service than they are used to.

Many staff members have been obliged to accept changed terms of employment and tasks in order to retain their jobs. New kinds of managers and consultants with market skills and high salaries on a par with those in private enterprise have been taken on, overturning old ideals. Flexibility has become a new key word which had no place in the old utility. Individual characteristics and interests have become of increasing significance for both work and leisure. The sense of collective solidarity with the company and colleagues has become weaker.

The book is appetizing, inviting closer investigation of changes for employees and the general public when state and municipal functions are privatized. Nielsen points out that there are differences in the development of working life between public utilities and private companies. For example, union work had to be pursued with different means and goals. The clubs that were organized at the workplace once meant a great deal for the employees' sense of belonging with workmates and the company in both public and private activity, but they have now lost a great deal of their significance. The present day seems more individually oriented. Changes in society are far from unambiguous; they must be studied more closely. Nielsen has shown that even before privatization there were similar factors to take into consideration when one compares development in the public utilities and the private companies.

Göran Sjögård, Lund

The Complex and Colourful History of Tourism

Auvo Kostiainen, Janne Ahtola, Leila Koivunen, Katariina Korpela and Taina Syrjämaa, Matkailijan ihmeellinen maailma. Matkailun historia vanhalta ajalta omaan aikaamme, Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki 2004. 349 pp. ISBN 951-746-564-5.

■ Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world today and it touches more or less everyone; people, cultures and nations, either as hosts or guests. We are encountered by tourism everywhere and it has become a fixed part of our lives, just as leisure has become an important contrast to work. It is no wonder that tourism has also increasingly interested scientists of different fields during the last two decades in particular. In *Matkailijan ihmeellinen maailma* Professor Auvo Kostiainen and his fellow authors, set out to create a comprehensive exposition of the history of tourism. This is the first comprehensive work on the history of tourism, at least in Finnish, which makes it a valuable contribution to the field of history, as well as other sciences. The authors create an overall picture of tourism by describing different aspects of international, as well as Finnish tourism. The latter part of the book is also dedicated to debating possible future trends in tourism. Quoting the authors, the history of tourism is a fascinating historic adventure into the roots of Western World and the Western way of life, and this is the world the authors wish to mediate to the readers through this book.

The authors, Auvo Kostiainen, Janne Ahola, Leila Koivunen, Katariina Korpela and Taina Syrjämaa, are all researchers in General History at the University of Turku, and the material that the book is based on has its origin in their studies, research, lectures and particular fields of interest. This becomes apparent for the reader through the interesting articles, focuses and chapters that are included in this book. The research project "Massaturismin juuret", funded by The Academy of Finland during the years 1995–1997, has had a great impact on the outcome of the book by securing the economic starting point for it. The Finnish Tourist Board and the city of Imatra have also provided financial support.

The book is divided in eight larger chapters, each part portraying certain eras and developments in history, and thus also in the history of tourism. In the introduction, Professor Kostianen points out that it is of importance, from a historical point of view, to

focus on the manifestations of tourism during different historic periods, and on the circumstances that contributed to the development of these manifestations. Kostiainen maintains that it is interesting to focus on how the so called "typical" tourist looked like during different historical eras for instance, and this view also becomes apparent in the following chapters of *Matkailijan Ihmeellinen Maailma*. The second chapter describes tourism during the "old days"; beginning from the first actual account of a journey by Herodotos, two and a half thousand years ago, via the travel patterns of the ancient Greeks and the Romans, to the travellers of the Renaissance and Middle Ages, also including the Vikings and other explorers. In this chapter the early motives for travelling are described; religion, trade and conquest, as well as recreation. In the next chapter tourism from the Grand Tour to the travel patterns of the romantic era are in focus. In this chapter the meaning of the Grand Tour for the future generations of tourists is discussed for instance, as well as the ideal of the romantic era to become one with Nature and to experience something "genuine" and inspiring while travelling. This chapter also includes several interesting articles. The presence of these feature articles throughout the book is also one of the absolute strong points of *Matkailijan ihmeellinen maailma*. For instance the articles about Goethe, the rapids of Imatra, camping, as well as the article about Darwin, are great examples of this, and several more can be found throughout the book.

Chapter four focuses on the approaching modernization and the impact of technical progress on tourism, whereas travelling in the modern world is viewed more closely in chapter five. These two chapters encompass interestingly enough for instance the development of different railways, like the transsibirian railroad and the Pacific railroad, which make very interesting reading. Another truly interesting feature in chapter four is also the way the authors draw attention to the role of photographs and pictures in "touristic" contexts. This is a connection that I believe has not been made quite so clearly in other works which portray the history of tourism, at least not in my experience. Indeed, this detailed portrayal of events and different features in tourism is a distinguishing feature for this book as a whole; the authors do indeed succeed in describing the whole of the history of tourism.

In chapter five the modern ways of travelling are presented, as well as the ideals of the modern era and how they are manifested in tourism. Sunbathing, exotic experiences and the emergence of commercialized tourism, as well as other topics, are discussed here in an in-depth manner. One of the more interesting parts of this chapter was the way the American culture has influenced tourism. I found this part especially insightful; it was interesting to learn about the movement of American ideas and culture into tourism. Chapter six focuses on the era of mass tourism, during which travelling became a right for (practically) everyone, instead of being a luxury afforded by only the higher classes in society. Package tours, theme parks and cruises among other things, are talked about in this chapter. Even in this chapter interesting features are presented; for instance the so-called vodka tourism, which certainly feels close to home for Finnish people in particular. In the seventh chapter, current as well as possible future trends in global tourism are discussed in an in-depth manner. This last chapter is thought provoking; the authors do not shy away from seemingly difficult topics, like for instance tourist hijackings, sex tourism or terrorism, as well as the claim that cultures and Nature are being destroyed as a result of tourism and tourists. Taking also the less pleasant aspects of tourism into consideration is indeed another of the books many strengths. In the conclusion, Auvo Kostiainen discusses the meaning of leisure time, as well as the actual meaning of tourism. Kostiainen focuses on valid points, as for instance the role of tourism as a mediator of impressions and innovations, as well as having an important role in the development of new cultural forms. By doing this, Kostiainen summarizes the history of tourism, as well as the contents of this book.

I feel that *Matkailijan ihmeellinen maailma* really is a comprehensive illustration of the history of tourism, just as the authors have intended. In my opinion, the authors manage to present features in the field of tourism in a more versatile and detailed fashion than many other authors before them. To be able to combine for instance the invention of the map of the world during the beginning of the 15th and 16th century, modern tourism for seniors, so called "dark tourism", as well as art, within the same covers to a colourful whole, at the same time not disregarding the Finnish history of tourism, can truly be considered an accomplishment. Since historians have so far mostly focused on the earlier forms of travel; for instance on the Grand Tour and the pilgrimages during the Middle Ages and to a much lesser degree

on more modern forms of travel, this book truly is a welcome contribution to tourism research as well as other sciences, and quite simply a pleasant reading experience for anyone.
Pia Lindholm, Åbo

Folklore and the Culture of Daily Life

Jens Henrik Koudal, Folkeminder og dagliglivets kultur, Indføring i Dansk Folkemindesamlings arkiv, Folkemindesamlingens kulturstudier, Bind 5. C.A. Reitzels Forlag, Copenhagen 2004. 242 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7876-388-6.

■ During the 1800s the interest in documenting folklore and people's daily lives increased, in Denmark as well as in Scandinavia as a whole. Several men and women, amateurs and scholars alike, were engaged in fieldwork, collecting fairy-tales, songs, beliefs etc. directly from the common people. Some of the collectors brought about huge collections. These collections were stored in archives, established during the first decades of the 1900s. The archives though were not only storerooms, but also served important research purposes, with tight bonds to the universities, where sciences like ethnology and anthropology were established. Archivists often combined their work at the archive with teaching and researching at the universities. Due to this the archives, right from the start, were vivid research centres.

The Danish Folklore Archives (DFS) in Copenhagen was established in 1904. Its first leader was the philologist Axel Olrik (1864–1917), professor at the university of Copenhagen. Olrik was especially interested in folk poetry, i.e. legends, myths, and (medieval) ballads. His approach was historical and he concentrated on documenting the past agrarian society. Not only was he a skilled researcher but also a thorough archivist and a methodological pioneer. As early as in 1907 he organized an archive of phonograms and in 1908 he founded the Danish Folklore Society. Its tasks were to collect further folklore and to publish it. Olrik's collections are thoroughly presented in Koudal's book.

When Olrik died in 1917 he was succeeded by Hakon Grüner-Nielsen (1881–1953) and Hans Ellekilde (1891–1966). These two men dominated the work at the archive for about four decades. Their main interest was collecting further material from the common people, and like Olrik before them they were primarily interested in documenting the old agrarian society and it's oral traditions.

Grüner-Nielsen and Ellekilde added the records of the famous researchers Henning Frederik Feilberg (1831–1921) and Evald Tang Kristensen (1843–1929) to the archive collections. Feilberg, who worked as a priest, was especially interested in documenting Danish dialects and folklore. His most famous publications are "Danish Peasant Life" I–II published in 1889 and 1899. Kristensen, a schoolteacher from Jutland, is Denmark's most prolific collector ever. During his life he collected lots of songs, fairy-tales, and stories through fieldwork. He also took great interest in the storytellers as subjects and described their personalities and repertoires, thereby transforming them from representative "objects" into individuals of flesh and blood. Kristensen's collections were published in 79 different publications.

During the 1960s, when younger researchers succeeded Grüner-Nilesen and Ellekilde, focus started to shift from the agrarian to the modern, urban society, from texts to contexts, from objects to subjects. Fieldwork was from now on concentrated on documenting contemporary conditions. During the 1970s researchers like Bengt Holbek, Iørn Piø, Carsten Bregenhøj, and Birgitte Rørbye continued renewing the work and research profile at the archive. Now collecting was more or less solely concentrated on a comprehensive view of the present.

Since 1983 Jens Henrik Koudal has been working as an archivist/senior researcher at DFS. Today, he states, the archive is busy documenting and researching immaterial culture in Danish daily life from the Renaissance on. DFS studies and keeps the spiritual cultural heritage in Denmark. This heritage includes ways of life, beliefs, myths, storytelling, songs, and music. The collections are available to all sorts of researchers, amateurs as well as scholars.

Koudal's study of the DFS is primarily meant to be a guide to the vast folklore collections. For that reason the best part of the survey consists of catalogues to the archives of manuscripts, recording tapes, and pictures. His study, however, also serves as an introduction to Danish folklore research and some of its front figures.
Agneta Lilja, Huddinge

Death and Burial in Denmark

Birgitte Kragh, Til jord skal du blive... Dødens og begravelsens kulturhistorie i Danmark 1780–1990. Skrifter fra museumsrådet for Sønderjyllands amt 9. Udg. i samarbejde med Aabenraa museum 2003. 335 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7486-574-4.

■ The classical topics of ethnology are becoming popular once again. They include festivals of the life cycle, particularly the rites connected with the end of life. In the 1940s and 1950s the Folklife Archives in Lund and the National Museum's ethnological survey in Copenhagen collected a large amount of material about burial customs. In the 1990s several Danish museums jointly undertook a new collection of material. On the basis of the two Danish surveys we now have this comprehensive and thorough work on the cultural history of death and burial in Denmark, written by Birgitte Kragh and published by the museum in Sønderborg Castle. It may now be said that Denmark has an up-to-date equivalent to Louise Hagberg's classical Swedish work, *När döden gästar* (1937).

The book begins with a section about the cultural expressions of death, followed by two corpus sections: one about funeral customs through 200 years, the other about rural cemeteries. As with Louise Hagberg, then, the focus is on the countryside. This is presented in the traditional way with many quotations and is illustrated with a wealth of pictures, partly in colour.

The author shows how the different eras or fashions came and went, starting with Enlightenment thought and the subsequent romanticism, and how for two hundred years they have influenced the development of funeral customs and graves. One can single out, for example, the custom of wearing black as a sign of mourning, which originated in Spanish Renaissance fashion, and which was expressed in south-west Sweden and Denmark in the way that peasant women pulled their skirts over their heads so that they could only see out through a little slit. In some places, such as Amager and Bornholm, the gradually decreasing degree of mourning could be read in the woman's headdress during the year when she was in mourning.

In broad outline, the development of funeral customs has been the same as in Sweden, but when it came to nationwide reforms, Denmark was slightly ahead of Sweden. For example, the famous royal physical and statesman Struensee prohibited burials in churches in 1771, which did not happen in Sweden until the end of the century. A consequence of population growth was the coming of burial places outside the town centre in "auxiliary cemeteries" (*assistenskirkegårde*). One of these came into use in Copenhagen in 1805. There are also certain features shared by Denmark and Sweden. In Denmark candles acquired an important function at funerals. In Sweden they were prohibited after the Reformation, but in the provinces which had formerly belonged to Denmark they were not abolished until the end of the seventeenth century. With the return of candles in the twentieth century, however, they have also been restored to funeral services. Conversely, the use of black-draped staffs, which had an important status function, above all in southern Sweden, never occurred at funerals in Denmark. Since the status-marking function of funerals has decreased, they have also disappeared in Sweden. The custom of layered burials, whereby the dead were buried after each other in the order in which they died, never caught on in Denmark, except for people of limited means.

Kragh's work has the character of a monograph, yet I miss essential sections clearly reflecting changes in the view of death and burial. These include the terminology of death, death notices (which have been studied in great detail in Sweden), and also functionaries such as undertakers and priests, and the funeral ritual. The subject invites interdisciplinary study nowadays, as the sociology of religion and the study of churches and congregations have a great deal to contribute to the overall picture.

In the last part of the book, about rural cemeteries, the author is able to base her account on empirical, often still observable material. The Danish cemetery culture seems very well developed in comparative perspective. The similarity to cemeteries in southern Sweden is striking. In Skåne, as in Denmark, raised graves have been common, but wooden frames were also part of the older cemetery culture in Skåne (cf. *Skånes Hembygdsförbunds årsbok* 1977:200). Ecological differences in the country also make themselves felt in cemeteries. Whitewashed walls topped with tiles, for example, are typical of Sjælland, and also Skåne, while ditches were characteristic of the cemeteries west of the Great Belt. On the west coast of Jutland individual graves were enclosed with white-painted fences. Cemeteries on Fyn are held up as being particularly well kept, and with

an abundance of flowers. A more local example of an advanced cemetery culture, evidently modelled on vicarages and manor houses, comes from Lyø. Other cemeteries reflect piety – that of the Home Mission and that of Grundtvigianism – in the form of the graves. Many Grundtvigian gravestones are characterized by the record of the date of baptism, a consequence of the part played by this sacrament in the movement.

Development after 1950, as in Sweden and Norway, has been towards a neo-romantic park ideal, with the removal of stone kerbs and the levelling of the graves in easily maintained lawns, often in combination with memorial groves. In the 1990s, however, the trend turned, and insight into the importance of the individual grave has increased in pace with the growing individualism.

Nils-Arvid Bringéus, Lund

Nation Building in a Nutshell – the Case of Latvia

Re-inventing the Nation – Multidisciplinary Perspectives on the Construction of Latvian National Identity. Mats Lindqvist (ed.), Mångkulturellt Centrum, Botkyrka 2003. 349 pp. ISBN 91-88560-76-7.

■ *Re-inventing the Nation* is the final product of a research project "Nations and unions: A multidisciplinary project on national identity and trans-national movements in the Baltic States", realized at Södertörn University College in the years 1996–2002. The book includes contributions from the fields of ethnology, history and political science. The combination of these disciplines is a suitable mix to study nationalism and all the authors have represented the same constructivist theoretical approach. In this respect one has to appreciate the endeavour of the scholars affiliated at the Södertörn University College, who also profited from the experience offered by cultural geography and business studies. Their multidisciplinary approach, which can easily be witnessed throughout the publication, should be recommended as a good mix for studying the phenomenon of nationalism on the constructivist premises within the social sciences.

The declared aim of the book has been to describe and analyse how nationalist discourses operate, and how these discourses in fact manifest themselves in different arenas and at different levels within Eastern European society, as exemplified by a century of nation-building in Latvia. Choosing Latvia, however remote and foreign its case may appear for the mainstream research on nationalism in Europe, seems to have been a good move for several reasons. Studying Latvia is like looking into the laboratory of nationalism where all its important artefacts and tools are at work. We deal with the construction of community according to the language-based framework, there is an extensive use of newly conceived bordering line of ethnicity and, last but not least, there is the religion as a factor much more evident as an ingredient of nation-building than elsewhere in Europe.

Latvia is spatially a small object of research and in the sense of territory can be counted among small European nation states. Nevertheless, its size notwithstanding, its case is well chosen as the turbulent history condensed the nation-building process here to a period of about a century whereas Latvia's state building is even of more recent date. Many phenomena that took centuries to evolve in other countries are possible to be observed as if consciously engineered in the Latvian case. The questions of national language, national religion, songs and rituals have been developing rapidly due to the speedy changes in the external surroundings. Due to the fact that these processes lie only relatively short back in time, it has been possible for the researchers to reach sources that in the case of other countries are unavailable or perished. Furthermore, as the process of nation building in Latvia is still going on, the researchers had a rare chance to observe at a close range how powerful the tools the memory and myths in the construction of a national community still are.

The classical themes in the study of nationalism, like ethnicity, the national language and folklore are covered in a proficient way. The most interesting and arguably the most original contributions concern the national question in the evolving educational system in what can be subsumed as pedagogy of the nation. A meticulous study of the emerging Latvian higher education in the shape of the University of Latvia with its initial problems of balancing the academic excellence with the quest for national, Latvian education with only a minority of professors originally being able to lecture in the Latvian language is a case in point. It may be read with interest both by the historians interested in the past of the institution as well as those wanting to observe the different forces and persons shaping the intellectual elite of the young republic.

The historical study of the first Latvian republic covering more than half of the volume makes the phenomenon of the construction of Latvian national identity in the 1990s more understandable. While the ethnic composition on the Latvian territory in 1991 was less favourable than it had been at the time of the first republic, the founders of the second republic have learnt well the lesson how to create the nation state. For instance, while the respect for national minorities is widely spread in Europe and the Latvian authorities would have to grant considerable citizen rights to its numerous Russian ethnic population, the official policy has been to treat Russians only as "Russian-speakers", thus disqualifying them from the minority status. This example shows a paradox of the Latvian nation building where the recaptured national identity in 1991 meant also the necessity to free itself from the constantly lingering legacy of the Soviet period.

Although the content of individual contributions is mostly well structured, some more interrelationship between data, facts and people discussed in different chapters would help readers easier to find examples for some claims. For instance, the very relevant chapter concerning Baltic Germans in the first Latvian republic, which suffers from somewhat weak conclusion, could gain considerably if it were linked better to the story of establishment of the University of Latvia and the examples of German professors teaching there. A more direct link and comparisons between the policies of the first and second Latvian republic would be able to demonstrate more clearly the tools used for the construction of the national identity.

This being said, the above description of the book conveys though an utterly positive image of a volume on a national micro-history that should be found interesting by both the academic professionals and amateurs alike. Undoubtedly, the book is important also because of the lack of competent and unbiased research concerning the nature of nationalism in the post-Soviet territories in general and the Baltic States in particular.

Kazimierz Musial, Gdansk

There must be a Border

Der må da være en grænse! Om holdninger til ny teknologi. Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen (ed.). Museum Tusculanums Forlag, Copenhagen 2003. 245 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7289-873-9.

■ *Der må da være en grænse!* is an absorbing collection of essays on the subject of how new technologies, primarily biotechnologies, are confronted and experienced in society. Some scholars at Copenhagen University, who share a special interest in the specific topic, have written the book. In chapter one Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen, philosopher and the editor of the book, criticizes the bioethical discourse for being too hostile to technological development in general. A more transgressive mode of considering technological change is proposed. The first part of the chapter is a critical reflection on the objections that bioethicists tend to raise against biotechnology: that it would involve several risks (the risk objection), that it cannot be stopped if it is started (the slippery slope objection), that it is unnatural, and that it is against our view of what a human is. In the second part Lippert-Rasmussen points to what the bioethicists lose sight of when they discuss emergent technology in such a negative way: the risks of already existing technologies, the beneficial effects that the new technologies may have to other societies rather than to our own, etc.

In chapter two the target for criticism is those natural scientists that reduce reality to one single formula. Mickey Gjerris, the author of the chapter, represents in this respect a perspective that has lost its explanatory power in secularized society: the theological perspective. The power of the theological perspective is according to Gjerris that, in opposition to the natural sciences, it can give guidance in ethical matters. Assuming that we today are living in multifaceted societies where ethical pluralism is a dominating condition, Gjerris argues for the realization of different forms of a particular ethics rather than one universal ethics. The American bioethicist Tristram Engelhardt and the Danish phenomenologist K.E. Løgstrup are his instruments for realizing such an approach. The chapter is basically theoretical. Not until the end of the chapter becomes the discussion more directly related to concrete biotechnological issues, namely to research on stem cells and therapeutic cloning.

In chapter three the biologist and scientific theoretician Claus Emmeche calls attention to the

combined political and metaphysical dimension in the resistance to the biotechnological development. This bioscepticism is linked partly to that systematic direction of needs that biotechnology represents on a global scale, partly to a significant transformation of the human body into a cyber-body – a certain kind of body exposed to a techno/scientific space of possibilities where the boundary between what is possible and not possible is moved continuously.

In chapter four Mette Hartlev, member of the Danish Council of Ethics and researcher of law, discusses different law strategies within three different fields – organ transplantation, genetic testing and IVF – and illustrates how the laws have very different aims and purposes.

In chapter five Lene Koch, researcher of public health, criticizes the idea that the procedure of informed consent will make patients who receive genetic counseling autonomous in relation to their surroundings. Koch begins her essay by giving a brief historical sketch that illustrates the close connections between the autonomy ideals of today and the harsh methods of the race hygienic strivings in the first half of the 20th century. Further on in her text Koch moves her focus to the normative context of the contemporary situation. The actual power of the biomedical paradigm as well as the special interests of those different family members that take part in genetic counseling are described. Together these two structures will eventually make the autonomy of the individual patient into an illusion.

In chapter six Jens Hoff, researcher in public administration and informatics, presents a study of the attitudes among members of the European parliament to information technology and its importance for a democratic development. The attitudes of members from four different countries – Denmark, Norway, Austria and Portugal – are compared and characterized. Hoff's discussion constitutes not only a jump from biotechnology to information technology, but also from that qualitative and reflective approach that the previous chapters have had to a basically quantitative and reporting approach. A number of statistical differences and similarities between the different national members are presented. A main conclusion is that the parliament members from the different countries are all surprisingly positive to the democratic potentials of the information technology, taken that the practical use of information technologies varies greatly in the different countries. Underneath this European consent, however, there are many differences in attitudes related to the experiences of the individuals, to gender, age, political affiliations etc.

In chapter seven Bent Foltmann, professor emeritus in biochemical genetics, discusses the relationship between artificial and biological consciousness in the context of the information technology. "Can a computer fear death?" is the thought-provoking question that is put already in the title of the chapter. The conclusion is that it cannot. At least not for a very long time. Those who say anything else ignore the fact that there are a great many problems to be solved before a computer (or a robot) may achieve something that can be likened to the human approach to death. These problems concern according to Foltmann a combination of characteristics relating to material, self-preservation and reproduction.

In the last chapter Gert Balling, researcher in computer science, discusses the German director Fritz Lang's classical film *Metropolis* from 1926 and its way of representing technological development and change. The film has often been interpreted as a critique of technology's inhuman and repressive qualities. Balling wants instead to stress that *Metropolis* discloses our deep dependence of technology and the different phases of change that we go through when experiencing technological change.

Der må da være en grænse! contains a preface but no general summary or conclusion. In the preface the editor consequently suppresses all expectations that the anthology would present a synthesis or a general perspective on how to deal with attitudes to new technology. The different contributions of the anthology are supposed to illustrate the width of the field, no more no less. After reading all the chapters, each one of them being very exciting in itself, this rather low level of ambition in the preface is a bit disappointing. As a scholar I keep wondering about the multidisciplinary approach in itself. How did the authors of this book come to approach each other and how did they "find themselves" in that multidisciplinary field called "attitudes to new technology"? Moreover, as a member of the lay public I feel confused about the different empirical themes and the different theoretical interpretations that are presented in the book. In short, I want to know more about the transgressions and connections between different themes, approaches and scientific worldviews within that multifaceted field of biotechnology and information technology. The book gives an introduc-

tion to this multifarious landscape, but it shies away from giving a more comprehensive penetration of this difficult subject.
Markus Idvall, Lund

Museums and Belief in the Future

Museer och Framtidstro. Lennart Palmqvist & Svante Beckman (eds.) Carlssons, Stockholm 2003. 308 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-7203-526-9.

■ It is not without a touch of envy that a Danish curator reads about the major Swedish museum project "Framtidstro" (Belief in the Future). For many years the Swedish museum world has displayed its courage and willingness to tackle a series of profound and relevant problems. How should we document the present day? Why collect things at all? What are we supposed to do with the unpleasant memories and black chapters in history? Is there a Swedish national history? And what does it look like? These are some of the questions that have been tackled over the years. They are really difficult questions to answer, but they have nevertheless been raised because they were important for the continuous critical development of the museum system and the understanding of history as such. We in Denmark could learn something from the Swedish model. Even though we too have national ventures within the museum system, we have not dared to leave the security of familiar topics which are already canonized, such as Christian IV, the Danish golden age, and now the anniversary of Hans Christian Andersen.

It was therefore with great expectations of learning something new that I began to read this collection about museums and faith in the future. The book begins splendidly with Annika Alzén's comparative analysis of the Stockholm Exhibition of 1930 and the Swedish museums' future projects 70 years later. Alzén elegantly brings out the ideological and futuristic visions in the 1930 exhibition and shows the striking contrast with the Framtidstro project in 2000. Whereas the exhibition Svea Rike in 1930 showed astounded visitors the ideal Sweden of the future in the name of functionalism, without hesitation, didactically and authoritatively, the project in 2000 was much more hesitant and doubtful about its message, and the reader is left wondering if it was not the museums themselves, rather than the visitors, who needed some faith in the future in 2000.

Alzen's article is followed by Magdalena Hillström's essay on the revival function of museums. Once again the Framtidstro project serves as a good prism for shedding light on contemporary western museum problems. Jenny Beckman likewise uses the project as a relevant starting point for more general topics, in this case the split in the museum's identity between being an institution for both research and presentation.

The next four articles, by Carina Johansson, Hanna Wallsten, Katja Lindqvist, and Per Fjellmand, do not show the same breadth of perspective. The Framtidstro project is described from various angles, but without reference to more general problems or anything but local examples. Admittedly, Danish examples are cited, but what about the rest of Europe and the many museological investigations and projects that have been and are being undertaken there? In London, Paris, and Berlin, the turn of the millennium was also celebrated with meta-reflective exhibition projects about the future, which could have put the Swedish efforts in fruitful perspective, but here the writers do not go beyond their own studies and the reader is left to speculate further.

There is some compensation for the detailed local analyses in the last two contributions to the collection. Svante Beckman and Magdalena Hillström, in their joint paper, present a quartet of metaphors which all reflect the museum institution: the treasury, the folk high school, the archive, and the theatre. Through historical and present-day examples they show that these four metaphors have not just succeeded each other through time as primary metaphors for the museum institution, but in large measure also exist side by side. They can also be detected in the exhibitions about belief in the future. The last article, by Lennart Palmqvist, is a *tour de force*. Proceeding from the exhibition about the future in the Nordiska Museet, with a series of examples of the museum exhibition as an idea and form, and how it has changed through history, the article ends with a normative statement that the exhibition space must be viewed as an installation. To get the reader to accept this idea, however, it would have been desirable to have a more classical, methodically structured argumentation with clear references to basic theories. Of course, it is also a matter of whom the volume is really intended for. If it is aimed at other museologists, many of the views expressed will already be familiar and perhaps do not need to be made explicit. The few pictures in the

book could also lead one to expect that it is mainly intended for the other participants in the project. The rest of us – who do not have such exciting national projects and can only read about them – could have benefited from a long series of pictures from the exhibitions discussed, so that we could make our own assessments of the project about belief in the future and the museums in the future.
Camilla Mordhorst, Copenhagen

Rome, Treasury of Inspiration

Inspirationens skatkammer. Rom og skandinaviske kunstnere i 1800-tallet. Hannemarie Ragn Jensen, Solfrid Söderlind & Eva-Lena Bengtsson (eds.). Museum Tusculanums Forlag, Copenhagen 2003. 410 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7289-742-2.

■ For centuries Scandinavian artists have gone on pilgrimage to Rome. In the nineteenth century a period of study in Rome was regarded as a suitable conclusion to an artist's education. The presence of the classical city was still palpable there, the great collections of ancient art were to be found there, and one could meet artists and connoisseurs from all over the world. A stay in Rome and the inspiration that artists brought back with them was considered to be of great significance for their continued development when they returned to their Scandinavia homelands.

In this book, "Treasury of Inspiration", the three editors have assembled 18 different contributions by art historians and classical archaeologists from Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. It has mainly been produced in collaboration between the Departments of Art History at the Universities of Uppsala and Copenhagen, based on fifteen years of exchange of research findings, a project which has been increased to embrace other departments of art history in Scandinavia. It is also a result of a symposium in Rome, supported by the institutes of the four countries in Rome. The publication of the book has been subsidized by the Danish Research Agency, King Gustaf VI Adolf's Foundation for Swedish Culture, and the Royal Patriotic Society in Sweden.

The interest shown by Scandinavian researchers in the nineteenth century and Rome has differed in different countries. In Denmark the attention is focused on the first part of the nineteenth century – which is fairly natural in view of the Danish "Golden Age" – while scholars in the other countries have mainly considered the second half of the century.

The book is divided into three parts. The first is about "The Image of Rome and Italy", where the former professor of art history in Oslo, Magne Malmanger, begins with "The Italian Environment as a Catalyst", while Torsten Gunnarsson of the National Museum in Stockholm tackles "Italy in Dream and Reality in Nineteenth-century Nordic Art" and Kasper Monrad, senior curator at the National Art Museum in Copenhagen, writes about "Artistic Life in Rome 1800–1820 through the Eyes of Danish Painters". Malmanger deals with the ideal image of a stay in Rome. What was dream and what became reality? He draws parallels with the pilgrims, whose primary goal was Rome, and with the Grand Tour and the Italienische Reise. Rome was "different", a new culture to conquer, which could be regarded "from the outside". Italy and Rome were also interesting as a market for the Scandinavian artists and it was easier to obtain contributions for a trip to Italy than to other destinations. "People went there not just to learn but just as much to become successful." Malmanger also gives an account of the interest in and development of landscape painting, which became so characteristic of the Nordic artists.

Torsten Gunnarsson writes about the view of the Italian landscape and the Roman cityscape, for instance how Carl August Ehrensvärd regarded the Italian landscape: he found Campagna ugly, but "a beautiful countryside in comparison with that around Åbo". Even what was unlovely in Italy was superior to "the poor North". The image of Italy was to a large extent already shaped by engravings and travellers' tales, long before artists experienced it for themselves. Most of them lived in colonies around the Piazza di Spagna and Piazza Barberini (the Danish colony favoured Trastevere) and could thus cut themselves off from the majority of the Roman population. Kasper Monrad records in his contribution how five Danish artists in the first two decades of the nineteenth century describe in letters the works of the Italian and German artists above all, presented at exhibitions which exerted a great influence on the young Danish history painters.

In the second part of the book, "Art Academies and Study Tours", Emma Salling considers the practice and the rules for scholarships and travel which the Academy of Art in Copenhagen established during the 1830s and 1840s, and how these were followed by the artists. Eva Henschen describes Bertel Thorvaldsen

as a holder of a travel scholarship, and Hannemarie Ragn Jensen has gone through the artist J. L. Lund's collections of copies of older works from the thirteenth century onwards from his time in Italy, in order to see what was perceived as important to learn from. Bo Lundström devotes his essay to the trip by Michael Gustaf Anckarsvärd, military man and amateur artist, to Paris and Italy, starting in 1819. The purpose of the tours changed after the latter half of the eighteenth century, when they began to involve an increasing amount of pleasure and enlightenment, and Lundström draws parallels to the "Voyage Pittoresque". Lennart Pettersson analyses the correspondence between Anckarsvärd and Bengt Erland Fogelberg; when the former returned and became the superintendent and president of the Academy of Art, this developed into a reciprocal exchange. Fogelberg needed a supporter to keep an eye on the major commissions back in Sweden on his behalf, and Anckarsvärd needed someone to follow the work of the Swedish scholarship holders and their development in Rome, able to report on them to Anckarsvärd and the Academy. Eva-Lena Bengtsson deals with "European Cultural Heritage and Swedish Nationalism – Carl Gustaf Qvarnström, Classicism, and Italy", while Peter Nørgaard Larsen tackles "Danish Figure Painting in Rome in the 1860s". Tomas Björk, in "From Ragnar Lodbrok to Laocoön: August Malmström and Mårten Eskil Winge in Rome", tells about the influence that artistic life in Rome had on the two artists. Elina Anttila writes about Albert Edelfelt's visit to Rome and his encounter with the old masters. This second section ends with Britt Inger Johansson's description of the Swedish architects' study tours to Italy.

Jan Zahle introduces the third section of the book, which is a concerted presentation of the role of casts, with his "Casts in Copenhagen in European Perspective", which clarifies the links between the collections of casts in Rome, Paris, London, and Bonn and the large Copenhagen collection, what was considered important in different periods and how the Copenhagen collection (like others) entered a period of decline in the mid-twentieth century but has now begun to attract attention again.

Solfrid Söderlind, in "The Plaster Issue: Collections of Sculptures and Casts in Sweden", performs a similar analysis from the Swedish point of view, showing how Rome was to be recreated in Stockholm through Gustav III's classical collections and how they were augmented and underwent a partial change of focus as a result of purchases throughout the nineteenth century. The view of originals and copies is a recurrent theme in several articles in the book.

In "The Sculpture Museum in Kristiania" Niels Messel gives interesting insight into how the museum was created, into the ideas and discussions about which casts the museum should contain, how they should be presented, and – not least of all – the personal conflicts for the post of director during the first decades, with Lorentz Dietrichson as one of the powerful figures. The debate about putting fig leaves on the casts, which was not an unusual practice in similar institutions in Europe, gives an interesting snapshot of the times. In the last two contributions to the book, Torben Melander deals with "Thorvaldsen's Collection of Casts and the Use of Casts in Pictorial Art" and Riitta Nikula considers "Helsinki University's Sculpture Collection – History and Background".

Hans Medelius, Stockholm

Everyday Life in Estonia

Pro Ethnologia. 16 Studies on Socialist and Post-socialist Everyday Life. Pille Runnel & Ena Köresaar (eds.). Estonian National Museum, Tartu 2003. 144 pp. ISBN 9985-9475-2-5.

■ The anthology *Studies on Socialist and Post-socialist Everyday Life* was initiated by a cooperative research project at the Department of Ethnology of the University of Tartu and the Estonian National Museum. As the editor Ene Kõresaar notices, everyday life was not a subject of academic research in Eastern and Central Europe during the socialist period. He also stresses that because of East European researchers' "lack of distance and the inevitable emotional bondage with the events" (p. 5), most of the research has been done by Western scholars. In the last decade, though, everyday life during socialist times has attracted great interest in these countries. The anthology contains several articles on people's practices, strategies and identification during different periods of Estonian, Latvian and Polish socialist and post-socialist history, with the focus on large societal transformations related to Soviet rule. The authors use different approaches to the subject, not all of them typically ethnological. Because of the shifting approaches and the geographical range, a presentation of the authors and an introduction to the main theme would have been helpful to the reader. Most

of the articles, though, are unified by a biographical perspective, in which people's experiences during the socialist era as well as the influence of the presence on narrating the past are analysed.

Baiba Bela-Kr mi a in her article "Relationships between Personal and Social: Strategies of Everyday Life in the Process of Radical Social Changes" uses life stories of the older generation in the Latvian countryside to analyse people's adaptation to new circumstances and strategies to maintain continuity in the Stalinist period. The non-directive life-story interviews were collected by the Latvian National Oral History (NOH) project in 1996 and, as Bela-Kr mi a notes, must be seen in relationship to the present public discourse, at that time deeply influenced by the re-establishment of the independent Latvian state. In the rural life stories, the conflict between Latvian national cultural discourse and ruling Soviet discourse can be observed over a longer period. Adaptation in the early years of socialism was a question of surviving, both the disaster following the rapid collectivization of the agriculture and the repressions and deportations intended to destroy family and memory. To maintain continuity, people developed strategies of self-identification, such as being a good worker, often contrasting themselves to Soviet rule and "uneducated Russians". Although forbidden, people continued to celebrate Christian and Latvian holidays in private and thus succeeded in identifying themselves as Christians and Latvians. Standing apart from Soviet mass organizations as a strategy of resistance has become an important marker in public opinion in the years after independence.

Reet Ruusmann discusses the same kind of material in her article "The Establishment of Collective Farms and their Early Years as an Image of History in the Estonians' Life Stories". Here the focus is on the life story as a retrospective reconstruction of reality, on reminiscence as a selection and association of events influenced by the past as well as the present and the future. Ruusmann discusses how the experience of collectivization is textualized, thereby forming an image of history suitable to the present public discourse. By using an image of history the narrators can discuss painful experiences in an impersonal and superficial way, still with the assurance that they can be decoded through the culturally shared common knowledge of this period and its sufferings. Telling one's life story also means the opportunity to make one's contribution to the public discussion about this part of Estonian history, in which the political understanding of the early years of Soviet rule as nothing but bad is rather set.

In "What People Tell about Their Working Life in the ESSR, and How Do They Do It? Source-centred Study of a Civil Servant's Career Biography" Kirsti Jõesalu uses a life story and a career biography of a Soviet civil servant in Estonia to discuss how different kinds of sources can enrich each other when one analyses vertical and horizontal social relations. Structured thematic questionnaires generate other information than life stories and biographical interviews. The answers are influenced by how the questions were posed and the time when the material was collected. Still, Jõesalu stresses that questionnaires with an experience-centred approach can give us subjective information on different aspects of people's lives. When combined with other biographical sources this can give us a more complete picture of a phenomenon such as working life. In the case of the civil servant the life story offers an insight into the narrator's attitude to Soviet power as such and therefore serves as a complement to the comprehensive but non-evaluative career biography.

The topic of Aida Hachaturyan-Kisilenko's article is life in a Soviet military garrison in Estonia and how it is recollected. Her material consists of semi-structured interviews with former servicemen and their families. The military garrison was separated from civil life and constituted a world of its own where the life of the inhabitants was strictly regulated but also more comfortable than that of the civilian population. Hachaturyan-Kisilenko shows that especially the children, but also the adults of the garrison, recollect life in the garrison as above all positive. From the present point of view, their former life appears as an ideal that is no longer attainable. In this context, it is interesting that most of the interviewees, although originating from many ethnic nationalities, still consider themselves as Russians.

Cultural processes connected to the integration of Eastern Europe into the European Union are the subject of the article "Europe as a Measure of Change: Soviet-Time Values and the Construction of Estonia's Post-Communist Turn to Europe". Pille Runnel examines how the experience of individuals is organized around nodal points, in this case *hygiene* and *culture*, which conceive multilevel meanings in popular discourse. In the semi-structured interviews with people in strategically important positions in

Estonian society, the European Union is considered to be both a desired community and a threat to Estonian values. Runnel points out that people's views of the integration process are based on definitions of "self" and "the other" in the private sphere and are less dependent on information about the Union and its functions. Whereas "hygiene" is an obvious marker for the new wealth of Western Europe in contrast to the old Soviet system, "culture", often used synonymously with national culture, is treated more ambivalently. Although defined as something solid and unchanging by the interviewees, it can simultaneously be replaced or threatened by the integration with the European Union. This indicates that people lack concepts with a fixed meaning to describe and discuss the present transformation of society.

The anthology also contains Liis Palumets' article on different lifestyles in Estonia in 1991. Here Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* is used to identify three main groups: those with both economic and cultural capital, those with only economic capital and those with only cultural capital. Palumets examines the relationship between occupation and social origin and the three different lifestyles. Tomasz Rakowski depicts life surrounding the Belchatóv lignite mine, which once was the most attractive area in Poland, symbolizing modernization. The author uses the concepts *sacrifice* and *hope* to describe how the inhabitants deal with the modernization process, in this case dominated by heavy industry. The book ends with a review of books on socialist Poland and a report on the conference "Work Life and Life-World during Socialism and Post-Socialism" held in Tartu in June 2003.

The anthology is an interesting contribution to the discussion of the relationship between experience, reminiscence and public discourse. Everyday life during and after socialism in the Baltic states is characterized by extreme and rapid societal changes. As several of the articles shows, the biographical perspective on these changes presents not only a rich ethnographical description of life during the Soviet period, but also shows how people in the years after independence recollect and create their history in interaction with the national discourse. Researchers, not least in ethnology, have a great impact on how the socialist as well as the pre- and post-socialist history is to be understood. As Reet Ruusmann observes, the material on which her article is based and the collecting of it is part of the national revival after 1991: "The campaign of collecting life stories had started during the high tide of patriotic sentiment and was/is patriotic in essence as well" (pp. 24f). The theoretical perspective, in which the recollection of the individual is been seen in relationship to the public discourse also indicates that the contributors are aware that they are not only in the middle of, but also a part of the re-establishment of their nations, in which the interpretation of the Soviet period is crucial. A problem with most of the articles, though, is that discourse is used in the analysis, but never clearly defined. Although presupposed to be contingent in its character, at the very moment of research, public discourse tends to be handled as a constant factor influencing people's reminiscence. Treated like this, "public discourse" runs the risk of becoming an empty concept that can be applied to any situation or material. The discussion about the relationship between the reminiscence of the individual and the context in which it appears therefore ought to be continued. *Studies on Socialist and Post-socialist Everyday Life* should be considered an interesting contribution to the research on socialist everyday life in general and on the biographical perspective on it in particular.

Sofi Gerber, Huddinge

Grundtvig as a Key to Danishness

Grundtvig – Nyckeln till det danska? Hanne Sanders & Ole Vind (eds.). Makadam Förlag, Göteborg & Stockholm 2003. 303 pp. ISBN 91-7061-000-2.

■ The Centre for the Study of Denmark at Lund University opened in 1998. It is a network of researchers with an interest in Danish studies. The Centre has started arranging Danish-Swedish conferences where scholars from both sides of the Sound meet in Skåne. The first conference took place in 2001, dealing with the Danish clergyman, author, and school reformer N. F. S. Grundtvig (1783–1872). The present book is a result of that conference. The editors are the historian Hanne Sanders and the historian of ideas Ole Vind. The authors of the book are ethnologists, historians, historians of ideas, educationists, and theologists from Denmark and Sweden.

A basic theme of the book is how important Grundtvig is for an understanding of Danishness. One question concerns whether he was as modern and democratic as he has tended to be perceived. The book casts some doubt on this. For example, in 1849

Grundtvig voted against the Danish constitution, which marked the end of absolutism in Denmark and the introduction of democracy. Grundtvig perceived this constitution as un-Danish and *ufolkelig* (not in the interests of the common people). At the same time, he became an important inspiration for the Danish nationalism that grew strong after the fall of absolutism.

Another question concerns whether Grundtvig really was as Danish as he has been perceived. The authors point out that he actually built on German ideas. His thoughts about the people had their roots in Germany. In his stress on the common people Grundtvig held up the peasantry in particular as the core of the nation, and their way of life serves as the model for Danishness.

Grundtvig was instrumental in ensuring that the established church (*folkekirken*) became a part of the construction of the Danish nation in the nineteenth century, in contrast to the situation in Sweden. He provided the inspiration for a revival in which the nation, the common people, and the church were closely allied. This has helped to shape the Danish mentality and lifestyle.

Grundtvig gave new life to the Danish church by emphasizing the living congregation. These churchgoers sang many hymns written by Grundtvig himself. These hymns are permeated by a bright, optimistic tone. "A happy Christianity" came to dominate, in contrast to pietism with its darker view of this earthly life. The people were regarded by Grundtvig as an active subject, constituting the foundation of the church, which became a place for different spiritual tendencies. That is why the free churches never caught on in Denmark, unlike Sweden. Grundtvig also built bridges to Catholicism, which acquired a distinctive popular character in Denmark.

The folk high schools, for which Grundtvig was the inspiration, have played a major role in the development of Danish society. Education at these adult colleges, according to Grundtvig, would encourage people to take personal responsibility without external coercion. They were "schools for life".

There has been extensive research on Grundtvig since the Second World War. A Centre for Grundtvig Studies has been founded in Århus. In today's Danish politics, however, Grundtvig has also been tainted with the adoption of his nationalist ideas of Danishness by the xenophobic Dansk Folkeparti.

This book gives insight into current interdisciplinary research focusing on Grundtvig's work and his significance for Danish history up to the present day. It is obvious that his ideas still play a major role in Danish church life and Danish society. The book presents a multifaceted picture of Grundtvig and his significance. It can be recommended to all those who want a greater understanding of Danish nationalism, mentality, church life, and popular education.

Anders Gustavsson, Oslo

The First Step

Fredrik Schoug, På trappans första steg. Doktoranders och nydisputerade forskares erfarenheter av akademin. Studentlitteratur, Lund 2004. 213 pp. ISBN 91-44-03678-7.

■ Fredrik Schoug's book is timely. Presently, universities have been undergoing significant changes and the public debate on the pros and, more often than not, cons of different reforms has featured prominently in the media. Among other things, much concern has been expressed over universities turning into industries designed to churn out standardized doctors and MA's at a dizzying rate. In the on-going effort to adapt universities to the market economy, models and structures are frequently borrowed from the business world. Whereas this course of action might have some application for the hard sciences, there are fundamental clashes of aims and methods when it comes to the humanities and the social sciences. The strategy makes for a sinister Procrustean costume; instead of designing the clothes to fit the wearer, limbs are twisted, manipulated or simply cut off in order to fit the garments. The question is: will university departments, as catwalk models, have to put up with life-threatening diets, fashionable quick fixes and plastic surgery to keep up appearances?

One of the topics looming large in the debate is the reorganisation and expansion of the doctoral programme. Competition for positions is fierce, there is little funding to go around and young researchers seem to have less and less time in which to finish their dissertations. It is thus hardly surprising that many students at the doctoral level have expressed discontent over the present state of affairs. However, and this is one of Schoug's important main contentions, the voices dominating the university debates stem for the most part from the people at the top of the academic hierarchy. In contrast, the focus in *På*

trappans första steg explicitly lies on the experiences of PhD students and newly graduated doctors.

The empirical material for the study consists of interviews with researchers who either recently received their doctorate or who are in the process writing their dissertations. The interviewees come from the disciplines of Ethnology, Literature, Sociology and Political Science at the universities in Lund and Umeå. The general theme is the researchers' experiences of the university world. In addition to interviews, Schoug makes active use of a wide array of public material such as articles, propositions, reports and investigations concerning universities. By doing so, he is able to expose considerable discrepancies between attitudes at different levels of the academic hierarchy. Understanding these dissimilarities in the light of the divergent social conditions prevailing at different levels is an important impetus for Schoug's study.

Much of the blame for various unsatisfactory conditions in the academic world is habitually placed at the door of national politics and, especially, its decision makers. The author characterizes this as a rather one-sided view and underlines that universities still have a certain amount of autonomy and, in fact, often resist directives from above. Schoug distances himself from any organic view of the university and points out that battles regarding new directives are often fought at the level of individuals. It is namely the people at the top of the hierarchy who stand to lose the most by changes. Therefore, an individual's position within the system will very likely affect their responses to change.

In the first chapter, the relationship between the university and society is analysed. A present day ambition is to bridge the gap between universities and the world outside. The interviewees in Schoug's survey were on the whole very interested in the prospects of making an active contribution to society at large. The most enthusiastic believers in the importance of "being useful" were found among those researchers most economically marginalised. However, with the conspicuous lack of obvious careers and opportunities on the labour market, it is no wonder that the majority of the researchers in the present study seemed more intent on a career within academia. An obvious question in this context is of course, why do students, considering the bleak job situation at present, still decide to proceed to the doctoral level? The reason, Schoug suggests, is a matter of socialisation. Very few people enter universities with the clear intent of getting a PhD. It is rather a decision that slowly takes shape, influenced by rewarding experiences such as personal achievements and encouragement from tutors and professors. Regardless of the often-dismal conditions – difficulties in procuring financing, the high level of insecurity and low prospects of finding work – many researchers still testify to how satisfying and personally rewarding they find their work. Thus, the "meaning" of and justification for the research is found in the work itself, something the author is inclined to interpret as a rather convenient idealisation.

In the following chapter, Schoug goes on to discuss the practical consequences of the 1998 admission reform in Sweden, according to which the universities have to be able to guarantee financing for everyone admitted to their doctoral programmes. The increased demands on speed and efficiency in the educational system were experienced as a double-edged sword among the interviewees. On the one hand, many expressed a wish not to spend a great many years on their dissertations while, on the other hand, the fear of getting "stuck" and not being able to finish in time was a clear source of worry and stress. Furthermore, the strict time frames, which allow for less time spent on socialisation, translated themselves into confusion and frustration for many of the doctoral students. Accordingly, one of the main complaints among students is the lack of support and supervision. For the Post Docs aiming for a career within the university, the main concern is rather the devaluation of degrees and titles, and the consequent need to continuously attain new qualifications in order to stay competitive.

The topic of investigation in chapter three, tellingly entitled "Significant research and insignificant researchers", is the importance of receiving confirmation of one's role as researcher, either within or outside the academe. Inclusion in project groups and acknowledgement received at research seminars act as affirmations of the doctoral student's role and position as an academic. Interestingly, some Post Docs deemed being included in networks and having good contacts within the university almost as valuable as having good research ideas.

In chapter four, Schoug turns his attention to the competition, which increasingly permeates a researcher's life. The automatic connection made between competition and quality of research in political rhetoric is strongly placed into question. Schoug observes that competition combined with

meritocracy in fact works to increase inequalities rather than levelling them out. The strong emphasis on competition for few resources, forces researchers to spend an ever increasing amount on time on applications for grants and positions, and creates an environment where symptoms of stress and burn-out are ubiquitous.

Many of the interviewees held a rather ambivalent attitude towards the prevailing competitive atmosphere. Most of the students at the doctoral level found it unpleasant having to think of friends and colleagues as rivals. Competition was often said to have a paralysing effect on creativity. Only on an abstract level was competition perceived as a potentially inspiring element. Among Post Docs, the attitude towards competition was also characterised by mixed feelings. However, the positive attitudes were slightly more common in this group. A result which, Schoug remarks, very likely was influenced by confidence gained from successfully having completed one's dissertation. In fact, the higher up in the hierarchy a person is, the more apt he or she is to endorse the academic conditions. Again, the lower down in the hierarchy a person is, the more he or she stands to lose by competition. Researchers without funding or research positions are marginalised in, more or less, subtle ways. Rather than giving everyone a "fair chance", the system of selection contributes to generating unequal conditions, by creating obstacles for the "losers", while paving the way for the chosen ones. Through its confessed objectivity, the system, in reality, legitimises inequality.

In the final chapter, Schoug compares the results of his own study with other studies, such as research about careers and gender studies, the latter offering a particularly illuminating interpretative framework. The author draws the conclusion that where the interest of the more marginalised groups is at stake, what is called for is not freedom from politics, but more appropriate politics.

I hope that many people will read Fredrik Schoug's book. The study is written based on Swedish conditions, however, most aspects are of great comparability for other Nordic countries as well. There might be objections to some of the conclusions and statements presented in this study. Nevertheless, my belief is that the author has succeeded in his aim to present a much-needed perspective "from below" which will prove to be valuable for continued debates and discussions.

Susanne Österlund-Pötzsch, Helsinki

Crossing Human and National Borders

Hanna Snellman, Sallan suurin kylä – Göteborg. Tutkimus Ruotsin lappilaisista (Gothenburg, the biggest Salla village. A study of Lappish immigrants in Sweden.) SKS, Finnish Literature Society, Helsinki 2003. 295 pp. ISBN 951-746-511-4.

■ Finland after the Second World War presented different pictures, depending on whether the consequences of the war were viewed from Lapland or Helsinki. Some things were common to both: poverty, a period of rapid rebuilding, and the loss of the father, either physically or mentally, in many homes.

In a study entitled *Gothenburg, the biggest Salla village* Hanna Snellman presents the Laplander view on one consequence of the post-war era of rebuilding and industrialisation: emigration.

From their own point of view, the Laplanders sacrificed their homes, their homesteads and nature to industry. Many had lost their homes in the war, and homes were now being lost to make way for power stations and reservoirs. The book takes a look at life in Salla in Finnish Lapland after the war and the way young people emigrated to Sweden in search of work. How did they cope with the change from the northern wilds to the concrete suburbs of a major city in a strange country to the south?

Hanna Snellman reports that her aim was to write an academic ethnological monograph that would also tell the story of the Finns in Gothenburg. The monograph and the lifestories read like a novel. Snellman admirably parallels her interview materials with excerpts over ten years from the diaries by a girl called Ulla, who started to write them when she was 12 in 1966.

In her diary she writes: "We live in a nice village called Naama. I never want to move away unless I have to. This village is sort of in a valley. It's surrounded by ridges, hills and fells. Two rivers flow through the village. Our family used to live by the river, then we moved twice. The former was in a very beautiful place, on the banks of a river. I didn't want to move away, but we had to."

The diaries describe what it was like to grow up from a young girl to a young woman. Ulla writes about her relationship to her own village, school, work, nature, her friends and dreams for the future. Apart from smoking, the youngsters' hobbies differed greatly in Lapland and Helsinki. The most popular pastime was "going round the camp".

At 15, after going round the camp, she writes: "Oh what glorious scenery while we were out skiing. The sunshine was glorious. We had a smoke by the river again. For a while we listened to the silence of the wilds. Skiing there made you feel so free. If only the girls and I could be free to do what we like in peace. The wind would sigh in the trees and we would sit round a fire in the open. How happy I or we would be."

When she is 15, Ulla and the girls move to Sweden. She is excited about what lies ahead.

"Do you know what? We're in Sweden, Tuula and my big sister, just think! We set off last Monday. We came here with Tauno and Jukka. I cried when we left, Ensio (Tuula's father) didn't know Tuula had gone. I bet he's cross. So the journey here was fun. We laughed and sang a lot. Jukka is really nice. We're now living with Irma. The men are at work."

The reaction then sets in, and disenchantment. "The days just pass here. I'm like a machine, doing my work automatically. Reckon I'll fall sick soon, not being able to speak freely to anyone. Last night I cried again, thinking of home, Mum, my little brother and everything, even the cows and the dog. – I hate being a maid, the girls hate it too, but at least there are two of them. If only things would sort themselves out soon. Please help, God! Guide me, bless me and be with me."

And then things did sort themselves out. Ulla began going out with a boy, then she got married and had children. She started working at the Volvo factory with other Finns from Lapland. Little by little her life became far removed from what she once took for granted and from what seemed, at a distance, so attractive. The lives of young girls and boys who emigrated from Lapland are told in their own lifestories over a period of 35 years. The narrative is at the same time the plot of the study: the childhood home, the decision to emigrate, the move to Sweden, everyday life, at work, at home, with the children, in Finnish in Sweden, the social networks of the Gothenburg Finns, the new and old homeland, homesickness, visits that become less frequent, Finnish vs. Swedish citizenship.

In the study Ulla's diaries speak of the time at that very moment, while the interviews reveal oral history of that same period. The diaries and interviews thus complement each other. The photographs are well chosen and cause the reader to stop and look. Men's and women's narratives also join in dialogue. How did the men cope? Was being an immigrant different for men and for women? "The Finns, being demons for work, did the toughest jobs of all in order to be accepted and they paid for it dearly: with their health," is the succinct comment of many a man in the study.

The move was not simply from countryside to town. It meant crossing the border to another country, language, and culture. Many things had to be learnt the hard way and often "from scratch". From the moment they arrived, the new immigrants had to do everything in a foreign language. But oh how well they succeed in describing what they feel when they do not understand a word and have to keep calm and pretend to understand. At the time of the study they were able to laugh at themselves. What is interesting is that some of them have continued to live their lives in Finnish throughout their time in Sweden.

The study once again illustrates the human ability to adapt to new and different conditions, in this case people from a little village in Finnish Lapland to the biggest industrial city in southern Sweden. The Laplanders got by with the help of their own social network, helping one another. The most difficult thing was the anonymous urban lifestyle, i.e. learning not to care.

Emigration also has its downside. The immigrant status is hard to bear. The immigrant had to be better than the Swedes, or at least better than the other immigrants. The price of emigration is sometimes high. Not all have the tenacity and energy; when a person's strength is taxed to the extremes, crossing the border sets a course in a new direction. Snellman has chosen a sensitive, respectful style in writing this overall treatise.

On the other hand, the immigrant culture also introduced new customs and values. The newcomers grew up in a multicultural milieu and a permissive atmosphere that accepted and understood others. They created an immigrant culture of their own and integrated selectively with Swedish culture. They held on to their national and above all their Lappish identity capital founded on social networks that functioned incredibly well in practice.

In her own distinctive style, Snellman has initiated the ethnological study of Finnish emigrants, the human crossing of borders. Unfortunately, but luckily, the monograph is in Finnish. Unfortunately because so many non-Finns would like to read it but cannot. Also unfortunately because it is seldom

possible to find the resources for translating Finnish national research, but luckily it has thus been possible for many a Finnish emigrant to view his or her identity and history in a new light. We now await Hanna Snellman's next study, of what happened to the children of those emigrants, the second generation. The time of emigration belongs to the history. After the year 2001 Swedish-Finns is one of the five minorities in Sweden. And many Finnish emigrants have changed the nationality before that.

Leena Louhivuori, Helsinki

The Green City

Ulf Stahre, Den Gröna Staden: stadsomvandling och stadsmiljörörelse i det nutida Stockholm. Bokförlaget Atlas, Stockholm 2004. 342 pp. Ill. Abstract. ISBN 91-7389-136-3.

■ Ulf Stahre's *Den Gröna Staden: stadsomvandling och stadsmiljörörelse i det nutida Stockholm* builds on the author's earlier examination of the growth and decline of urban protest movements in Stockholm during the late 1950s, 60s and early 70s (in *Den Alternativa Staden*) by depicting the new wave of protest that re-emerged in the 1990s. It also considers the continuities and discontinuities between the two.

By the 1960s the demands of a growing industrial economy and an increased urban population led to major moves to rebuild and 'rationalise' Swedish cities to improve dwelling standards, meet new commercial and transport needs and, in Stockholm's case, maintain the European competitiveness of the capital and its region. As the almost war-like scale of the destruction involved became apparent, public attitudes changed. Protest against particular road building and redevelopment schemes grew. People re-evaluated the old urban environments and demanded their preservation. In Stockholm, the new *Byalagsrörelse*/Neighbourhood Movement emerged to mobilise action. Drawing on the generally increased radicalism of the late 1960s, its locally-based groups espoused anti-commercial community values and anti-authoritarian participatory democracy. Their great symbolic and opinion-shifting victory was the 1971 *almstrid*/battle of the elms, when Stockholmers occupied *Kungsträdgården*, a famous central city open space and prevented redevelopers felling trees. Next year some 15,000 met there to protest against the regional plans for the city's growth. A widely consultative research initiative (*Trafiksamråd*/Traffic Consultation 1973–74) then preceded the cancellation of many of the large road projects. Protest, Stahre suggests, together with the early 70s economic downturn produced this outcome.

The 1990s events also occurred against a backdrop of economic change, now linked to post-industrialisation and an increasing globalisation that is perhaps producing a new hierarchy of cities topped by those achieving 'world city' status. In his final chapter Stahre briefly discusses how these changes can affect urban life in general, touching for example on gentrification and polarization between citadel and ghetto areas. How far Stockholm manifests these trends is only hinted at. Instead, the core chapters of the book document a range of protests against threats to the city's environment and then, slightly repetitively, examine the key organisations involved in them. What were opposed were the renewed moves to improve the city's transport infrastructure, in the new world of global competition. Most important were the *Dennispaket* proposals for a major road route round the city, and the third track/*tredje spåret* plan for a new rail link sited problematically close to the valuable seventeen century buildings of Riddarholmen in the city's core. Also considered is the fight to protect the culturally and environmentally important Haga Park-Brunnsviken area, threatened both by the *Dennispaket* proposals and new prestige building by international corporations seeking an attractive location.

Four protest groups are highlighted, though more are mentioned, with Stahre suggesting that the greater number and variety of the groups involved in the 90s action, together with some significant individual initiatives, distinguishes it from the earlier protest period. In a post-Fordist, post-modern world of diversification we have fragmented dissent. *Haga-Brunnsvikens vänner*/Haga-Brunnsviken's Friends, a formally organised body of law abiding, older people, often drawn from the cultural elite and focused on protection of this specific area, is one of the groups discussed. It contrasts with *Socialekologisk Action*/Social Ecological Action, whose predominantly young, anarchist inspired members sometimes sabotaged the road builders' machinery. *Alternativ Stad*/Alternative City also (initially) loosely structured and favouring direct internal democracy, had roots in the earlier *Byalagsrörelse*. Besides fighting the various development proposals it was more broadly

interested in fostering the good (anti-commercial, anti-car centred, tightly built, publicly accessible) city, its range of research projects belying Stahre's occasional suggestion that the 90s activists were less concerned than their predecessors with general social change. Finally, *Ur Tid Är Leden* /The Road is out of Time was the main umbrella organisation, facilitating joint actions between the different groups, although interconnections also operated on a more ad hoc basis through individual contacts and shared memberships.

Stahre queries whether the organisations and actions he describes comprise a social movement, as recognised by contemporary social movement theorists. Despite his previously mentioned equivocation he concludes that, overall, the 90s groups and events do meet his defining criterion of advocating significant social change. They also manifest the (often internet facilitated) network element typical of contemporary movements. And, we might add, whilst the protests linked to economic change, the organisations did not define themselves in class terms, nor, generally, did the activists present themselves as members or representatives of underprivileged categories. (In fact the major trade union organisation, LO, supported the *Dennispaket* whilst one of the smaller preservationist groups, *Vi som älskar Stockholm*/We who love Stockholm was comprised of financiers, bank executives, stockbrokers among others.) Some however, saw their activity as part of the Swedish *folkrörelse*/folk movement tradition born in the country's transition from a rural to a modern, urban, industrial society, but also not directly rooted in work-place identity. Stahre might usefully have considered the appropriateness of this claim.

As in the 60s and 70s, the demands of the 90s activists were partly met. Much of the Haga-Brunnsviken area became protected as part of Sweden's first Urban National Park, the third track proposals were deemed unsatisfactory in their existing form, and the *Dennispaket* was cancelled in 1997. Parts of it were, however, later resurrected. The once contested Södra Länken, for example, it was opened in 2004. On a broader level, Stahre sees the two generations of protest as having substantially increased the environmental consciousness of the general population and urban decision makers. Even the contested *Dennispaket* showed the impact of the 60s action in the high proportion of its new roads to be hidden underground. *Alternativ stad's* advocacy of denser, mixed-use urban quarters has become more common-place (see, for example, the 1998 Stockholm City Plan's ideas about 'building the city inwards' and re-utilising old, brown-field sites for multi-functional developments.) However, the privatisation of urban services and resources, challenged not only by *Alternativ stad* but by more recently founded groups like *Stockholm inte till Salu*/Stockholm's not for Sale, and *Mot marknadsdiktatur*/Against the Dictatorship of the Market, is increasing.

Den Gröna Staden reveals that the outcomes of a social movement are linked to the characteristics of the groups and individuals which comprise it, the circumstances in which they act, and the interplay between the two. On the first front, the multi-group network structure of the 90s movement was highly effective in permitting large numbers to engage in key collective actions whilst not requiring that they all agreed in detail about every aspect of aims and methods. Combined with a developing tradition of successful protest, networks facilitated oscillation between periods of latency or more generalised programme building, and those of the direct action required when new threats emerged. Large numbers could be mobilised quickly as required without the need for all the groups to maintain substantial permanently organised memberships. The importance of *some* of them doing so is perhaps underplayed. The role of experts and of movement members with links into the political and official decision-making structure was also crucial. Cultural elite support, including from members of the state's own *Riksantikvarieämbetet*/National Heritage Board, plus eventual backing from a minister in the Environment and Nature Resource department, helped secure Haga-Brunnsviken area's National Park Status. Influential alternatives to other *Dennispaket threats* were also drawn up by technically expert (male) academics and ex public officials. Well-qualified pensioners were particularly active. Further factors affecting the activists' effectiveness included their ability to devise enough symbolically expressive protests to keep followers engaged and to attract and shape favourable media coverage.

Stahre's work suggests, but doesn't underline, that economic factors are a key 'external' influence on the activists' chances of success. Economic downturn makes it easier to beat road-building schemes but not to resist cuts in collective provision. However, the modern economy's fundamental reliance on effective

transport routes means that the road issue is always likely to resurface – aided by many citizen's personal commitment to their car. Perhaps more hopeful is the way that post industrialisation, an increased tourist industry and the greater mobility of capital, offers economic rewards for maintaining and improving urban environmental quality. Nordbank's chief is quoted as asserting that 'Sweden has a capital we can love, be proud of and observe as a trump card in international competition' – an advantage he feels should not be squandered through traffic proposals offering short term fixes. Stahre might have further emphasised how, collectively, economic elites now have reasons to be cautious about despoiling at least those parts of the city in which their top employees live, work and play, even if they might individually want to exclude their own pet building projects from any strictures. In the age of city marketing, it is good economic sense to preserve such attractive and historically interesting areas as Haga-Brunnsviken.

General cultural orientations, together with the character of the polity, civil society and their interrelations, also shape the circumstances in which social movements find themselves. Stahre makes the particular point that all party support for the *Dennispaket* in Stockholm city council encouraged the development of new forms of opposition outside it. But in general he rather under-specifies and takes for granted the character of the Swedish state and features of society which non-Scandinavian readers might find distinctive. Thus he misses the opportunity to more overtly contribute to understanding continuing national differences in the impact of contemporary social movements, despite their growing cross-border connections. Sweden's folk movement tradition, long established, strongly organised campaigning groups such as *Naturskyddsföreningen* and *Fältbiologerna* (The Nature Protection Society and the Field Biologists), the *Hembygdsrörelsens*/Local District Movement's more than century-long focus on local environmental protection, are immediately relevant to the case in hand. But they also stand as examples of a generally strongly developed civil society. One which, however, is not sharply distinguished from a state which, in line with strong cultural preferences for rational decision-making, moderation and compromise, widely consults informed bodies outside of it.

Den Gröna Staden thus does provide interesting case material on Stockholm's recent urban development and contemporary urban social movements, but its potential to contribute more generally to theorising the latter isn't fully cashed.

Hilary Stanworth, Swansea

Sketches from a Landscape

Mikkel Venborg Pedersen, Ejdersted. Skitser fra et landskab 1650–1850, Nationalmuseet – Frilandsmuseet, Lyngby 2004. 203 pp. Ill. English summary. ISBN 87-7602-013-4.

■ One of the buildings at the Open-Air Museum north of Copenhagen is the Ejdersted farm (from Eiderstedt in Schleswig), which is one of the oldest farms re-erected in the museum. The farm really stands out as exceptional, so that even a visitor who is not familiar with cultural and architectural history can easily point it out. This is due to the steep pitch of the huge roof, which characterizes the farmhouse as a *haubarg*, a word meaning "hay shelter", although it brings all the farm buildings and dwelling house under one roof. This is a form of building that saves timber in an area without many trees, and in the flat landscape it provides good shelter against the wind from the sea. The interior is functionally divided to suit the needs of cattle breeding and milk production as pursued from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries.

With this book about Ejdersted, Mikkel Venborg Pedersen has made a contribution to the relatively new wave of microhistory in Danish ethnology and history – a wave that began in earnest with Palle Ove Christiansen's dissertation *A Manorial World* in 1995. Venborg Pedersen likewise focuses on rural society but on a slightly earlier period and in a geographical area that was outside the kingdom of Denmark, in fact, about as far south as one can come in the duchy of Schleswig, and simultaneously the northernmost area with noticeable Dutch-Frisian features.

It is not unusual that the material for a Danish microhistory is taken from a rural community or is centred around 1800, the age of agrarian reform. As Christiansen has said, "so-called peasant history is a special Danish form of rural and social history" (*Kulturhistorie som opposition – Træk af forskellige fagtraditioner*, 2000, p. 104). The central place of the "great" agrarian reforms in Danish historiography and the Danish self-understanding is well known, and it is tempting to upset 150–200 years of history

writing. At the same time, when tackling the agrarian reforms, the microhistorical method will hopefully prove to be more than a parenthetical trend. To put it another way, we will not be able to avoid the microhistorical approach when in future we want to use the age of agrarian reform as the basis for new studies and perspectives. The present book definitely seems to stimulate great expectations about future efforts applying microhistory to Danish material.

Venborg Pedersen's aim is "to describe everyday life on the big farms in Ejdersted, to be able to approach Ejdersted's elite and the cultural world" (p. 17). He achieves this in the book by concentrating on three contexts which make up the main parts of the book: the cultural landscape itself; trade and agriculture; and material culture. In all three contexts the perspective is that of the social elite of Ejdersted.

Today Ejdersted has been transformed into a tourist attraction, but in the period that Venborg deals with, the economy was mainly based on raising beef cattle and milk production. On the mental level, however, people lived with a myth, which is also represented in the hitherto general interpretation of the motifs on the alcove cabinet in the living room on the Ejdersted farm in the museum. The mermaids on the cabinet protect against sea monsters, just as the people of the Ejdersted area had to protect themselves against the destructive force of the seas by building and maintaining dikes and drains. These natural conditions for life in Ejdersted, as Venborg Pedersen shows, have been a major factor in the creation of the local conceptual world. Natural conditions which involved a trackless and disconnected landscape right up until around 1600 created the potential for a certain degree of independence for the peasant community, who either had no lord, were beyond his range, or enjoyed special rights in relation to him. Together with good times for cattle breeding ever since the Middle Ages, there was a good seedbed for notions among the big farmers around Ejdersted about freedom and self-determination, and about prosperity and wealth.

This conceptual world was materialized in the cultural landscape. In the absence of proper manor houses, it was the lines of big farmers' *haubargs* that dominated the landscape, with their mighty roofs rising above the small farmers' low-roofed double farms and the little homes of the peasantry. The big *haubargs* – which in later versions from the nineteenth century could rise several metres above the ground – became prestigious architectural projects which were comparable in the local craft tradition with the building of floodgates and mills. For nineteenth-century people in Ejdersted they were thus a part of the visible order with its social, economic, cultural, and political hierarchy that the leading class set their distinct stamp on the physical landscape.

Each *haubarg* was a little community in itself, with a household of 10–20 persons. Venborg Pedersen shows how the drainage regulations constituted a foundation of privilege for each *haubarg*, while simultaneously each big farmer had to organize the work on his farm, the use of land for grazing or arable, internal authority and inheritance so that he could ensure not just an immediate income and the survival of the inhabitants but also the continued existence of the social organization. The author's analysis of a number of judicial disputes and negotiations about drainage rights and inheritance cases is very instructive, demonstrating in a fascinating way how, through meticulous studies of an individual case with general perspectives, we can approach an understanding of the often contradictory characteristics of a bygone reality. Venborg Pedersen gives a wonderful example of this in his description of, on the one hand, the formal inheritance rules – which rested on the principle of land division – and, on the other hand, the practical means by which the big farmers' families tried to optimize their chances of survival.

The third section in the description of the social elite of Ejdersted looks at their material culture in a broad sense, with close-up focus on the furnishings of the *haubarg*. Venborg Pedersen manages to suggest how the inhabitants through their furnishings materialized their social exclusiveness, both for themselves and for the surrounding world. The identification of status consumption is the author's way to point out the objects, the styles, and the quantities that could underline the trade contacts of the farms via towns in Schleswig and Holstein with the larger world, Hamburg, Amsterdam, and London. As he points out, there must be a clear connection between these status objects and the educational level of the people who were given status through the objects. There was probably nothing wrong with the education of the 3–5 per cent of the population of Ejdersted who lived in the *haubargs*. Unfortunately, the source material does not allow the author to follow shifts in status consumption over a long period, in the spirit of Bourdieu, which could reveal changes in the composition and shape of the cultural capital that is necessary at any time

for maintaining social exclusiveness. Yet Venborg Pedersen manages to demonstrate convincingly the direct association between, for example, the silk dressing gown and the Turkish tobacco on the one hand, and the level of wealth and education in the other hand.

Despite their relatively high educational level, the big Ejdersted farmers remained part of the peasant class, defining themselves in terms of their land and their efforts to gain a yield from it. Consequently, they occasionally took part themselves in the work in the fields, their bookshelves were dominated by books about agriculture and drainage, and they were not fully comparable to an urban bourgeoisie. It may even be questioned whether the bourgeoisie of, say, Hamburg served as model of style or status. Venborg Pedersen does not pursue this in his book, which otherwise gives so much through its sympathetic insight and its almost "descriptive analysis" form.

This book about the social elite of Ejdersted shows that it is possible to achieve a relatively large amount through the method of microhistory. Let us hope that it will inspire more scholars to try the approach.
Henrik Zipsane, Östersund

Memories of My Town

Memories of My Town. The Identities of Town Dwellers and Their Places in Three Finnish Towns. Anna-Maria Åström, Pirjo Korkiakangas & Pia Olsson (eds.). Finnish Literature Society. Studia Fennica. Etnologia 8. Helsinki 2004. 249 pp. Ill. ISBN 951-746-433-9.

■ In the last couple of decades the human sciences have seen a dramatic flourish of interest in the category of space. Among the most frequently cited works are Michael Keith and Steve Pile (eds.), *Place and the Politics of Identity* (1993), Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso (eds.), *Senses of Place* (1996), Anssi Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness* (1996), James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (1997), Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place* (1998). One of the latest and best examples is Jonas Frykman and Nils Gilje (eds.), *Being There: New Perspectives on Phenomenology and the Analysis of Culture* (2003). And now we have this edited volume from Finland, which is of very high class. Luckily, it is in English, so that it is possible for a broad European audience to access this highly readable work, where the theoretical and the empirical are blended so fruitfully. Readers with an intimate knowledge of the three Finnish towns considered here, Helsinki, Jyväskylä, and Viborg, are of course better equipped, but others can also benefit from this magnificent collection. The book should be seen as a contribution to research on the essence and meaning of place and space – research which is thriving not least for political and global reasons, as the global is accompanied by an increased interest in the spatial dimension and home places. We can read about this, for instance, in the excellent introduction and in Anna-Maria Åström's article "The City as Living Room", which can best be described as a treatment of the phenomenon of reflexive nostalgia in relation to a place that contains "accumulated time", as it is so fittingly called. Or as it is formulated in Pirjo Korkiakangas' article "Steps to the Past" about Jyväskylä: even though the past is viewed in a nostalgic light, it is not necessarily a sign that one is dissatisfied with the present, but perhaps an expression of problems in maintaining an identity. As a whole, the idea of "reflexive nostalgia" recurs frequently in the book.

Today we are increasingly witnessing how the political and the cultural are diverging. This is due not least of all to the fact that culture and tradition grow in importance when people try to understand themselves. The democratic freedoms and rights have been sidelined or are taken for granted, which is not the case with cultural heritage and cultural identity. On the contrary, both cultural heritage and cultural identity are in demand, as something not given or established once and for all. Identity therefore has to be created or mediated. For this purpose, history in its spatial aspect becomes relevant. As the Norwegian historian Anne Eriksen has put it, history becomes "the country we all come from".

Behind this statement is a perception of history as a space that makes it possible for us in our quest for identity to see connections and continuity, similarities and possibilities for recognition – but also conflicts and social tensions, as Pia Olsson stresses in her brilliant treatment of the working-class neighbourhood of Berghäll in Helsinki, in contrast to the middle-class district of Tölö. Here history is viewed not as a course of events but as a past that is relevant to the present, in that it takes place in a space with qualities of place, which are still dedicated to and made an object of cultural heritage. In other words, history is not – as in the scholarly discipline of his-

tory – a matter of correcting general awareness, but about confirming and finding a standpoint amidst all that is changing and uncertain. The paradox is that, while it is the course of history that distinguishes the political and cultural boundaries, it is in history that we find the explanation for who we are and where we come from. In pace with this, of course, the spaces of history become more important than history as time. Space and place thereby stand out as something different from and more than a background. Space and place become synonymous with history.

The process began in the 1980s, when the problem of identity came into focus. In this connection Jonas Frykman has said that European people today show an increasing tendency to live "genealogically", that is, in their understanding of themselves and of society they no longer look forwards as much as they look backwards. Whereas people between the wars could speak in nationally directed political visions of welfare – not infrequently generated by a national social-democratic desire for personal and family happiness and physical comfort – nowadays we tend increasingly to orient ourselves on the basis of the past. Genealogy is flourishing, and family reunions are being held everywhere. The restoration of old houses and boats is also a part of this interest in the past.

This, however, is far from synonymous with saying that the temporal dimension takes on increased significance. The crucial thing when it comes to tradition, culture, and identity is having a home, finding a home by becoming familiar with one's place; even if it is a suburban area like Pikku Huopalahti in Helsinki; cf. Jorma Kivistö's article on this. Here the category of space definitely becomes relevant. We talk about "home place" but not about "home time", and the question of belonging to a place is consequently important.

But what are space and place? Here it may be useful to make precise analytical distinctions between the two concepts. On can thus differentiate between the location of a place, its material shape, its meaning and value. None of these aspects can be excluded if the perception of the place is to be valid. As regards the location, one can say that it is unique and singular. This location involves the possibility of a difference between here and there, between near and far. In the final instance, we must add, it is conditioned by people's singular bodily nature: that we live finally and with a one-place existence. Two people cannot be in one place at the same time, just as each of them cannot be in two places at once. But just as people can transcend their bodies with their senses, the boundaries of a place are also elastic, both analytically and phenomenological. The extent of a place is determined, for example, by the optics with which it is viewed and the spatial context in which it is put, that is, the scale in both a physical and a mental sense.

A place is also materiality. Whether it is natural or man-made or a mixture of the two, a place is always endowed with materiality. Nature in the city is not just aesthetics, but also phenomenological facticity, as Tiina-Riita Lappi shows in her article "Nature in the City". Even when a place only exists in thought, it still consists of something. You cannot think of a place without thinking about something. You don't think of a place as nothing. This may seem banal, but it is important for an understanding that places can be used for representative purposes. Apart from this materiality, we must also bear in mind that places are affected by people. We shape places and make them our own, while they simultaneously remain places *an sich*. The author ends by pointing out that social processes such as differentiation, the exercise of power, collective actions, and so on take place in, through, and with the aid of the material shapes that we create and use. The articles about memories of everyday life in Viborg in the years between the wars are closely connected to the actions and deeds that took place in the urban space, that is, in streets, squares, and parks: Torkelsgatan, the shooting range, and the Esplanade. See, for example, Monica Ståhls-Hindsberg, "Vyborg – Town and Native Place", where the memories are in large measure evidence that identity is created via physical activity in a space. It is through actions that one appropriates a place, but also via language. In Viborg people used "four legs", as they said, with reference to the four languages spoken in the town: German, Russian Swedish, and Finnish; cf. Ståhls-Hindsberg's other article "Town, Language and Place".

Thirdly, a place always contains meaning and value. This happens first of all through naming and identification, which help to make a place something more than just physical existence as substance. The value and meaning of a place, however, are unstable and flexible. They change though time in the hands of different groups and cultures and are constantly disputed. This is because places are assigned qualities

in relation to their use. For example, different groups can make demands of a place as their home, as we can also see in the examples from Viborg, where the struggle is between Swedish and Finnish, and in Jorma Kivistö's article about the multivocal Helsinki.

This tripartite division shows that a place does not exist as a static object as such, but that a place primarily comes into existence by being used, whether in a scientific study or by being used and thought about by people. Against this background, the content of a place should be analysed as social and as constructed ideas, which comprise the material surroundings, individual life values, and collective representations and narratives. Here too, in other words, attention is paid to both the physical-material aspect and the allocation of meaning.

This duality about places and areas is clearly in focus in the volume. As the Chinese-American geographer Yi-Fu Tuan has claimed in his autobiography and elsewhere, a place is not necessarily a physical locality but just as much a meaning. He believes that even a spot in front of the fireplace or one's favourite armchair can be a place, a steamship on the sea can be a place, and even one's mother can be a place, for example, for the toddlers that come back to her after having played in the sandbox. In connection with such thoughts it can be claimed that the identity of a place is shaped by its physical character, its history, social structure, culture, language, and dialects – and value-based images, as Pia Olsson points out in her study of the working-class neighbourhood of Berghäll in Helsinki. She is evidently inspired by Tuan's concept of topophilia, and by Michel de Certeau and his distinction between strategic and tactical spatial relations.

Bestowing value and meaning on a place has the effect that it becomes more than just a place or an abstract position in a space that can be described in terms of geometry. A place is likewise more than just a stage or a background. It has power and strength *sui generis* and functions as a co-actor. A place does not create interaction by itself, but it shapes and influences actions. In other words, a place fills our deeds and our emotions, and it fills out the social and historical life. It is the factor that exists between people, actions, and practices.

This and much more are the topics covered in this outstanding volume, which makes up a coherent thematic whole. It should inspire ethnological research, but it will also benefit historians, urban planners, folklorists, sociologists, human geographers, and others. Moreover, it is adorned with a multitude of good photographs and other illustrations. There is every reason to congratulate the editors and authors on this work, which is warmly recommended. It testifies to the high level of Finnish research in this field.

Niels Kayser Nielsen, Aarhus

Instructions for submission of manuscripts to *Ethnologia Scandinavica*

Articles should if possible be sent on diskette together with a printout. Manuscripts should preferably be in English, although German may be accepted; if necessary the language will be edited by a native speaker. Articles may be submitted in the Scandinavian languages for translation, but articles in Finnish should be translated in Finland before submission. We reserve the right to revise and cut the texts, and to ask authors to make revisions.

Articles should not be longer than about 20 pages of typewritten text with 1.5 line spacing. Please aim for clear, concise language, remembering that you are writing for a non-Scandinavian audience. To make the translator's work easier and to avoid misunderstandings, authors are recommended to add technical terms and expressions in English in brackets or in the margin. Quotations should not be too numerous nor too long.

Legends to figures should be brief, not including anything that is not discussed in the text of the article. Legends should be written on a separate paper and clearly numbered. The illustrations – photographs, drawings, and tables – should be clearly numbered. Credits (archives, photographers, etc.) should be stated at the end of the legend. Figures should be referred to by their number, not "the table below" or "the photograph above". The placing of the figures in relation to the text should be clearly marked in the margin. Figures should be submitted along with the manuscript.

Notes should be avoided as far as possible. References to authors or book titles should be included in parentheses at the relevant point in the text. Notes should only be used for clarification or discussion.

The list of *References* should include only books referred to in the text. Details should be presented as follows:

Balle-Pedersen, Margaretha 1981: The Holy Danes. *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 11.

Frykman, Jonas 1988: *Dansbaneeländet. Ungdomen, populärkulturen och opinionen.* Stockholm: Natur och Kultur.

Löfgren, Orvar 1992: Landskapet. In *Den nordiske verden* I, ed. Kirsten Hastrup. København: Gyldendal.

Reviews of new dissertations and other books of broad general interest should be 4–5 A4 pages long with 1.5 line spacing. A review should consist of a brief presentation of the content and method of the work, followed by a comparison with similar significant works, and ending with a personal evaluation.

Reviews of other ethnological and closely related works should present the content and method and a personal appraisal. The length should be 1–2 A4 pages with 1.5 line spacing.

Reviews written in English or German should be submitted on diskette.

When in doubt, check the format of previous issues of *Ethnologia Scandinavica*.

The author will have an opportunity to check the translation and make any necessary changes. When the manuscript has been approved, no changes in proof will be tolerated unless there is an obvious risk of misunderstanding.

Translations and proofs should be returned to the editor as quickly as possible. The deadline for manuscripts, at present 1 September, must be observed so that publication is not delayed.

Authors of articles receive a copy of the journal and 25 offprints of the article. Authors may order more offprints, for which a charge will be made.

This year's collection of articles describes, with the aid of empirical studies, the restless and creative energy that can be found in cultural release, in cultural structures which are subject to constant reorganization. The discussion of kinesthesis, spatiality, and inter-personal contacts from the 2004 issue recurs in a couple of articles. There is also a consideration of how the readiness to change was fostered by the post-war mental hygiene movement; how childbirth continues deep-seated traditions of the nuclear family and gender constructions, and how these can simultaneously be challenged. The personal and societal problems caused by burnout also turn out to be a sign of profound social changes; the methods for dealing with the illness have an inherent potential for transcending boundaries. The sport of Ultimate Fighting completes a volume that tackles in various ways the cultural organization of movement.

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