

# Proceedings of the Sustaining Everyday Life Conference

April 22–24 2009, Campus Norrköping, Sweden

Editors

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## **Sustaining Everyday Life - Introduction**

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The conference "Sustaining Everyday Life" was held at Linköping University, Campus Norrköping, on April 22-24 2009. It was the second in a series of international conferences organised by the Nordic research network for Everyday Life Processes in Nordic Welfare Societies (ELPiNOWS), subsequently called Everyday Life Processes in European Societies (ELPiES). The network was founded in 2007 by professor Kajsa Ellegård, Department of Thematic Studies - Technology and Social Change, Linköping University, Sweden, professor Lars Dencik and PhD Allan Westerling, Department of Psychology and Education, Roskilde University, Denmark, and doctoral assistant Pirjo Korvela, Department of Home Economics and Craft Science, University of Helsinki, Finland.

The first conference "Paths to researching everyday life in the (near) future - stepping out of the frames of the disciplines" was held at the Department of Home Economics, University of Helsinki, Finland, March 2008. Presentations and discussion among a group of international researchers on everyday life laid a ground for developing the research field on studies of daily life from an interdisciplinary perspective. The conference was successful and there was a demand for further networking and a chain of conferences and a decision was taken to arrange the 2009 conference in Sweden.

The aim of the Sustaining Everyday Life conference was to consolidate the field of everyday life research and the collaboration with international researchers bringing two important research fields – daily life and sustainability – together and put them to the fore. Within the frame of this collaboration different complexes of problems in people's daily lives and in different phases of the life cycle are studied. The studies demand different theoretical and methodological approaches and, thus, the field of research is multi- and interdisciplinary. Many of the research questions that are posed focus on people's sense making and action space within the frame of constraining factors including, for example, time, space, material resources, laws, rules, and cultural values.

The intention was, thus, to tighten the link between everyday life and sustainability issues. The overall theme of the conference was the question of what sustainability stands for in everyday life in the sense of social, ecological, political, and economical dimensions. Nowadays the question of who is/are to be held accountable for an ecologically sustainable development is addressed to individuals in all areas of society and at all levels of the social

system. Based on the assumption that individual citizens' actions in daily life are resource demanding and have implications for other people and the surrounding environment, both locally and globally, an individual responsibility is assigned to each and every one of us. However, the demand for an ecologically sustainable development need to be accompanied with knowledge of how the world's limited resources are to be allocated and hence, questions of social, political, and economical aspects of sustainability need to be addressed.

During the conference, the theme "Sustaining everyday life" permeated the following seven sub-themes;

- 1) domestication of technologies in everyday life,
- 2) activities and practices of everyday life,
- 3) mobility and everyday life,
- 4) energy use in everyday life,
- 5) planning for everyday life,
- 6) everyday life for an ecologically and socially sustainable future,
- 7) institutionalisation of everyday life.

These themes, complemented with psychological sustainability, were reflected in the keynote lectures held by, in order of the themes: *Margrethe Aune*, Dept. of Interdisciplinary Studies of Culture, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway, *Eeva Jokinen*, Dept. of Social Policy, University of Joensuu, Finland, *Randi Hjorthol*, Institute of Transport Economics, Oslo, Norway, *Kirsten Gram-Hanssen*, Danish Building Research Institute, Aalborg University, Denmark, *Valentina Santi*, Dept. of Architecture, Venice University, Italy, *Thomas Gröbly*, Baden – Switzerland ([www.ethik-labor.ch](http://www.ethik-labor.ch)), *Jan Kampmann*, Dept. of Psychology and Educational Studies, Roskilde University, Denmark, and finally, regarding psychological sustainability, *Liisa Horelli*, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, Aalto University, Finland.

Two parallel workshops took place on the second day of the conference, including in total 21 presentations.<sup>1</sup> All participants engaged in creative discussions. Many of the sub-themes as well as the multi- and interdisciplinary character of everyday life research were reflected in the presentations. The participants were inspired by the possibility of encountering and discussing research they probably not would have encountered otherwise and still being able to see and contribute new ideas to the common field of everyday life research. In one of the workshops more issues related to ecological sustainability were discussed, whereas different aspects of social sustainability were addressed to a greater extent in the other.

Ten of the 29 presentations, including keynote lectures, have been transformed into full papers and are published in this proceeding. The abstracts of the remaining 19 presentations and two keynote speakers' power point presentations are also published. On the third and last day of the conference the ongoing work of writing a literary survey on everyday life research were presented and discussed. The survey has been finalized and a link to the report is found in the proceedings. The papers cover the variation of themes and deal with: psychological presence as a prerequisite for psychological sustainability; characteristics and social processes contributing to the understanding of mobility in daily life; the diversity of time frames experienced by people living inside and outside the labor market; two interpretations of the potential of reducing householder's consumption of electrical energy found in the literature;

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1 The workshops were organized according to the following: About four 10 minutes presentations were given in succession by four different presenters. After that, short group discussions followed. Each participant in the same workshop chose to discuss with three of the four presenters who sat at different tables. The participants changed table and presenter after each round of discussion that went on for 10 minutes.

how practice theory can be used to understand the role of objects and technologies in the constitution and change of routines and practices related to the use of everyday-life technologies; the “one family work method” aimed to help and support families facing the threat of exclusion; participatory design as a prerequisite for safer living environments for the elderly; the constitution of communality and individuality in everyday family life; local opportunities for improving energy efficiency that arise in households’ everyday practices and in relation to energy guidance; and the content of time in everyday life as experienced by the next of kin of haemodialysis patients. Taken together these papers offer intriguing reading on how to sustain everyday life in the double meaning of the expression!

Linköping, June 2010  
Kristina Karlsson & Kajsa Ellegård





## **Sustaining Everyday Life through Psychological Presence, Time and Space**

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Besides the social, ecological, economic and political aspects of sustainability, I wish to bring forth the concept of psychological sustainability. It refers here to the external and intra-psyche conditions that enhance mental and physical well-being with benevolent consequences for everyday life and the environment. One of its criteria is the ability to experience 'psychological presence'. I argue that sustaining everyday life can be enhanced through the practice of psychological presence in interaction with certain spatial and temporal conditions that deal with the co-creation of a supportive infrastructure of everyday life through the application of time planning and time politics. The aim of the chapter is to present the framework consisting of the main concepts around space, time and psychological presence, to describe how the concepts have been applied in a five-year long case study in a neighbourhood of Helsinki, and to discuss the results. On the basis of the literature and the case study it was possible to build a preliminary model of psychological presence as an experience, a mode of mind and an interactive process. The results illustrate that psychological presence can be considered one of the indicators and even a means to support everyday life in a psycho-socially sustainable way. Time planning might be regarded as a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for the practice of psychological presence.

## Introduction

Sustainability has been a heated subject for the past decades, but the operationalisation of the term is still under construction. Sustainability is not the same everywhere, as the ecological thresholds are different. The issue becomes even more difficult, when the focus is on sustainable development. Unfortunately, there is so far no holistic or even integrative theory of sustainability. Among the many unsatisfactory definitions on sustainable development I have chosen one in which sustainable development refers to the multidimensional pattern of resource use that meets the gendered needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (GDUS-network, 2009). This definition implies conflicts between the different interests concerning the economic growth and efficiency, socio-cultural equality and environmental protection (Campbell 1996; Salleh 2009).

Although most studies on sustainability deal with questions around the social, ecological, economic and political aspects, I wish to bring forth still another one, namely the psychological dimension and its relation to sustaining<sup>1</sup> everyday life. Environmental psychologists have worked for a better understanding of the psychological processes involved in the development of a positive environmental awareness and concern for people's use of natural resources. This also includes the fundamental connections between human behavior and the environmental crisis, which can be treated as social traps or dilemmas (Gifford 2007). According to Bonnes and Bonaiuto (2002:35-47), the ecological revolution has spurred environmental psychology to emerge from a field that has mainly focused on the spatial-physical environment to one that deals with sustainable development in a manner, where environmental issues are studied and acted upon at different interdependent levels, ranging from the individual to the collective and from the local to the global.

*Psychological sustainability* refers here to the external and intra-psychic conditions that enhance mental and physical well-being with benevolent consequences for everyday life and the environment. One of its criteria is the ability to experience the so called 'psychological presence'. It means having experiences of being and doing that imply an approving (mindful) attention to the immediate reality, now and here, without automatic responses or compelling intentions and control (Kabat-Zinn 2003). Besides having consequences for both mental and even physical wellbeing, 'psychological presence' as part of restoration or instoration processes may also lead to a re-perception of values concerning, for example the environment and its care in everyday life (Shapiro et al. 2006; Hartig et al. 2008).

As psychological sustainability does not emerge from a void, I will also focus on the conditions that may promote its appearance. I argue that sustaining everyday life can be enhanced through the practice of psychological presence or mindfulness in interaction with certain spatial and temporal conditions, namely the co-creation of a supportive infrastructure of everyday life through the application of time planning and time politics.

The aim of the chapter is to present the framework consisting of the main concepts around space, time and psychological presence, to describe the application of the concepts in a five-year long case study in a neighbourhood of Helsinki, and to discuss the results. Thus, the context is a North European welfare state at the time of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century recession.

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1 To sustain is used here as a synonym of to support, nourish, keep up and prolong.

## Building an integrative framework for sustaining everyday life

The framework consists of three core concepts: the co-creation of a supportive infrastructure of everyday life, time policies and planning, and the practice of psychological presence.

### *Sustaining everyday life through a supportive infrastructure*

Self-evidence characterises the logic of everyday life. Everyday life refers to the subjective experience of everyday, in contrast to the structures or systems made of institutions, financial flows etc. Scientifically everyday life can be approached as a process and practices in which people shape in their homes, at work or in the living environment the structural conditions into lived life (Beck-Joergensen 1987). Sustaining or even mastering everyday life means then the enhancement and coordination of those multi-dimensional and multi-level processes and practices with which people shape the conditions (Saariaho 2009).

The enhancement of the conditions can take place, among other things, through the co-creation and shaping of a supportive infrastructure of everyday life. The latter refers to a critic, vision, concept and model first developed by the Nordic women's movement and later by their European colleagues in the EuroFEM-network of human settlements (Forskargruppen för det nya vardagslivet 1987; Gilroy & Booth 1999).

The New Everyday Life is both a critic of the fragmented everyday life and a concrete utopia of a post-industrial mosaiclike society consisting of a variety of self-governing and even self-sufficient units responsible for the use of local resources. Important elements are work, care and housing the separation of which is to be replaced by their integration in the living environment in the neighbourhoods. The expansion of the concept of work is crucial. Both paid and unpaid work are seen equal, meaning that the process of work should be shared and organised in a different way. The aim is to balance the production-centred mode of thinking and acting into one in which production serves the reproduction of human beings, nature and culture, and not vice versa. This might lead to a sustainable holistic economy (Hendersson, 1996; Salleh 2009).

The central concept in the Nordic approach was the creation of an *intermediary level* between the private households and the public and commercial world of enterprises. The intermediary level was a new structure in the neighbourhoods comprising environmentally-friendly housing, services, employment, and other activities which support the residents irrespective of age and gender (Horelli & Vepsä 1994). Different types of co-housing in Denmark, Sweden and Norway are examples of well-functioning intermediary levels. However, also neighbourhoods and villages can comprise a supportive infrastructure of everyday life. It can be illustrated through a heuristic model consisting of physical, functional and participatory structures, which the actors in the neighbourhood or beyond can easily appropriate (Figure 1; Horelli 2006a). The physical structure should provide solutions of such a scale that even children and old people can appropriate them (which is contradictory to the current densification trend in building). The functional structure should provide a variety of housing solutions and accessible services. The participatory structure should imply affordances to get involved irrespective of age, gender, ethnic background and disability.

The results of the appropriation may be seen in the emergence of networks of care and mediation, which can also be supported by mobility tools (Larsen et al. 2006)<sup>2</sup>. This network capital might bring forth a supportive cultural structure that implies both local and translocal social capital<sup>3</sup>, which in turn may sustain everyday life.

It is possible to plan and even to implement the physical, functional and participatory structures of the model. However, the communal culture or social capital is something that emerges only if the residents and other stakeholders are willing to appropriate the structures, and to network in ways that create trust (Lin 2001; Allen 2004).

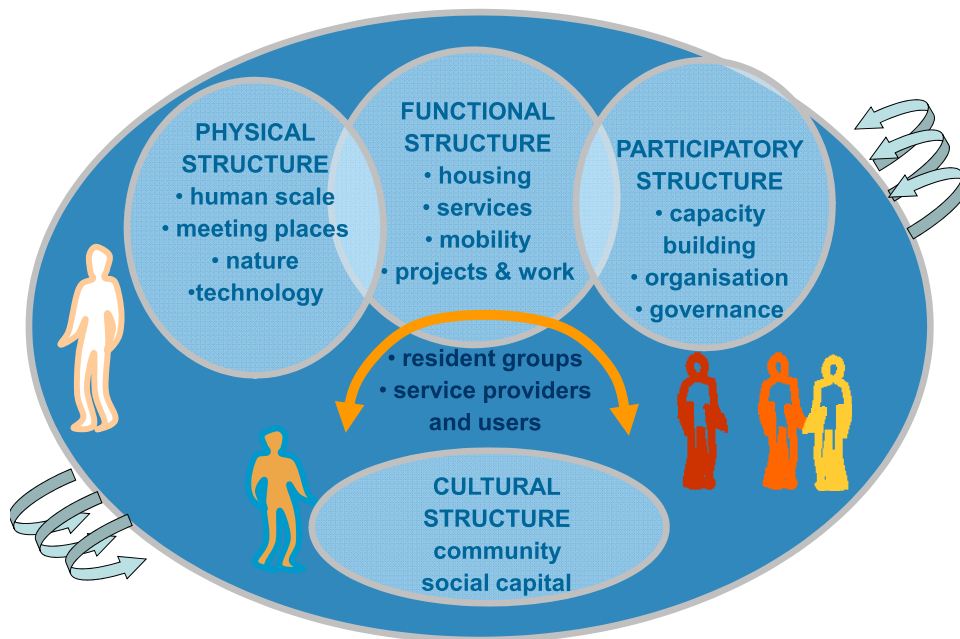


Figure 1. A heuristic model of the conditions for a supportive infrastructure of everyday life which the stakeholders can appropriate and shape into a communal cultural structure.

### ***Sustaining everyday life through time policies and time planning***

Several Southern European countries have experimented and applied for more than two decades a new approach to urban planning that focuses on the temporal qualities of and relationships with social and spatial structures (Boulin 2008). Local time policies and planning are a new phenomenon, at least in the Nordic countries. It has not been on their agenda, irrespective of the increasingly pressing working conditions, a deterioration of welfare services and a new kind of urban poverty coupled with the frantic densification of cities.

2 The relational mobility tools, such as public transport, mobile phones and the internet, are part of network capital, because they enhance the accessibility of ties in a social network, increasing the value of social resources and the support they provide (Rettie 2008).

3 Social capital refers to the possibility to mobilise resources, embedded in social relations and networks, for the benefit of some purpose (Lin 2001).

Time policies encompass the problematisation of time and its relationship with space, as well as new forms of participatory governance in which citizens, specialist and politicians form partnerships and contracts. Examples of new practices are the one-stop agency for the new school year in Poitiers, France, where families with children can get all tickets and registrations for hobbies at one place. The Netherlands have conducted more than one hundred experiments on the daily routines, such as the Sunday openings of libraries or help desks for the personnel of enterprises (Dialogos 2004). The new attitudes and measures concerning different social times (work, domestic, leisure), their linkages and interaction, are the result of social and societal changes situated mainly in the sphere of work, which in turn affect the other spheres of life (Boulin 2006).

Urban time policies refer to those public policies and planning interventions which affect the time schedules and time/space organisations that regulate human relationships at the local, regional, national and even European level (see Mareggi 2002). Time policies are thus connected to the globalisation and decentralisation processes that affect the reconstitution of time and the reconfiguring of space (Castells 1996; Boulin 2006). An illustration of this is the increasing demand to create models of 24 hour open cities with specific territorial characteristics and consequences.

Local time policies have striven to build up new social synchronisations of individual and collective times by legislation (in Italy), by setting up time offices, such as Zeitbuero in Bremen and Bureau des Temps in Paris, as well as by inventing a variety of new methods and praxis that enhance the infrastructure of everyday life of local actors. This takes place through *time planning*, which implies a “cubistic perspective”. It refers to participatory planning which simultaneously targets and coordinates several activities on many levels, such as child care, public transport, safety in open spaces etc. Time planning strives to increase the mastering of both collective and individual times so that the experience of time might become more satisfactory.

The rethinking of collective temporal and spatial operations has taken varying forms in different cultures. However, most countries have started to experiment with different forms of participatory governance in which new actors emerge as partners. This means a transformation of the relationship between individuals and communities, as well as between the different social times and their valuation. The latter brings forth the issue of temporal prosperity and temporal well-being, understood as the capacity to control one’s own temporal resources and the conditions to experience psychological presence.

### ***Sustaining everyday life through psychological presence***

The conception of time is dependent on the culture and phase of societal development. As time is a complex multidimensional phenomenon, there are many ways to classify it. The following dimensions are important to recognise, monitor and assess with different methods:

*Subjective, experiential time/ “objective”(linear) time.* The latter refers to the measurable time that can be monitored by time-use diaries. The tapping of the experiential quality of time, through deep interviews, is also important, because the nature of subjective time provides individual criteria for the successful balance of work and family life.

*Individual/collective, social times* (of the family, work, community, society). As people have their individual time schedules, which might be in conflict with the collective ones, it is important to conduct analyses of both of them

*Time as past, presence and shapable future.* The historical and cultural time patterns have an impact on the current and even future opportunities to manage time and space. Thus, it is necessary to analyse them (through archives, maps and surveys) and to envision future scenarios with the participants.

In addition, the *time of care* (Bryson 2007) and the *ecological time*, meaning the time it takes to restore the human activity in the ecosystem (Salleh 2009), as well as *kairos*, the right moment or opportunity, are important approaches (see also the domestication of times by Szerszynski 2002). However, "the present is the only moment in which we can live, feel and change" (Kabat-Zinn 1994:55). Being in the present is also closely associated with the quality of life. According to Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi (2000:5), the subjective criteria for wellness are: "well-being, contentment and satisfaction (for the past), hope and optimism (for the future), and flow and happiness (in the present)".

The experiential state in which the person is consciously in contact with the present can be called by different names. I refer to it as the *psychological presence*, like William Kahn (1990; see also Senge 2004). Many others call it *mindfulness*. However, the different terms share the assumption that the sense of presence is closely associated with health and wellness, as well as with the ability to cope with stress and everyday life.

Presence is at least a 2500 year old Buddhist concept. During the centuries it has spread through Christianity and other religious movements to philosophical phenomenology, humanistic psychology and lately to cognitive-behavioural therapies (Forsell 2009). The practice of psychological presence or mindfulness can be divided into formal training, such as meditation or mindfulness-based therapeutic interventions, and to informal practice on the arenas of everyday life. Although the latter is the focus here, the mechanism of the phenomenon has been explained in the research on the impact of mindfulness-training in working life, health and education (Langer 1989).

Shapiro et al. (2006) have proposed a model of mindfulness, in an effort to elucidate potential mechanisms to explain how mindfulness affects positive change. They claim that the mindfulness process comprises the simultaneous interaction of three components. They are intention (the personal vision of the reason to practice), attention (paying attention to the operations of one's moment-to-moment, internal and external experience), and attitude (openhearted, accepting attitude). The same research group (Ibid 2006:377) claims that "intentionally attending with openness and non-judgmentalness leads to a significant shift in perspective". This shift in perception or *reperception* is a developmental process that might have an impact on the clarification of values, as well as on cognitive, emotional and behavioural flexibility. This means that the practitioner of mindfulness or of psychological presence becomes able to reflectively choose what has previously been reflexively adopted. Thus, the automatic and compelling reactions will decrease.

According to Segal et al. (2002), the mind operates in two shifting modes or mental gears. They are the modes of being and doing. The goal-oriented *doing or driven mode* is triggered, when the mind sees that things are other than it would like them to be (discrepancies between the goals and reality). It sets in motion the habitual patterns of mind to reduce the gap which are often compulsory and automatically functioning. This future or past-oriented mode is at best in true problem solving or in the intentional and mindful activities of everyday life.

In the *being mode* the individual is fully present and aware of whatever is. The focus is on the immediate reality without automatic responses or compelling intentions and control. It is not motivated to achieve particular goals. Thus, there is no need for constant monitoring and evaluation, nor for discrepancy-based processing. This mode is accompanied by a sense of freedom, freshness and the unfolding of experience in new ways (Segal et al. 2002:74). The two modes of mind can accompany any activity. However, the aim of the mindfulness-based intervention is that the individual could experience psychological presence even in the doing mode.

In sum, psychological presence is an experience, interactive process and a mode of mind that have positive impacts on behaviour and wellness. However, most research cited above have been conducted without the recognition of the role of the socio-cultural and physical

environment. An abundance of research conducted within environmental psychology indicates that the quality of the environment increases the person-environment fit which in turn provides conditions for the experience of psychological presence within the so called restorative or flow-like experiences<sup>4</sup> (Korpela et al. 2002; Csikszentmihalyi et al. 2005:600).

I found in my dissertation on the Home as a psychological environment (Horelli 1993) that most residents experienced flow in the so called breathing hole spaces, such as the bedroom, living room, the garden and the sauna. Characteristic of the conditions for these experiences were timelessness and playful activities either alone or with the family. A symbolically wrong physical solution, such as a worktable in the bedroom, could destroy the experience.

I have had the opportunity to examine the following explorative research questions in a five-year-long case study on time planning in a neighbourhood of Helsinki: Can psychological presence be considered a criterion for sustaining everyday life? Will time planning increase opportunities for psychological presence? Will psychological presence have positive consequences for sustainability?

### Application of the framework in a case study on time planning in Helsinki

The case study on time planning in the Herttoniemi neighbourhood (18.000 residents) of Helsinki (550.000 residents) was a series of three consecutive action research projects that started in 2004 and continue until 2012. The first one was called ARJA, the Management of everyday life, and the second one Ubiquitous Helsinki. The third one is the Participatory Local Community as an issue of time planning that began in January 2009<sup>5</sup>. As the last projects deal more with the co-creation of digitalised services and the application of community informatics (Wallin & Horelli in press; Horelli & Wallin forthcoming; Horelli & Wallin in press), I will concentrate here on the empirical data from the first project that are relevant in terms of the research questions.

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4 Restorative environments, such as favourite places, parks, the home or even virtual spaces, promote the restoration of depleted resources and increase the capacity to direct attention (Hartig et al. 2008). Flow is a subjective state characterised by experiential involvement in moment-to-moment activity. People report that they are completely involved in something to the point of forgetting time, fatigue and everything else but the activity itself (Csikszentmihalyi et al. 2005:600). Flow seems to imply psychological presence, where as the latter does not always comprise flow.

5 ARJA was the first Nordic experiment on time planning. It was funded by the European Social Funds during 2004-2006. The action research was coordinated by researchers from the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies of the Helsinki University of Technology (HUT). The partners came from the Central Union for Child Welfare (services), WSP LT-Consultants and Liidea Ltd (mobility management), Statistics Finland (time-use diaries) and the Cities of Helsinki and Turku (local governance). UBI-Helsinki was funded by TEKES, the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation, the Innovation funds of Helsinki City and several enterprises. It was coordinated by VTT, Technical Research Centre of Finland in collaboration with HUT. The third project was funded by the Finnish Academy.

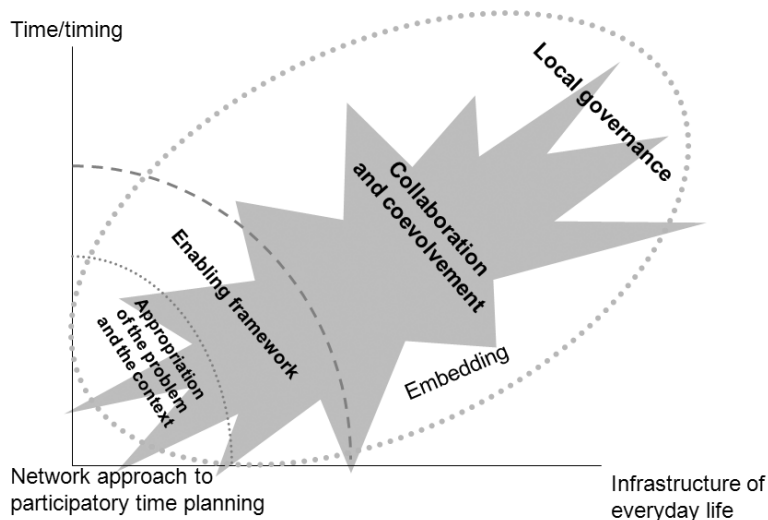


Figure 2. The adjusted framework to guide the implementation of the case study.

The theoretical framework that was described in the previous section guided the implementation of the case study, although it was tailored to suit the conditions of the specific projects. Figure 2 illustrates the adjusted framework which comprises the collective appropriation of the spatial and temporal structures of everyday life, enhanced by the Learning-based network approach to participatory (time) planning (Lena). This meant a form of social embedding in which the actors get involved in partnerships that will eventually lead to participatory local governance and social capital. Lena is a special version of collaborative planning that was co-created with young people and women (Horelli 2006b; Horelli & Wallin 2006). It comprises a method and a set of tools to analyse, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate planning and community development. Lena is based on communicative and post structural planning theories (Booher & Innes 2002; Hillier 2008), as well as on the theory of complex coevolving systems (Mitleton-Kelly 2003). The latter implies the parallel existence of tensions, created by order and chaos, the emergence of phenomena and processes, the self-organisation of different stakeholders, and their co-creation and embedding of products and systems.

I will first describe the implementation of the ARJA-project and then the results of the deep interviews on the experiences of psychological presence. Finally, a model of psychological presence will be presented, which helps to answer the research questions.

### ***Time planning as action research***

*The objective* of the ARJA-project was to construct and test models of time planning that suit the Finnish context. The main focus was on the ways in which the socio-spatial and temporal coordination of housing, work, services and mobility might improve the conditions to reconcile work and family life and the consequent social times of everyday life.

*The design of the action research* comprised an analysis of the context, scenario building of future work and its consequences for the residents and employers, construction of a vision around the supportive infrastructure of everyday life, and the choice of implementation strategies, entwined in on-going monitoring and evaluation.

*The methodological package* comprised, on the one hand, classical research methods. These included surveys (questionnaires to 1600 families distributed through the daycare centres and elementary schools), analysis of the stakeholders in the neighbourhood, thematic interviews with 20 families (chosen from the surveys) and their employers, time-use diaries, and the analysis of documents and field notes. Also the dwellings of the families were



assessed. The families, who were mainly upper- and lower-level employees, had children from the ages of 5 months to 17 years. The ages of the parents ranged from 31-54 years. The adults were all fully employed; four of them were single providers. The employers represented one to two person micro enterprises up till medium sized companies from both private and public sectors. The biggest employer was the City of Helsinki with 30 000 employees.

On the other hand, the methods consisted of a set of enabling tools (Horelli, 2002): diagnostic (mobilising mapping exercises and visits with actors), expressive (community art, future workshops and brainstorming with ICT techniques), conceptual (model building), organisational (networking, consensus building, forums and work groups) and political (goal setting and prioritising, panels, lobbying).

*The analyses* of the surveys, mapping and interviews disclosed that the residents of the area were quite satisfied with their living environment, especially with the closeness to nature and the good public transport. The sustaining of everyday life in the families was structured by the balancing of work and child care. Also the proactive or reactive attitude and organisational skills of the mother, as well as the division of domestic tasks in the family were seminal in the coordination of social times. In addition, the structure of the dwelling could constrain the smoothness of daily schedules. Hot spots of the dwelling were the entrance, which was usually too small, the form of the kitchen, which did not allow to have an appropriate dining table, as well as the lack of space for storage. The families were satisfied with the day care services, but complained about the lack of afternoon care for school children (the school ends around one or two pm). Also the transport for children's hobbies was a problem in many families.

The time use diaries showed that the temporal distribution of women was much more varied than that of men. Women's free time was fragmented and smaller than that of men. The only activities in which men invested more time than women were playing with children and taking care of material objects. The children did not seem to participate in the domestic chores to a great extent.

The Finnish legislation on working conditions recognises well the need to balance work and private life. Therefore, the subjects were quite pleased with the family-friendliness of their working. All of them could control at least to some extent their working time. However, the employers were not particularly interested in the opportunities to enhance the reconciliation of work and family life.

The mobilisation of local actors allowed to share the results of the research with the residents, local administrators and associations. The community worker assisted in creating new organs for local governance (the neighbourhood forum and its work group). They began to coordinate the many activities and projects that went on in the neighbourhood.

*The main result of the project* was that the development process around the enhancement of the infrastructure of everyday life was initiated. It became embedded in the new organisation and modes of working within local governance. The City of Helsinki is organised in a centralised way with no local councils. It has many local civil servants, but they belong to various centrally administered sectors. Therefore, governance means in this case a voluntary organisation and cooperation of all possible actors who have a stake in the neighbourhood: residents, users, civil servants, associations, entrepreneurs etc. The neighbourhood forum, which meets four times a year, assembled a development plan with 11 projects. The interventions that the project was involved with were:

1. the improvement of the metro-station, which was not only in a dilapidated state but also a safety-risk for children and young girls in the evenings (parents had to come and meet their daughters who otherwise could move freely in the area)

2. networking of the family services (which were dispersed and lacked the integration of social and health care, and the support from peer groups)
3. mobility management (information of mobility services, a new bussline, car pools, walking busses etc.)
4. the development and piloting within the Neighbourhood Forum of a new service format, the help desk.

Both employers and the local actors adopted the help desk concept. The *help desk* means that either a face to face desk, a contact number or a web-site exists from which a diversity of quality assured public, private and third sector services can be acquired. The desk can be tailored for the employers or it can be organised locally in the neighbourhood. In the case of Herttoniemi, the local desks will be opened at the metro-station (after its rehabilitation), the library and the play-park. The contact number already exists, run by the Work Efficiency Institute. The latter had conducted client surveys concerning the need and type of daily services. It had also trained one hundred entrepreneurs in Eastern Helsinki to provide quality-assured services. The web-site for the help desk was put up as a prototype and it is being piloted. In addition, the City of Helsinki and two enterprises will provide their personnel a help desk in their intranets. The digitalisation of the desk has been continued in the subsequent phases of the project.

*A preliminary model of time planning and policy* for the Finnish context was built in which the help desk with a service portal acts as an interface for the mastering of individual times and the local service system. The latter comprises the coordination and production of both public, private and third sector services in a specific neighbourhood or district. The help desk as part of the service system is embedded in participatory local governance, but it is also closely linked to the welfare and economic policies of Helsinki. The concept will hopefully be reproduced and disseminated to other neighbourhoods of the capital city. So far it has not been adopted in the original sense, but the idea has been embedded in a new formula of partnership and service platforms that will be disseminated in the City (Wallin & Horelli in press).

However, the piloting of the helpdesk allowed to create service packages for the project families. For example, family X wished to have a person to fetch three children from the child-care centre, a warm meal for the whole family, as well as somebody to fix more space for storage in their apartment. Family Y wanted to have baby sitting services, as well as an option to the City Car Club that lends cars at an inexpensive price. Family Z needs cleaning and the improvement of safety at the Metro station, so that the mother does not have to fetch her daughter from the station, when she has to wait for the connecting bus.

### ***Psychological presence as an indicator and a medium***

On the basis of the survey 20 voluntary families with children and their employers were selected for further research. The adults and even the children kept time-use diaries which were analysed with a programme called Vardagen (Everyday life), constructed by Kajsa Ellegård (Ellegård & Nordell 1997). Interestingly enough, the rhythms of the families even in the same life stage varied a great deal. The diaries provided some information on the times

when the families felt stressed. However, they did not disclose experiences of psychological presence. Therefore, six families (husbands and wives) were deep-interviewed in the summer 2006.<sup>6</sup> The practical goal of the interviews was to get information concerning the use of the new internet-version of the help-desk. The theoretical goal was to find out about the role of the informal practices of psychological presence in sustaining everyday life.

The results revealed that psychological presence was a familiar experience, especially among the women. They could easily express it and provide examples in several situations. It was also an indicator for sustaining everyday life. In fact it was even a means or an instrument to enhance daily activities. One mother of three children told that “when you are present, you can choose the attitude with which you can face the task or the person. This again impacts how you feel about life”. And another mother claimed that “when you implement things in a more calm and relaxed way, life is much nicer”. She could not remember that she would have had to hurry anywhere. A third mother enjoyed a seemingly benevolent attitude, as she said that

*“When we had two small babies, and one of them cried in the night, I thought that thank God, only one baby cries, and not both of them. And when the whole family had a flue, I thought that luckily they are ill in turns.”*

In addition to an attitude of acceptance, the interviewees revealed from the mechanism of mindfulness described by Shapiro et al. (2006), also the intention to decrease stress, to avoid bad consciousness and to increase positive thinking:

*“Presence is the precondition for better mastering daily situations. If you keep on thinking what happens next, and you run in front of things, it becomes stressful. I rather do each task at a time and when it ends, then I start the next one.”*  
(A Father of two children)

*“One afternoon three milk glasses fell and I thought that I have to clean up the mess, either by shouting or calmly. Everyone has a nicer time if you just do it, without saying anything. It is no use to get nervous with children.”*  
(A Mother of four children).

The last example brought forth attention, which also belongs to the mechanism of mindfulness. In addition, it shows how it is possible to be reflective instead of being reactive. Thus, the mindful way to face the world seems to lead to a better self-regulation, flexibility and handling of emotions.

On the other hand, not all interviewees were found to be concentrated on the moment. Automatic behavior and routines were not felt as a negative phenomenon. Their daily life was also sustained through certain routines and a calm attitude:

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6 The interviews lasted about two hours. They were transcribed and content analysed, based on grounded theory and using the constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin 1990). The conclusions emerged from analytic induction, aided by the quasi-juridical method of Bromley (1986:194-196). The emerging argument in the interpretation was built on a network of empirical facts, relations and relevant concepts.

*“Some things can be done without concentration, because they are fixed in a way that you don’t have to think about them. Just do them and the feet take you further...When I am at work, I concentrate on what I have to do. But the fussing here at home, that is something more or less...something.” (A Father of three children)*

Most of the families in the interviews had breathing hole spaces in their dwellings which enabled to experience flow. The breathing hole space for fathers was often the sofa in front of the TV. For some mothers it was the glass balcony, where one could see the landscape and the stars. For one single mother it was the kitchen table, after the children had gone to bed. “When the children are asleep, then I enjoy the calmness and the empty space around the kitchen table, where I can read the journal. They are my moments.”

### ***A model of psychological presence***

The research supported the hypothesis that psychological presence can be a criterion and an indicator for sustaining everyday life. For some families it was even a means to get by, at least ideally. In terms of content, the psychological presence appeared as a meaningful experience for oneself and as concentration on or attention to the intentions of other people. There were, however, variations in terms of how and why psychological presence appeared. On the other hand, the lack of presence did not seem to mean less control of everyday life in some cases. Daily life can also be sustained through good organisation and routines.

The space and time, structured by the environment were clearly factors that enabled to experience the moment as presence or flow in connection with the breathing hole spaces. On the other hand, the fragmented daily rhythm of some of the women and the lack of own space seemed to constrain the acquirement of calm moments.

On the basis of the literature in the framework and the results of the case study it was possible to build a preliminary model of psychological presence as an experience, a mode of mind and an interactive process (Figure 3). Psychologically the interactive process takes place between the intention, attention and attitude, just like Shapiro et al. (2006) described. It can be embedded in the two different modes of being and doing (Segal et al. 2002). However, psychological presence in everyday life is also affected by the transactive processes that take place between the person and environmental affordances. These are spatial, temporal and social opportunities that seem to structure the informal practice of presence. Participatory time planning can to a certain degree shape affordances or the infrastructure of everyday life (Figure 1), which in turn provides conditions for sustaining daily life. For example, the mobility cards co-created in the project and a new bussline from the other part of Herttoniemi to the health centre made the daily life of child families easier (Horelli & Haverinen 2008). In addition, making the Metro station safer, will affect the time budget of families and young people. Whether the additional time will increase the experience of presence is something which this research design does not allow to answer. Psychological presence, as an experience, is in the last hand a question of personal self-regulation which can be improved to a certain degree through meditation and therapeutic interventions.

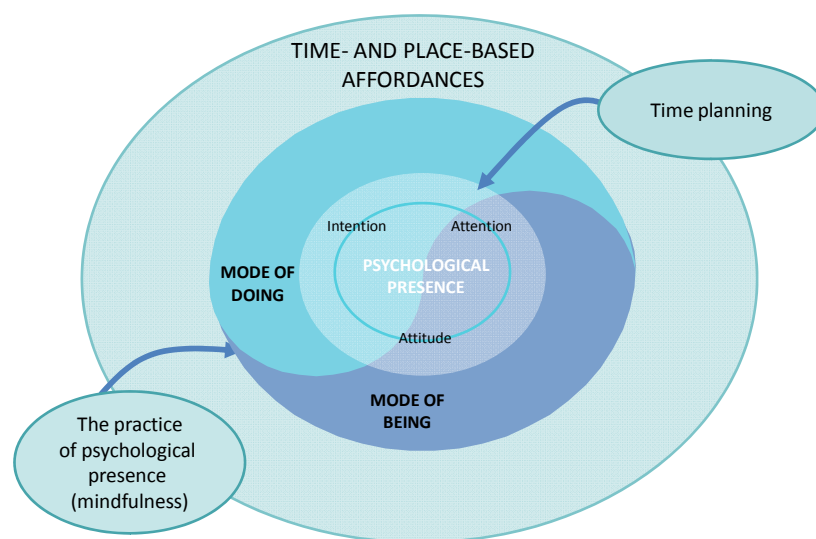


Figure 3. A schema of the psychological presence as an experience, interactive process and a mode of being and doing, structured by transactions with the environment.

## Discussion

I have argued in this chapter that sustaining everyday life can be enhanced through the practice of psychological presence in interaction with the co-creation of a supportive infrastructure of everyday life through the application of time planning. An integrative framework guided the implementation of the action research on time planning in a neighbourhood of Helsinki. The framework also enabled the examination of the pertinent questions: Can psychological presence be considered a criterion of sustaining everyday life? Will time planning increase opportunities for psychological presence? and Will psychological presence have positive consequences for sustainability?

### *Psychological presence as part of practice*

Although Csikszentmihalyi et al. (2005) claim that the societal phase of our time constrains the acquirement of flow, the residents in the neighbourhood under study had experiences of psychological presence without formal mindfulness or meditation training. It was a positive experience especially for women, as it enabled to concentrate on other people's intentions. In addition, the residents brought forth components of the mechanism of mindfulness, such as the intentions, positive attitude and focused attention (Shapiro et al. 2006). Also the two modes of mind – being and doing - that Segal et al. (2002) have described, could be diagnosed in the empirical data. Thus a model could be built in which psychological presence appears as an experience, a mode of mind and an interactive process in context (Figure 3). It also illustrates that the experience emerges from the transactions between the personal skills of self-regulation and the environmental affordances.

Consequently, psychological presence or mindfulness can be considered one of the indicators and even a means to support everyday life in a psycho-socially sustainable way. However, there are other material, social, and organisational ways to master everyday life, such as the routines of daily life. So, what is the relationship between the practice of psychological presence and the routines for sustaining everyday life? Routines are the often

repeated, in-bodied, unconscious doings and sayings which are part of broader social practices. According to one interpretation of practice theory (Schatzki 2002), practice is a set of doings and sayings that are organized on different levels. They are held together by the individual and practical intelligibility; body, mind know-how; rules, knowledge and language; engagements and meanings; products, things and technologies (Gram-Hansen 2008:5-6). Thus the whole multidimensional context – the infrastructure and organization of everyday life - is important in the construction of routines. They are both shared in the same culture and individually interpreted with personal variations in the practice. Practices contain a great deal of mechanic bodily actions and thinking, i.e. they are carried out in the automatic doing mode, just like some of the interviewees narrated in the case study. However, it is possible to experience presence even in the repetitive activities (routines). This means that the being mode is then penetrating the doing mode (Segal et al. 2002; see Figure 3). Whether this will have favourable consequences for the wellbeing and sustainability in general, is something that cannot be answered in this study.

### ***Psychological presence and time planning***

An important arena for sustaining everyday life and the environment is participatory urban planning. The Learning-based network approach to time planning (Lena) that was applied in the case study, improved the supportive infrastructure with the residents, organisations, administrators and entrepreneurs. Lena could provide tools and techniques that had a positive impact on the environmental affordances, which in turn might increase the temporal and spatial prosperity of people.

The temporal prosperity increases the freedom of action and may thus impact everyday life. However, the quantitative increase does not guarantee the qualitative improvement. Consequently, time planning does not automatically increase the sense of psychological presence. Nevertheless, time planning as a process can enhance *collective experiences of presence*. This was the case when the local forum in Herttoniemi painted together visions for the Metro station and made an exhibition of its future. Later on, it led to an architectural competition. Thus, time planning succeeded in creating psycho-social sustainability, but only minor advances in economic and ecological sustainability. Examples of the latter were some improvements in public transportation and in the support to small entrepreneurs and cooperatives (Horelli & Wallin 2006).

Time planning seldom brings forth individual experiences of presence, but it can support their emergence through the provision of conditions that are more fit with the intentions of the residents. Correspondingly, poor time- or urban planning can constrain the flow of daily life. Thus, time planning might be regarded as a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for the practice of psychological presence.

The role of the physical environment has not been conspicuous in the literature of mindfulness. Here it was evident that the peak experiences of presence appeared in the breathing hole spaces of the home (see also Horelli 1993; 1995).

### ***Psychological presence and sustainable development***

Meditation and therapeutic interventions increase mindfulness skills which in turn might have positive impacts on, besides stress and pain reduction, also on social relations (Kabat-Zinn 2003). Thus, the practice of psychological presence does have a close connection to social sustainability. Unfortunately, the implied attitude of acceptance, deriving from the Buddhist tradition, might be counterproductive from the perspective of sustainable development and desired change. However, psychological presence is a conscious choice. Paying attention to the present does not have to be on-going. It can be taken in use when needed, like the residents in the study did. Psychological presence can also lead to an increase in deliberation

in which it is a kind of wedge between impulsiveness and active responsiveness. It then enables the choice of the desired focus and balance between different positions. Shapiro et al. (2006) refer to this phenomenon as the change of perspective or re-perception that can enhance the finding of new ways and views. This is the foundation of psychological presence for being a criterion of psychological sustainability.

The openness to new perspectives is where the hope lies for more sustainable behaviour and for sustainable development which have to be constantly renegotiated in every context (Salleh 2009). Nevertheless, there is no guarantee that the clarification of values will transform daily activities towards a more environmentally-friendly behaviour.

Psychological sustainability is only one dimension in the holistic phenomenon of sustainable development both of which comprise many interdependent components and dimensions that interact with one another (Bonnes & Bonaiuto 2002). Thus, psychological presence recognizes besides the intra-psychic processes also the external conditions that enhance mental and physical wellbeing. Gram-Hansen (2008) claims that it is crucial to investigate which parts of the social, cultural and technological structures draw daily practices and routines towards a more or less sustainable direction. However, as sustainability is an endeavour that requires human-environment negotiations on different arenas, the skills brought forth through the practice of psychological presence seem to be seminal. Psychological sustainability is an aspect that should not be forgotten in the discourse concerning the holistic picture of sustaining everyday life. It needs, however, a great deal of further research.

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## Domestication of Technologies in Everyday Life

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Studies of technologies in everyday life show that the process of innovation continues after products are appropriated. Users do not relate passively to the products they buy, but may be active in both procurement and use (McCracken 1988, Keat et al. 1994, Lie and Sørensen 1996). Moreover, everyday life activities may change in relation to technologies. In analysing these socio-technical processes of everyday life, the concept of *domestication* has proved to be useful. Silverstone, Hirsch and Morley (1991), introduced this concept in an analysis of how media technology was integrated into the “moral economy” of a household. Domestication as a tool or a perspective has since then, been used and reshaped through empirical studies (Lie and Sørensen 1996, Berker et al. 2005).

Domestication describes the practical, symbolic and cognitive processes that take place when a product is integrated into a household. When people domesticate a technology they place it, learn to use it, fit it into their routines and give it meaning. Thus, the discussion is not about *effects* of technology, but of the development of different user patterns in ‘negotiation’ with the technology.

In this presentation I will discuss the concept of domestication and use empirical examples to illustrate the domestication of technologies in everyday life. I will show how a domestication perspective can be used as a concrete analytical tool as well as a more general analytical perspective in understanding the relationship between users and technologies/technological systems.



## Everyday Agency and New Forms of Governance

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I will discuss various shifts and transformations concerning the relationship between everyday life and politics of the social. In the industrial capitalism everyday life was supposed to be a sphere being opposed to work and free time; it was the ‘small life’ conducted by women as opposed to the important life in the economy and politics conducted by men. The very set of the opposition was a logic of power, as many feminist and other scholars have shown. Today, this territorial model of life has begun to blur. In the new 7/24 society, homes which used to be the site of the everyday life have turned into working places. At the same time, the logic of everyday life is leaking out from its conventional sphere. The figure of the housewife, once the nexus of everyday life, has become the paradigm and ideal worker of the new labour market: she is capable of doing many things at the same time, he is flexible and social, she takes care of complex logistic chains, and he doesn’t lose his temper even if the customers present impossible demands or cry from the evening to the morning. These changes go along with the changes in the forms of governance: the old ways of the politics of the social based on the clear division between the everyday life and work (which is still echoing the ‘work-family balance’ discourse) do not obviously fit any longer. I will suggest a way to look at the changes and discontinuities by drawing a map, which takes ‘small’ agency as its starting point. The concept of small agency refers to the approach that asks: How are the (global) changes in the labour market and in the politics of the social made livable? I will use examples from my previous study on *The Everyday Life of Adults* and from my current study on *Precarisation in North-Karelia*.



## **Mobility and Everyday Life – the Social Context of Modern Childhood**

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Modern society is characterized by speed, a hectic pace of life and mobility. Travelling is an important part of it, and being on the move gives the impression of being both effective and active in everyday life. Mobility embedded in everyday life makes it necessary to have a good understanding of the social processes creating and maintaining the social context and especially the framework of the daily lives of children conditioning the choice of transport mode. This article deals with the characteristics, social processes and trends contributing to our understanding mobility in daily life, while concentrating on aspects of importance in the organization of everyday life in families with children. While there are several societal trends contributing to increased use of the car in the mobility of children, there is at the same time a decline in children's independent mobility, i.e. walking and cycling. Individualization and organized leisure activities for children, perception of time and time pressure, access to and habituation of car-use, interplay between transport and information and communication technology are all discussed and illustrated with empirical examples.

## Introduction

Significant characteristics of contemporary society are increased physical and virtual mobility (transport and travel) and different forms of information and communication technology (ICT). On average, people make more than three journeys every day and travel about 40 km (in Norway) (Denstadli et al., 2006). Simultaneously, the growth in use of ICT devices such as mobile telephones, the Internet and communication by e-mail goes on unabated ([http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/eeurope/i2010/infso\\_today/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/eeurope/i2010/infso_today/index_en.htm), <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/19/40/34082594.xls>).

Our activities are spread over a large geographical area: workplace and school situated away from where we live, leisure activities often localized outside the neighbourhood and friends and relatives living in distant parts of the urban area or home town. At the same time, ICT is facilitating contact without physical presence and increasing flexibility in the organization of daily life (Townsend, 2000).

Mobile everyday life is typical not just among the adult population, but among children, too, whose lives seem to have developed in much the same direction. There are clear indications that everyday life for children has become more fragmented in space and time than it was just a few decades ago. In Norway, for example, the incidence of children being chauffeured to different activities increased by more than 60 percent in the 1990s (Hjorthol, 2002) and the penetration of the mobile telephone seems only to have enhanced this trend (Hjorthol, 2008).

It has been said that “this spatial development is a symptom of the rise of childhood as an adult-controlled societal structure in a differentiated modern society” (Jurczyk et al., 2004: 753). Zeier (2001) claims that the various places children frequent during the course of a day, e.g. school, day care, music school, football training, etc., can be seen as islands in the landscape, with the children transported from island to island (very often by car). Part of this picture is reduced independent mobility, i.e. less walking and cycling.

Research from different countries points to the fact that an increasing number of children are taken to school by car. During the past 10-15 years there has been a significant increase in car-use in this respect. Studies from Great Britain, Scandinavia and Italy reflect the same tendency, and not just among the youngest children in the first and second grades, but among those in the upper grades too (Bradshaw, 2001; Fyhri, 2005; Mackett, 2002; Mackett et al., 2005; Jensen et al., 2004; Prezza et al., 2001). While, in 1985, 10 percent of children in the age group 11-16 years in the UK were being taken to school by car, by 2005 this proportion had increased to 21 percent (Department for Transport, 2006). A study from 2004 (Fyhri, 2005) showed that 25 percent of children in Norway were being taken to school by car, i.e. nearly 40 percent of the youngest children and 16 percent of those in the 6th grade. In the period 1992 to 2005, car-use increased from 4 to 11 percent for the 12-15 year age group.

While school trips have attracted a good deal of attention in the past, other trips made by children have been given much less consideration. Longitudinal studies in the UK indicate that car-use is growing faster in relation to children than in relation to the rest of the population (Mackett, 2001). Results from the UK show that children make fewer, but longer, trips than previously. Mackett points to the fact that school trips count for only one-fifth of the daily excursions of children. In other words, children’s mobility is much more than just school trips, but we know little about the other journeys and activities in which they take part. In addition, we know relatively little about the trends and/or driving forces that contribute to this development or about the consequences these have on the everyday lives of children.

The aim of this paper is twofold: to arrive at a better understanding of the societal trends that enhance the development of children’s everyday mobility and to illustrate the consequences of these trends for children’s activity and mobility patterns. The last part of the paper is based on an empirical study carried out in Norway in 2005.



## Social trends

### *Car-use and urban development*

Suburbanization and automobilization are self-reinforcing phenomena. Urban development of this type presupposes transport (the car), and the car increases opportunities for travel. The flexibility afforded by the car extends the distances people can travel and what they can do. One effect is less dependence on local services and social contacts in the immediate neighbourhood. The urban sprawl makes it difficult to provide a uniform, reasonably good, public transport supply over the entire urban area. Very often supply is based on the needs of commuters for radial lines serving central urban areas, while other travel purposes are given less priority. The fragmentation of activities in both time and space is partly a result of the accessibility of fast transport (the car) and suburbanization.

The necessity associated with use of the car is also often tied to issues associated with children. Without the car, it is claimed that there is not enough time to carry out daily activities (Freudental-Pedersen, 2007; Hjorthol, 2006). Many families have adjusted their daily lives to the existence of the automobile. When the day care centre and one's job are in different parts of the city it is difficult to use public transport. The routinized nature of daily life is the basis of the more habitual use of the car. When always having access to a car – and a routinized travel pattern – it is more difficult to get over the threshold to using public transport, especially when there is a very strong temporal norm of saving time with a lot of activities going on. Accessibility renders the car more and more central in daily life and the use of alternatives increasingly difficult. Many of us feel that it would not be possible to do without the car, because either the habit is so strong or issues of access are so insurmountable that car-use is entrenched.

### *Both parents working – more time pressure?*

The increase in the gainful employment of women has meant that in most families both parents are working. In Norway, more than 80 percent of mothers with children 5+ years are in paid work (Kitterød, 2005), which means that pre-school children need to be transported to day care centres or other types of care facility and children in lower classes need to be escorted to school. When both parents in a family are working, there are often periods of the day that are more hectic or chaotic than others. The most pressing time periods are (probably) in the morning when all the family members are leaving for work, school or day care, and in the afternoon when time has to be found for a meal before different leisure pursuits, for instance sports and music, begin. Shortage of time is a common excuse for car-use among parents when transporting their children to leisure activities (Hjorthol et al., 2005, 2006; Freudental-Pedersen, 2007).

Gershuny (2000) claims that shortage of time, days filled with (meaningful) activity, is more a sign of success than is having plenty of leisure time (which can be related to unemployment). Not only is time pressure normal, it is also socially acceptable and to a certain degree status-giving, which means that the time pressure and the lack of time many families say they experience are legitimate reasons for their various actions in everyday life. Using the car for different purposes, regardless of travel distance and accessibility of other modes of transport, is a good example. The perception of time pressure becomes the 'normal' social framework of daily life.

Thrift (1996) argues that the subjective perception of time changes when speed in society increases. When most people in society have access to a car, the day "allows" for more activities to take place, and time "demands" more activity. When speed increases, not just time, but also the perception of space, might change and distance will be seen as shorter and less burdensome.

Speed, as represented by the car in daily life, changes our perception of both time and space. Pointing to the importance of speed as the basis for change in the perception of time, Nowotny (1994) claims that mobility is a central value in society as a result of the innovation of transport technology. Like time, speed can be seen as an aspect of status that differentiates between social groups. According to Nowotny: “The fast group are doing it right. They are, from a technological point of view, up to date, ahead of the competition. They are rewarded for it, in material terms as well. The slow group are far from being socially recognized in their slowness” (1994: 32).

### ***Organized leisure activities for children – aspects of individuality***

Another characteristic of contemporary society is the emphasizing of the individual, i.e. encouraging individual talent and developing independence in children, too. It seems to be a norm that to succeed you have to start early. Studies indicate that parents with higher education emphasize organized leisure activities for their children more than parents with lower education do (Mattson, 2002; Lidén, 1999). Awareness related to children and their needs and development is much more prevalent today than it was only a generation ago. Organized leisure activities are seen as being “superior” in the development of a child’s creativity than just playing in the streets, which in most areas is not possible because of traffic. It is also more common for children’s organized leisure activities to take place outside the immediate neighbourhood (e.g. Valentine and McKendrick, 1997, Hjorthol et al., 2006). Access to transport has an impact on the possible choices a child has and on participation in leisure activities (Fotel, 2007).

It has been claimed that the reason children’s organized leisure activities have increased is that neighbourhoods have become unsuitable for children’s play due to increased traffic, but this is probably only partly true. The participation in organized activities among children is not just an urban phenomenon; also children in rural areas take part in such activities. They very often have to travel even further to football training and music education and therefore become more dependent on the car than children in the bigger cities, where public transport can be an alternative (Mattson, 2002; Jensen et al., 2004).

When the “norm” is that children ought to take part in organized activities, mobility and access to a car are conditions for participation. Mobility is a necessary resource for “success” for children, too. Children in families without cars are dependent on public transport or of getting to a venue by bicycle or on foot if they are to have the same level of participation as children in families with cars. Urban development with increasing distances will often be barriers to children’s activities. Families without a car either have to spend more time planning their activities or they have to reduce their expectations about what their children can take part in.

### ***Diffusion of ICT – interplay between transport and ICT – shorter planning horizon***

In many ways, the proliferation of the mobile telephone has changed the way people organize their everyday lives. Before the advent of the mobile telephone, when family members had little opportunity of communicating during the day, when apart or on the move travelling to or from different activities, advance planning was necessary in the daily lives of families with children. Changing an appointment or arrangement was difficult if there was no access to a landline telephone (not to mention the person at the other end being unavailable) or no possibility of meeting in person. From previous studies of travel behaviour we know that there is a relation between pre-planned activities and mode of transport. Indications are that car-use is greater in the case of trips not planned in advance than on pre-planned trips (Handy et al., 2005; Jakobsson, 2004); in other words, that planning reduces car-use or that ready access to the car makes planning less necessary (Gärling et al., 2000; Garwill et al., 2003).

Townsend (2000) claims that we experience freedom from punctuality with the new communication technology, and that this will quickly become a habit, making it difficult, almost unthinkable, that we will ever be without these new tele-devices. He says: “Once one becomes accustomed to the flexibility of scheduling, the freedom from punctuality permitted by the ability to constantly updating other parties as to one’s status, it is nearly inconceivable to go back” (2000: 94).

A nationwide survey in Norway on use of the mobile telephone in organizing daily life in families with children suggests that the instrument is important in everyday communication among family members organizing the practicalities of daily activities (Hjorthol, 2008). The way arrangements are made varies with planning horizon. Short planning time and use of the mobile telephone go together. The mobile telephone brings the possibility of “instant action”. This survey found a significant correlation between the amount of time in advance the daily activity was planned for and the frequency of car-use. People who plan in advance generally have a lower level of car-use than others who have a short planning horizon or make arrangements (very often by mobile telephone) about activities on the day itself.

To some degree, one could say that the mobile telephone directs car-use in the sense that it may generate more trips, since its use means there is no need to plan daily activities. More activities are carried out spontaneously and daily life is ad hoc. For example, an often sent SMS from children to their parents is “come and pick me up” (Hjorthol et al., 2005). This study also found a significant relationship between the frequency of car-use of parents and use of the mobile telephone for making appointments with children about accompanying them to/from friends and activities (Hjorthol, 2008: 316). This indicates that easy access to both mobile communication and private transport resources increases car-use, because more arrangements can be made on impulse.

## Children’s daily mobility – a Norwegian example

### *A nationwide survey about children’s daily activities and travel*

The trends discussed in the previous section are indicative of the social framework of the daily lives of children and their parents. In this section, we take a closer look at children’s activities and mobility during leisure time. We study whether these trends can be mirrored in aspects of the everyday lives of children.

As stated in the Introduction, school trips are only a part of children’s daily mobility. By comparison, there is much less information and empirical data about travelling related to different types of leisure activities, organized and non-organized. In this section, results from a nationwide survey in Norway in 2005 about children’s (6-12 years) activities and daily travelling are presented. We emphasize activities outside school and focus on the role that the car plays in children’s mobility in this context.

Respondents were recruited from the National Travel Survey (NTS) 2005 and are parents with children in the relevant age group (1282 respondents). During the NTS telephone interview, all parents with children in the target group were asked whether they would like to take part in a mail-back study about the physical environment of children, their activities and travel. The questionnaire included questions about gender, age, housing situation, possibilities for outdoor activities, traffic, parents’ and child’s judgement of the traffic situation, the trip to school in relation to the traffic, outdoor play and organized leisure activities, interaction with friends and travel to and from these activities. The response rate was 62 percent. The questionnaire was designed such that the parents were to answer the first part and the children (if necessary with the help of mother or father) the second part containing questions about their leisure activities, outdoor playing and social interaction with friends. To secure a good basis for the analyses, it was decided to carry out an additional survey of 500 extra

respondents in November 2005 with a sample from the entire country. The same questionnaire was applied with some additional background information about the parents. The response rate was 60 percent. The data from these two surveys were merged.

**Playing outside and visiting friends**

For children, being physically active is important for their physical and psychical health. Results from several studies indicate that reduced physical activity is a cause of increased weight and obesity among children (Cooper et al., 2003; Evenson et al., 2003; Fox, 2004; Salomon et al., 2005). Playing and being together with other children are also important for social development. These activities can be carried out within the framework of athletics clubs or organizations, or in non-organized settings. In this section, we present data from both settings.

On average, about half of the children in this survey play outdoors every day (Figure 1) -- the proportion is higher in summer (74 percent) than in winter (46 percent). Figure 1 gives the full picture of unorganized outdoor playing.

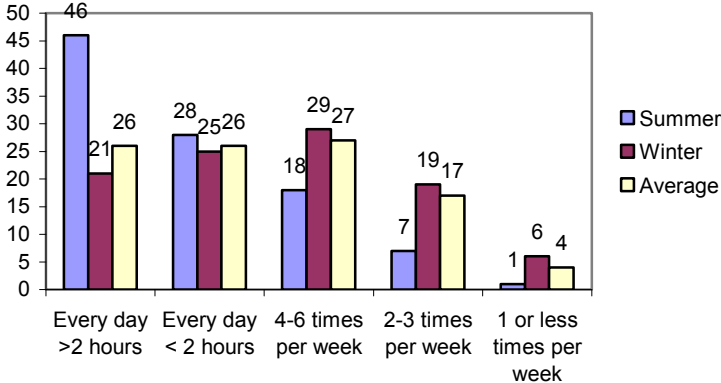


Figure 1. The frequency of outdoor playing in summer, winter and average. Percent.

The outdoor activity level varies with age. Children in the age group 10-12 spend significantly more time outdoors than do younger children.

An interesting aspect of this non-organized activity is that children with lower-educated parents are more active outdoors than are children with higher-educated parents (Table 1). This can be seen as an indication of differences in norms related to children’s activities.

**Table 1.** The frequency of outdoor playing by parents’ education. Percent\*\*\*.

Frequency of outdoor playing	Parents’ education			All
	Low	Middle	High	
Every day > 2 hours	38	29	22	26
Every day < 2 hours	17	27	26	26
4-6 times per week	25	27	27	27
2-3 times per week	18	13	19	17
1 time or less per week	2	4	6	4
Total	100	100	100	100
Number	132	723	896	1751

\*\*\*p < 0.001, chi-square.

Further on in this section we take a closer look at organized activities and whether parents’ educational background plays a role in the propensity of participation. As discussed, previous studies have indicated that children of higher-educated parents more often take part in organized activities than children of lower-educated parents.

Most of the outdoor playing of these age groups takes place in the vicinity of the home and along with other children. About 70 percent of children have their closest friends in the neighbourhood (see Figure 2).

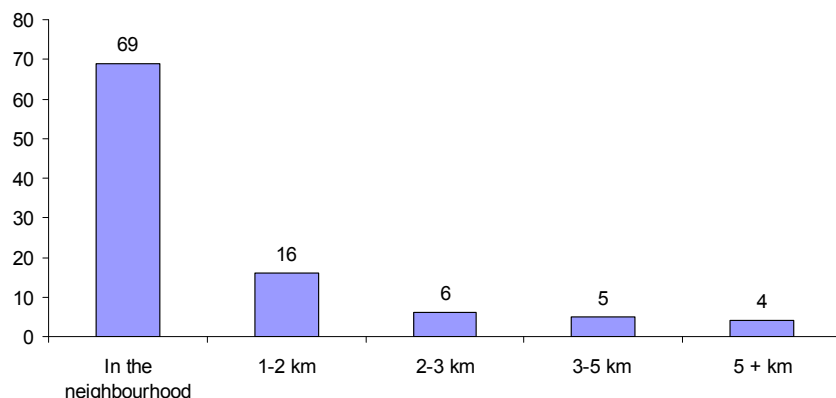


Figure 2. Distance to closest friends. Percent.

Both distance and age of the child are important variables in the frequency of social interaction with friends (Table 2). Frequency increases with age and decreases with distance. Distance to friends is crucial in how often social contact occurs.

Table 2. Frequency of visiting friends by age and distance to friends. Percent.

	The frequency of visiting friends					Total
	Every day	4-6 times a week	2-3 times a week	1 time a week	Less often than 1 a week	
<i>Age ***</i>						
6-7 år	7	30	36	21	6	100
8-9 år	15	31	35	15	4	100
10-12 år	13	34	39	12	2	100
<i>Distance to friends***</i>						
In the neighbourhood	16	38	35	10	1	100
1 -2 km	4	25	44	22	5	100
2 - 3 km	1	23	41	25	10	100
3 - 5 km	4	8	38	40	10	100
5 + km	0	4	30	47	19	100
All	12	32	37	15	4	100
Number	215	571	664	274	65	1790

Visiting friends is mostly based on children's independent mobility; 70 percent of children say that the usual way is by walking, 55 percent cycle and 46 percent are taken by car by one of their parents (they could give multiple answers). Mode varies significantly with distance. While 85 percent of the children say that they walk to their friends if they live in the neighbourhood, the proportion is 29 percent when the distance is between two and three kilometres. Two out of three children say that they are taken by car over distances between one and two kilometres, while almost all are taken by car if their friends live more than three kilometres away.

There is a positive correlation between frequency of outdoor playing and distance to the closest friends (correlation significant at the 0.01 level, two-tailed). Short distance correlates with high frequency of outdoor activities.

### **Organized activities**

A large majority of the children in these age groups take part in organized physical activity of different kinds. Nearly 80 percent say that they are members of a sports club (Table 3). Other, not so common, activities are member of a choir or band (23 percent), visiting a youth centre regularly (10 percent) and being a member of other organizations (about 20 percent). The results for children in the different groups are given in Table 3. Participation in organized activities increases with age in every type of activity. Girls take part in musical activities, such as a choir or band, more often than boys do. They also participate more than boys in what is labelled here 'other organizations'. For both musical activities and sports there is a tendency of children living in the largest cities to participate more than children living in other places, which is probably explained by a wider choice in the urban areas.

**Table 3.** Proportion of children taking part in different types of organized activities by age, gender, place of living and parents' education. Percent.

	<b>Choir/band</b>	<b>Sports</b>	<b>Youth centre</b>	<b>Other organizations</b>
All	23	77	10	19
Number	523	1379	174	337
<i>Age</i>	***	***	***	***
6-7 yrs	12	70	4	12
8-9 yrs	24	79	7	22
10-12 yrs	30	81	16	21
<i>Gender</i>	***			*
Female	30	77	9	21
Male	17	77	10	17
<i>Place of abode</i>	*	***		
Oslo/Bergen/Trondheim/Stavanger1)	36	85	21	29
Surrounding municipalities to Oslo/Bergen/Trondheim/Stavanger	33	87	22	27
Next 6 largest towns	23	73	16	24
Smaller towns	28	77	15	26
Rest of the country	32	79	21	27
<i>Mother's/father's education</i>	***	***	**	
Elementary school	15	68	16	13
High school/College	20	75	11	20
University	27	81	8	19
<i>Employment status of the parents</i>	**	**		
Both working full-time (more than 30 hours per week)	26	84	8	16
One full-time and one part-time	29	77	8	19
One full-time and one not employed	20	75	9	18
Part-time and not employed or both not employed	13	71	11	22

1) The four largest cities in Norway.

\* $p < 0.05$ , chi-square, \*\* $p < 0.01$ , chi-square, \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , chi-square.

Children whose parents have been in higher education tend to participate more in sports and musical activities than those whose parents have been in lower education. The tendency seems to be that children of higher-educated parents participate in organized activities, while children of lower-educated parents are more active outside organizations (cf. Table 1). Corresponding differences related to parents' status and education have been found in previous research (Lidén, 1999; Mattson, 2002).

Parents' employment status is used as an indication of the time pressure in families. One assumption could be that time pressure will be more prevalent in families where both parents are working full-time than in families where the total number of working hours per week is

lower (the results in Table 3 do not support this assumption, however). The participation of children in families with both parents working full-time is high where music and sports are concerned. Participation is lowest in families where a parent's connection with the working market is low, either because they work part-time or because they have no paid work at all. Measured in this way, shortage of time does not really explain children's level of participation in organized leisure activities. Parents' status in the labour market is connected with education. In families where both parents work full-time, 62 percent of the respondents were educated to university level, while only 35 percent from families with the poorest connection to the labour market were educated to the same level.

This supports the assumption that the norm, namely children should participate in organized activities, is more typical among parents with higher education than among those with lower education. Expectations of the proper way of bringing up children are perhaps more important than available time. A high activity level of children in the family might lead to time pressure in the next round.

As opposed to non-organized activities, most organized activities take place outside the immediate neighbourhood (Figure 3).

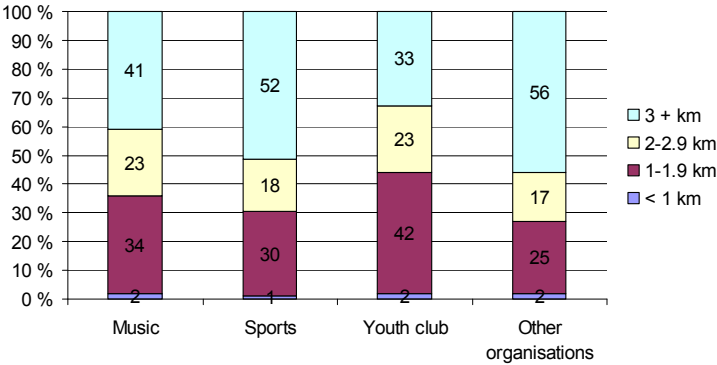


Figure 3. Distance to leisure activities in kilometres. Percent.

As Figure 3 demonstrates, more than half of all sports activities take place 3 km or more from the children's homes, although youth clubs are usually situated locally. Assuming that up to 2 km is within walking distance of at least the oldest of the children in these age groups, between 27 percent (other organizations) and 44 percent (sports) can walk to their activities. The cycle distance would be longer. These figures indicate that the majority of the children have leisure pursuits beyond walking and cycling distance. Children in the larger cities generally live closer to their activities than children in other areas. While 65 percent of the children in Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim and Stavanger (the four largest cities in Norway) live less than 2 km from their music activities, the proportion in sparsely populated areas is 24 percent ( $p < 0.001$  chi-square). For sports, the percentages are 45 and 26, respectively ( $p < 0.001$  chi-square).

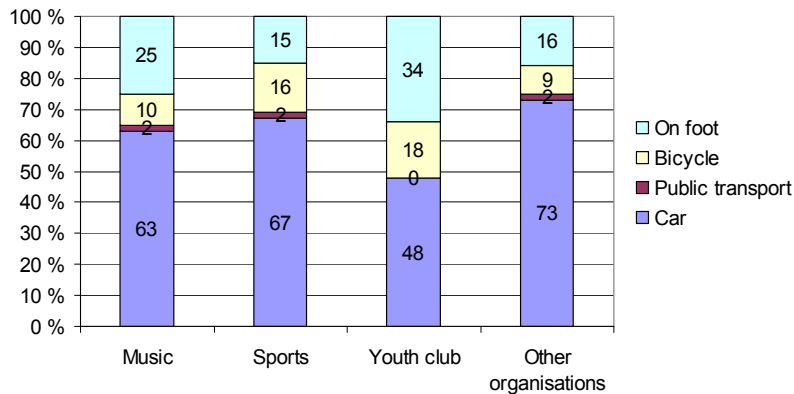


Figure 4. Transportation to and from leisure activities. Percent.

Even though there is relatively large potential for walking or cycling, the most typical mode of travel to leisure activities is by car. With the exception of going to the youth club, the majority of children are taken by car to their organized activities (Figure 4). Public transport is hardly ever used. Between 25 percent (other organizations) and 52 percent (youth club) of trips are on foot or by bicycle. This is a low percentage compared to the corresponding proportion on school trips, which is about 60 percent in the same age group (Fyhri and Hjorthol, 2006).

A closer look at the characteristics of children using the car for these purposes indicates that distance to the activity is the most important variable of all (Table 4). When distance is 2 km or longer, a large majority of the children are taken by car. The proportion taken by car to music and sports is lowest in the larger cities and highest in middle-sized and small-sized towns. If parents always have a car at their disposal, car-use is significantly higher on travel to music and sports. The tendency is the same for the other activities. For sports and music, car-use is higher in the case of children of parents who use the car for commuting, while for the other two activities there is no significant difference.

Table 4. Proportion of children taken to leisure activities by car. Percent.

	Music	Sports	Youth club	Other organisations
All	62	68	48	72
N	258	940	89	250
<i>Age</i>	**	***		
6-7 yrs	81	81	47	79
8-9 yrs	55	72	47	77
10-12 yrs	61	57	48	67
<i>Distance to activity</i>	***	***	***	***
< 1 km	14	0	0	0
1 -1.9 km	27	27	14	28
2 – 2.9 km	66	72	51	89
3 + km	91	90	91	91
<i>Gender</i>		***		*
Female	61	73	47	68
Male	63	63	47	77
<i>The parents' opinion of the way to school (traffic)</i>	**	***	**	**
Unsafe	70	75	57	81
Safe	55	62	39	66
<i>The children's opinion of the way to activities (traffic)</i>	***		*	
Safe	46	59	41	69
Unsafe	88	69	75	75



	Music	Sports	Youth club	Other organizations
<i>Place of abode</i>	**	**		
Oslo/Bergen/Trondheim/ Stavanger	44	57	35	67
Surrounding municipalities of Oslo/Bergen/Trondheim/Stavanger	57	65	31	65
Next 6 largest towns	76	70	57	70
Smaller towns	66	75	56	78
Rest of the country	66	69	54	74
<i>Parents' access to car</i>	*	**		
Always	64	68	45	75
Not always	44	56	27	61
<i>Parents' commuting by</i>		*	***	
Car	57	67	49	70
Other means	67	56	24	71
<i>Employment status of the parents</i>				
Both working full-time (more than 30 hours per week)	58	69	44	67
Other working arrangements	62	65	44	77

\* $p < 0.05$ , chi-square, \*\* $p < 0.01$ , chi-square, \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , chi-square.

Parents' commuting mode has a bearing on children's transport on school trips, too; 26 percent of children are taken to school by car if one of the parents commutes by car and 18 percent if other modes are used ( $p < 0.001$ , chi-square). Even though distance and age seem to be the variables that have the greatest impact on car-use to children's leisure activities, the analysis also indicates that perception of the traffic situation and parents' access to and use of a car on commuting play a role in children's leisure mobility. Parents with ready access to a car, and who use the car for their own purposes, are more likely to take their children to leisure activities by car. However, our indicator on time pressure in families, i.e. parents' weekly working hours, does not suggest any relation to choice of transport mode in how children travel to leisure activities.

## Discussion

Children's everyday lives, like those of their parents, are characterized by a wide range of activities and, as a result, by travelling. It seems that increasing travel is dependent on motorized transport and that various social trends enhance this tendency. Ready access to a car in families with children (in Norway 98 percent of families with children have a car and 59 percent have two or more cars (Denstadli et al., 2006)) facilitates car-use for most purposes. In most families, both parents are in paid work, which indicates greater time pressure on the everyday lives of families, especially when a majority of children take part in organized activities. The widespread expansion of mobile telephones for both parents and children (70 percent of children at the age of 10 years in 2005 had their own mobile telephone) (Hjorthol et al., 2006) makes it easy to be in contact whenever wanted -- contact that is often about transportation to and from (especially from) different organized and non-organized leisure activities. Even if many children have friends in their neighbourhood (especially children in urban areas), the organized leisure activities which many of them take part in are very often localized further away. For these types of activities, e.g. sports and music, the majority of children are taken by car.

Children who are encouraged to participate in organized activities are rendered more or less dependent on parents (or other) transporting them and, as a result, of losing some of their own independence, i.e. independent of the possibility to walk or bicycle to their leisure activities. Children in families where both parents work more often take part in organized activities than children in families where the parents work fewer hours; there is also more

frequent organized participation among children with higher-educated parents. It seems that what can be termed objective time pressure, measured as parents' working hours, does not necessarily have an impact on the frequency of children's organized leisure activities. As discussed, it is commonly understood that time pressure is a normal social framework of daily life, while at the same time there is a strong social norm that children should take part in organized activities to encourage development of their individual talents, independence and social skills. Within this framework, parents (especially those with higher education) make an effort to fulfil what they perceive to be the norm of being a good parent despite a shortage of time. The social expectations of participation for children induce time pressure for the parents (a situation which is seen as normal).

On the other hand, we can see that children activate themselves. Many of them, more so those of parents with lower education, play outdoors without any supervision by parents or other adults. In a study from two areas in England, it was found that children use more calories in free play than in equivalent organized activities (Mackett, 2008). Mackett gives an example: "[B]oys kicking a football around in the park use more activity calories than they would in the same time in a football lesson, partly because much of the football lesson is being spent changing into and out of football kit and listening to the teacher explaining what to do." Whether this is so in our study is hard to tell, but it is paradoxical if the effort parents go to in transporting their children to various organized activities perhaps reduces their own child's physical activity and perhaps also the initiative they have to organize their own actions and pursuits.

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## **Introducing and Developing Practice Theory – Towards a Better Understanding of Household Energy Consumption**

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A household's energy consumption is an important element of sustainable everyday life. It is therefore relevant to understand and explain the daily routines and use of technology that are intimately linked to energy consumption. This paper introduces a recent practice theory from Schatzki, Reckwitz, and Warde that has been put forward as a promising framework to explain everyday life consumer practices. The practice theory is, however, not a commonly agreed upon theory but is regarded more like an approach or a turn within contemporary social theory. When using practice theory in studies of everyday life, there are several conditions that need further clarification. In this paper, the focus will be on the question of how to include technology in practice theory and how technology contributes to both change and stability in practice. In the paper, Schatzki's practice theory is described in detail and, based on Reckwitz, is afterward extended with discussions of different socio-technical approaches, including appropriation and domestication of technology, transition theory, and scales of technology. The paper discusses practice theory and how it can be used to understand the role of objects and technologies in the constitution and change of routines and practices related to the use of everyday-life technologies, as it is by using these technologies that energy is consumed in the homes.

## Introduction

This paper aims to get a better grasp of the daily routines and practices that are done in households and that have as a secondary effect the consumption of energy. In the past decades, quite a lot of research on household energy consumption has been carried out both from a cultural consumption perspective and from a socio-technical perspective. It has been argued that there is a general tendency within cultural consumption to overstate the conspicuous consumption approach in favour of focusing more on routine consumption practices (Gronow and Warde, 2001). Following this criticism, Shove showed in her influential book how new norms and higher standards of comfort, cleanliness, and convenience are constructed, along with the introduction of new technologies, and how these shifts have a huge impact on household energy consumption (Shove, 2003). From a more theoretical perspective, we have at the same time seen what some call 'The practice turn in contemporary theory' (Schatzki, Cetina and Savigny, 2001) and, as both Shove and Warde have pointed out, this might be highly relevant to getting an understanding of consumption. According to them, the quality of practice theory is precisely that it stresses the routine aspect and the collective and conventional nature of consumption (Warde, 2005) and that it stresses the importance of the role of the artefacts involved in constituting new practices (Shove and Pantzar, 2005).

In this paper, I intend to follow and develop this line by exploring the content and ideas of practice theory as they are developed by Schatzki (Schatzki, 1996, 2002). First, I will give an introduction to the theories of Schatzki with a focus on the different elements and links that he proposes. Next, I will propose ways of extending the practice theory of Schatzki to better include the material - e.g., things and technologies – as discussed especially by Reckwitz (2002a, b). In this proposal for an extension, I will concentrate on three aspects: how people relate to and domesticate technologies, how new practices evolve in a co-production with new technologies, and finally how questions of infrastructure, scale and systems of technologies can be understood in practice theory. In the last section of the paper, I refer to examples on how practice theory can be used in empirical analysis.

## Practice theory – in the words of Schatzki

### *What is practice theory?*

In the introduction to "The practice turn in contemporary society," Schatzki emphasises that there is not one common understanding of what practice theory is, but that there are many different contributions originating in philosophy, social science, cultural theory, and science & technology studies (Schatzki, 2001). What they have in common is that practice theories place practices at the centre of the understanding of the social where other theories may emphasise actions, language, system, or structure in their definition of the social. Practice theory is thus not just a theory of practice; it is actually a challenge to the understanding of cultural and social theory up till now. The most coherent and developed contribution to practice theory comes from Schatzki, and even if he is one of the contributors to practice theory who put less emphasis on the role of things and technologies in practice (Reckwitz, 2002b), I will start by introducing concepts from Schatzki's work. The following builds on his latest book on practice theory (2002), where, in addition to new contributions, he repeats, develops, and defends his own work in 1996.

Schatzki sums it all up: "a practice is a temporally evolving, open-ended set of doings and sayings linked by practical understandings, rules, teleoaffective structures, and general understandings. (...) the organization of a practice describes the practice's frontiers: A doing or saying belongs to a given practice if it expresses components of that practice's

organisation" (Schatzki, 2002, p. 87). In the following, I will explain and develop the content of this quote, and I intend to illustrate the concepts with examples from energy-consuming everyday practices like washing clothes and regulation of indoor comfort.

### ***What are practices?***

The basic element of a practice is bodily doings and sayings, and, as a comment on the linguistic turn in recent decades, Schatzki emphasises that the doings are as important as the sayings (p. 77). The context of the doings and sayings is important as both doings and sayings can change meaning according to context. A practice is a set of doings and sayings, and as a way of understanding and describing these sets, Schatzki introduces a hierarchy with *doings and sayings* at the basic level, and with collections of sayings and doings forming a level of *tasks*, which, in turn, at a higher level with several tasks, can form *projects*. He explains that different sayings and doings can often form the same task. If the task is to dry washed clothes, for instance, this can obviously be done in different ways: for instance, either by using a tumble dryer or a clothes line. The same is true for the level of projects. If we consider clothes washing as a project, this can obviously also consist of many different tasks and sayings and doings like deciding what to wash, telling teenagers to clean their room for dirty clothes, sorting the clothes, putting it into the machine, etc. A practice thus embraces a set of hierarchically organised doings and sayings, tasks and projects, and the participant in any given practice will normally carry out actions at all three levels. Furthermore, practices need not be regular; they can comprise occasional, rare, or novel sayings and doings, tasks, and projects. Buying a washing machine, for instance, is part of the washing practice; however, it is a doing that is much rarer than the doing of filling the machine with clothes. Practices are social and by performing a practice you coexist with not only those you interact with (for washing practices, primarily other family members), but also with all other people performing this practice, e.g., most people in western societies share washing practices.

### ***What guides practices and individual activities?***

Activities by individuals are guided by practical intelligibility, which is basically what makes sense for the individual person to do. Thus practical intelligibility is an individual thing, and the way it guides certainly does not have to be in the most rational or normatively correct way. When interviewing people on how they regulate their indoor climate, you can get very different views of how thermostats work and what is healthy or not, as related to indoor climate (Gram-Hanssen, 2010a). Some, for instance, argue that it is unhealthy to keep a high indoor temperature or that airing a room is a matter of showing control and personal strength. And some argue that it is easier to air a room if one keeps a high temperature. The question of whether these ideas in a scientific understanding can be called true is secondary; what matters is that it actually guides individual practices. People do what from their practical intelligibility makes sense for them to do.

In contrast to individual activities, practices are collective and need collectively shared links to hold together the sayings and doings. Schatzki proposes four links of what holds sayings and doings together in practices:

- Practical understanding
- Rules
- Teleoaffective structures
- General understandings

*Practical understanding* is about knowing what to do and knowing how to identify and react to something. It is a capacity underneath the action; however, it does not determine the action.

Practical understanding carries out those acts that practical intelligibility singles out. Using the indoor climate as an example again, I understand practical understanding as the bodily knowhow of actually regulating the heating and ventilation systems, that is, turning the valves and opening and closing windows and doors.

By *rules* is meant explicit rules of how to do things, what is allowed and what is not. Thus, this does not include tacit or implicit rules. Again, with heating as an example, some neighbourhoods with shared district heating systems might have written rules of how to handle the system – for instance, in relation to payment and maintenance or in relation to what the temperatures should be in summer and winter.

*Teleoaffective structures*, a compound term made up of teleological and affective, is about being goal-oriented, where the goal is directed by normative views or moods. To illustrate this, I think norms of cleanliness and how these norms are part of holding washing practices together is a good example. Teleoaffective structures are not individual-based like practical intelligibility; instead, they are properties of practices. This means that a person does not have to be aware of the teleological end of a practice to take part in the practice. When individuals explain their washing habits, they do not refer directly to cultural understandings of what is clean and what is not. Their actions, however, will most probably follow the general norms. The practice thus contributes to the construction and reproduction of the teleoaffective structure, which at the same time also takes part in the linking together of sayings and doings into practices. Teleoaffective structures do not govern individual activity, as this is governed by practical intelligibility. The practical intelligibility, however, is also formed during the learning processes of how to carry out the practices. It then follows that the normativity in the teleoaffective structures of a practice does shape what makes sense for people to do. Furthermore teleoaffective structures and the ends, tasks, and projects that they guide are open-ended and subject to discussion and contention.

As examples of the *general understandings*, Schatzki mentions religious and communitarian understandings. The general understandings are thus commonly shared beliefs, enterprises, concerns, or fates. As an example, I think the idea that "taking care of the environment is a good thing" is a common understanding shared by most people in Denmark (and probably in most western societies). Exactly how this should morally influence practices, however, is a question that there is much less agreement about. Schatzki, however, does not provide much knowledge of this fourth aspect of what links together practices, even though this fourth element was not part of the theory in Schatzki's first book, where he only describes the first three elements that hold together practices (Schatzki, 1996:89) It is not mentioned either in a 1997 article by Schatzki (Schatzki, 1997). In these older descriptions from Schatzki, it seems as if the general understandings are part of the teleoaffective structures.

### ***Integrated and dispersed practices and their delimitation***

Practices can be differentiated into integrated and dispersed practices. Integrated practices are those that get the most attention in practice theories and they are the most complicated in the sense that they consist of more elements and specific organisations. Examples of integrated practices with relation to energy consumption in households are cooking practices, washing practices, communication and entertaining practices, whereas examples of dispersed practices are asking, describing, and the practice of turning a switch or a tap on or off. As seen in these examples, dispersed practices are elements in the integrated practices, in such a way that many different dispersed practices can be part of the same integrated practice, and that any dispersed practice can be part of a multiplicity of different integrated practices. It is important to mention that simple dispersed practices are not guided by all four elements but usually only by a practical understanding, as they are most often both free of rules and not governed by



teleoaffective structure. Actually, it is exactly because of the absence of these structures that it is possible for the dispersed practices to work in such different types of settings.

A particular doing or saying, or a dispersed practice, might be part of not only one but several practices and the same is true for a given organisational component. So, how does one distinguish one practice from another? The delimitation is given in the understanding of a practice as a set of doings and sayings linked by practical understandings, rules, teleoaffective structures, and general understandings. This means that what practices exist is an empirical question of the actual existence of such packages. The same holds true for the question of who is member of a practice. This is not a normative question but a factual one of who is actually following the norms of what is obligatory or acceptable to do and say.

### Practice theory, artefacts, and technology

As Schatzki writes in the introduction to "The practice turn in contemporary theory", one of the things that divide scholars who consider themselves as part of practice theory, is the question of what role things, technologies, and matter should have in the theory. Most would agree that things are an important element in most practices. However, for some of the theorists, this is regarded as mediators between primary social relations, whereas the post-humanists will argue that non-humans take a role in their own right (Schatzki, 2001). Schatzki is obviously not part of the post-humanistic turn himself, and he is explicit that what he calls activities are human activities and what can be called nonhuman agency belongs to social orders (the result of the practices) and not practices in themselves (Schatzki, 2002). However, in this paper, I am interested in that part of practice theories, which in a more profound way, takes in things and technologies as essential in the understanding of household energy consumption. For this purpose, I will in the following section introduce the work of Reckwitz who argues for an elaboration of Schatzki's theory by bringing in the work of Latour's symmetric anthropology. Actually Reckwitz writes that not only does he think that such an inclusion of Latour in Schatzki's work is possible; he thinks it is required and, furthermore, he thinks it can help to make Latour's work more understandable (Reckwitz, 2002b).

#### ***Reckwitz: bringing Latour into the theory of Schatzki***

In his article, Reckwitz is searching for the status of the material in different approaches of cultural theories. He divides cultural theories into three different (historic) periods and discusses how the material has been thought of in each of these periods (Reckwitz, 2002b). The first period is the sociology of knowledge, including Manheim, Scheler, and Durkheim, and Reckwitz argues that the way the material is thought of here is as social structures. The second period includes all of the cultural turn in social sciences, as for example, (post)structuralism, semiotics, constructivism, and social phenomenology. Though there are big differences in these understandings, they share the view of the material as something that only exists as carriers of meaning and objects of knowledge. Reckwitz admits the general merits of these cultural approaches; however, at the same time, he also asks for a less intellectual understanding of the material. This understanding, he writes, should first be able to see human activities with things as something that is not just related to other subjects or structures; second, to understand that social order is also a product of socially stable artefacts; and third, to see social change as following from a change of artefacts. And Reckwitz argues that the best place to look for such insight is to go to Latour, as this is where we get the things and artefacts into the theory without falling back into the materialist-idealistic approach of knowledge sociology.

The symmetric anthropology of Latour is an attempt to understand the link between the cultural and the material without having a constitution one way or the other (Latour, 1993). The material is neither the basis of the cultural nor a matrix of symbolic objects; it is artefacts

taking part in social practices in line with human beings. Latour tries to develop his own language on this, and central concepts are networks or practices, hybrids, and nature-cultures. However, in Reckwitz's opinion, this language is never fully developed into a social theory, and it has problematic elements such as the claimed status of objects as actors in their own right (Reckwitz, 2002b). Rather than elaborating on Latour's work, Reckwitz, however, wants to insert Latour's ideas into the practice theories.

So what does Reckwitz bring with him from the Latourian approach? If we look at what Latour calls historically specific nature-cultures, we see that they consist of different social networks or practices, including not only human beings and their relations, but also things that are seen as equal components in the constitution of the practices. Especially in contemporary society, with its enormous expansion of technical artefacts, it becomes increasingly difficult for a social theory to overlook how things take part in the constitution of social practices. Related to my subject, one can imagine how difficult it would be to understand washing and cooking practices without considering washing machines and refrigerators. Latour (1993) talks of the hybrid status of things: on one hand, they are socially and culturally handled and interpreted, but, on the other hand, they are definitely also more than just cultural representations as they are used and have an effect on their own.

Reckwitz (2002b) uses part of these understandings from Latour and writes that in their materiality and in being handled and produced, the objects or things are a necessary and irreplaceable part of creating and holding together practices. Furthermore, they make social reproduction possible beyond temporal and spatial limits. Things act as resources that can both enable and constrain practices, and they can work as instruments that do not only transmit messages but also mould both the form of the message and the type of communication. Thus, social change may also strongly depend on changes in the technical media. On the other hand, things or technologies do not determine specific activities. To have an effect, things must be used, and they can only be used if those using them have the knowhow, understanding, and interpretation of the thing – thus, the relation between the thing and the human agent is basically a relation of practical understanding, where the human agent learns to know and use the thing and this knowledge materialises within the practice. In this way, things can also be seen as materialised understandings and that not only bodies but also things are sites of understanding. Reckwitz sums up that "Social order and reproduction can be adequately understood only when we realize their double localization: as understanding incorporated in human bodies and as understanding materialized in artefacts." (Reckwitz, 2002b, p 213). Also, Reckwitz echoes Knorr Cetina and writes that, in this way, actions between human beings lose their omnipotence as they are joined by equally important actions between humans and non-human artefacts (Knorr Cetina, 1997). However, Reckwitz does not agree with all aspects of Latour's symmetrical anthropology. In his view, artefacts only have an effect insofar as they are handled by human agents, which is the reason their importance cannot be the same or equal that of human bodies and their embodied understandings.

Though Reckwitz is doing a good job in incorporating things and technology in practice theory, there are aspects of the technologies' role or place within practices that I think need to be further explored and discussed. As I am working with practices related to household energy consumption, I am interested in the relation between users and the individual appliances in everyday life as well as the users' relation to the whole energy system. Furthermore, I am interested in both the stability and the change of routines. In the following, I first want to introduce theories that emphasise the large technological systems and the inertia that these kinds of systems impose on practices. Then, I will focus on how new practices emerge in co-evolution with new artefacts. And finally, I will focus on the relations between the user and the technologies and the processes of domestication and appropriation.

### ***Large technological systems, transitions, and the physical infrastructure***

Bas van Vliet has written a PhD thesis on the greening of the grid and I will use part of his work to pin down some of the main aspects of how physical infrastructure influences and relates to household consumption (van Vliet, 2002). Large integrated technological systems are, for instance, grids that are built for the purpose of delivering a specific commodity to its customer. It can be the electricity grid or the district heating or gas pipes and it delivers a uniform, continuous, and mainly invisible product to its end-users, who seldom has any choice as there is only the same network and as products are essential for basic practices within the household.

In understanding how this type of big technological systems with many single artefacts and actors has come into existence, van Vliet refers to the work of Huges (1983) who studied the evolution of electricity systems between 1880 and 1930, as well as to other studies and traditions within technology studies. One of them is the technological transition theory, and it can, in many respects, be seen as bringing some of the most relevant aspects of the other theories together, which is why I will concentrate on this in the following section.

Technological transitions are big technological changes in the societal organisation of, for instance, housing, transport, communication, or production. Technological transitions are changes not only in technologies but also in the social network surrounding and sustaining these technologies. Technological transitions therefore do not easily break through. However, as history has shown, they do happen. Transition theories, as described by Kemp and others (see, for example, Rip and Kemp, 1998; Kemp, Loorbach and Rotmans, 2006; Geels, 2002), focus on both the inertia and the changes and in doing this they build on a long tradition from science and technology studies. Basically, transition theory works with a multilevel framework consisting of three levels: niches, regimes, and landscapes.

The metaphor of landscape is chosen because it refers to a material and hard structure, which is very difficult to change, and the landscape level works as the context and structure of all interactions between actors. The landscape level includes, for instance, the physical infrastructure as well as the legislation and deeply rooted ethical norms of society. "The Socio-technical landscape is a landscape in the literal sense, something around us that we can travel through; and in a metaphorical sense, something that we are a part of, that sustains us" (Rip and Kemp, 1998:334)

The notion of regimes comes from evolutionary economics where it focuses on how engineers working to develop new technologies follow technological trajectories, because they are locked in certain ways of thinking about and doing things. In transition theories, the idea of regimes is extended to include a more sociological understanding of "rules" (Geels, 2002). "A technological regime is the rule-set or grammar embedded in a complex of engineering practices, production process technologies, product characteristics, skills and procedures, ways of handling relevant artefacts and persons, ways of defining problems, all of them embedded in institutions and infrastructures" (Rip and Kemp, 1998:338). Among some theorists, the understanding of regimes is further extended to include more actors, as users, policy makers, societal groups, suppliers, scientists, capital banks, etc. Following this broadened understanding of technical trajectories, Geels use the word *socio-technical* regimes rather than just technological regimes to refer to this meso level of the model (Geels, 2002). Developments at this level follow the line of already known ways of doing things; they follow technological trajectories that are built into routines, knowledge structures, organisations, and physical structures. The regime level thus counts for stability in the way, for example, technologies, knowledge, and organisations develop. And as van Vliet writes, "Technological trajectories seem nowhere as evident as in circumstances of fixed networks, where large-scale investments have accumulated over the years and physically impede changes or alternatives to the basic features of the system" (van Vliet, 2002:35)

The niche is the most crucial level in relation to technological transitions as this is where radical changes are able to develop in a small scale in isolated or protected environments (e.g., the army) and then later eventually transferred to the regime and landscape levels if, for a different reason, these show openings or tensions (Rip and Kemp, 1998). The three levels of landscape, regime, and niche form part of a hierarchy, where the lower levels are dependent on the higher levels and changes in niches thus also depend on the configuration in regimes and landscapes. However, Geels criticises this strong focus on the niche level as the only place where radical changes happen. By using a case study on the transition from sailing ships to steam ships, he argues that an accumulation of niche developments, together with changes in landscape and regime levels, provides a better understanding.

Following this line by using concepts of transition theories but criticising the understanding that novelties always develop in niches and spread from here, Shove has studied how practices of comfort, cleanliness, and convenience have co-developed with all three levels of technologies (Shove, 2003). Shove shows that transitions have to be understood both as bottom-up (from niche to landscape) and top-down (from landscape to niche) processes, as well as on a vertical level where 'systems of system' develop - e.g., washing practices being dependent on systems of washing machine technologies as well as on systems of new fabrics. And while practices and (systems of) technologies have co-evolved, expectations and norms of what a normal life should be like have changed in a rather unsustainable way.

### *New practices – new products*

The socio-technical approaches described above all have as a basic understanding the co-evolution of new technologies and new practices. However, they focus on it from a system perspective, which might seem rather far from the single practice. To get a closer look at the micro-level close to the consumer, Shove and Pantzar did an exemplary work in their study on Nordic walking (Shove and Pantzar, 2005). Here, they show how a pair of sticks and the practice of walking, both quite well-known things for thousands of years, have been developed into a new practice: Nordic walking. In the construction of the new practice, both consumers and producers have played an important role in creating images, artefacts, and forms of knowledge, and they describe how new practices engender and entail new forms of production and consumption. Shove and Pantzar are inspired by practice theory as developed by Schatzki, Reckwitz, and Warde. However, they tend to use a more simple form of it as they focus their study on three elements of a practice – meanings, competences, and products – and on the dynamic relationship between these three elements. They argue that neither the sticks nor the knowhow of walking nor the idea of walking for fun or exercise are new, but that the combination and integration are made in a new way and thus form a new practice. They conclude that neither the producers of the sticks nor the consumers could have invented this new practice alone or could have reproduced the practice alone. Furthermore, they conclude that although Nordic walking is seen in different countries, they find it misleading to say that it has spread from Finland to other countries. Rather, they find that new variants of Nordic walking, that is, new practices, are emerging in new contexts. In their description of how the meanings, competences, and knowledge of Nordic walking are institutionalised, they draw on discussions from technology and transition theory of how building institutions and networks are important elements in developing new technologies. As the notion of niches suggests, this might be easier to do in small environments or communities, where the system builder already knows other actors or can easily get in contact with them. In the case of Nordic walking, a well-connected group of actors, including sports institutes, organisations, and manufacturers, is seen as an important ingredient in the rather fast development of Nordic walking (Shove and Pantzar, 2005).

### ***Appropriation and domestication of technologies***

The third and last element concerning technologies that I wanted to relate to practice theory is the question of appropriating and domesticating technologies. Theories of domestication deal with how people relate to new things and technologies in the different consumer phases of acquisition, use, and disposal of goods (see, for example, Lehtonen, 2003). Domestication is not only about a consumer getting used to a new product and learning to use it. In the process, both consumer and product may change, and the result is not always the use pattern that was anticipated by the producers. An even closer look into the relations that develop between the consumer and the consumer good can be found in an article by Kaj Ilmonen (2004). Based on, among others, the ideas of Russian psychologist Vygotsky, Ilmonen describes how the first step in the process of appropriation is internalisation, where one commodity is singled out and given a place in our social life – for instance, a house is turned into a home. This internalising is actually in the beginning a cognitive adoption, in the sense that all goods require skills and knowhow to be used properly. This cognitive adoption is, in many cases, an ongoing process and, during this process, we transform our relationship with the product, we go from objective understandings to subjective minds in our relation to the thing. This process is not necessarily an individual process; for instance, a family together creates the feeling of home, and the process is also under broader cultural influence. This implies that different types of consumers, for instance, related to gender and age differences, might undertake this process in different ways. However, generally, the more we are involved with and committed to the thing, the stronger the role it plays in our life, the stronger this process is. Following this cognitive adoption in the appropriation process is the way we decorate or configure the products to make them a part of us or as a way to extend our self and form a territory around our body (Lupton and Noble, 2002). Furthermore, the way we take care of the goods expresses our feelings for them, Ilmonen writes. The appropriation process not only changes our relation to the objects; it also changes our practices as our use over time becomes a routine, and, depending on the type of product, we might even stop to think about the product as it becomes just part of what we do. The last part of the appropriation process, according to Ilmonen, is the process of externalising, where we show other people what we have done with our product – for instance, how we have decorated our home or we show the result of our skills with the computer. And, by this, we might take part in the development of the practices, as others might respond to our ideas and use them as well.

### ***Concluding remarks on the introduction of socio-technical approaches into practice theory***

In the preceding sections, I have proposed different socio-technical approaches that can be included or combined with practice theory as described by Schatzki. These approaches include a system perspective from transition theories, an important contribution when dealing with a practice such as energy consumption, which has a strong link to the constitution of physical infrastructure. Also, understandings of how technologies are domesticated and appropriated are a relevant contribution as people interact with technologies and relate with them in many different ways in everyday life and this also has consequences for energy consumption. Finally, I have described an example of how new products and new practices co-evolve. The example is dealing with Nordic walking, which is a simpler practice than most of those connected to energy consumption, in the sense that it is a more delimited practice, that is not interwoven with as many different levels of technologies and actors as most energy-consuming practices. However, the example might still be illustrative of an issue which is of great importance when dealing with energy consumption – the continuous development of new practices and, by that, new needs in relation to the introduction of new technologies in everyday life.

My introduction of different socio-technical approaches into Schatzki's practice theory has been inspired by the way Reckwitz combines ideas from Latour and from Schatzki. When Reckwitz, in his article, proposes to incorporate Latourian theories into Schatzki's work, he refers to Schatzki's book published in 1996 (Reckwitz, 2002b). However, in the same year that Reckwitz's article was published, Schatzki published a new book, where he actually extensively discusses the work of Latour and opposes it for several reasons (Schatzki, 2002). First of all, Schatzki, like so many others, rejects the idea that Latour uses words indicating intentionality in relation to artefacts and technology. Furthermore, Schatzki contrasts his own practice approach with theorists like Latour and Foucault, whom he calls arrangements theorists, as they focus on networks and relations rather than on practices. Finally, according to Schatzki, Latour is also a nominalist who opposes the idea of a context for the social order, which is an important element in Schatzki's practice theory. In Schatzki's understanding, technology is a result of practices and a context for practices, whereas the socio-technical understandings typically emphasise the symmetrical relation and the co-evolution between the social and the technological. Regardless of the different understandings of the relation between practices and technology, I will give examples of how practice theory and socio-technical approaches combined can give insights on everyday life and energy consumption.

### Using practice theory in analysing everyday life and energy consumption

One of the things that complicate the analysis of energy consumption in everyday life is that consuming energy is not a practice; it is an element in, a consequence of, or a necessity for many different practices. As mentioned previously, practices in everyday life include, for instance, cooking practice, clothes washing practice, or communicating and entertaining practices, but also what could be called "the practice of making a home," which includes keeping a comfortable temperature and lighting as well as cleaning, maintaining, decorating, and furnishing the house. In all these different integrated practices, we can find the dispersed practices of turning on and off thermostats, switches, remote controls, and taps whenever energy consumption is involved in the practices. It could be argued that practice theory might not be the best approach for analysing energy consumption when energy consumption cannot be viewed as one practice but has to be understood as elements in several different practices. The case is, however, that practice theory only highlights what also follows from an everyday-life approach. People do not consume energy in their everyday life; they do a lot of other things, for different reasons, and with different purposes and these imply or are followed by energy consumption. Understanding energy consumption, we thus have to focus on the different practices and, for this purpose, I will argue that practice theory in the way I have presented it above provides a relevant approach.

I have elsewhere used practice theory for analysing the practice of keeping a comfortable indoor climate (Gram-Hanssen, 2010a) and for analysing standby consumption practices (Gram-Hanssen, 2010b). I would like to summarize some of the insights and conclusions I drew from these two articles. Both articles built on qualitative interviews with families about their every day practices, combined with different kinds of measurements of their energy consumption. In both articles, an adjusted practice theory approach was used, which defined four elements holding a practice together:

- Practical understanding – embodied habits
- Rules – knowledge
- Engagements – meanings
- Technologies – material structure

The first three elements are in line with the work from Schatzki's book in 1997, though following the work of Warde (2005) and Shove and Pantzar (2005); the third element is renamed engagements or meanings rather than teleoaffective structures. The element "general understandings" from Schatzki's 2002 book are not included, as it is argued that this is integrated in the engagement-meaning element. Furthermore, a fourth element, technologies or material structures, was added, following the arguments presented in this article. The article on indoor climate focuses on how different households in identical houses perform the same practice in rather different ways and thus with the result of rather different levels of energy consumption. The other article on standby consumption focuses on how changes in the habits of turning off standby consumption can come about or not.

The two articles conclude that these four elements provide a good basis for analysing what holds practices together and for understanding which variations there can be within one practice as well as understanding how changes can come about. The articles emphasise the dual nature of these four elements and the practices. Each of the four elements should be seen as a structure sustaining practices at the same time that these elements are sustained and developed by the practitioners performing the practices. Another strong point of the theory is that it maintains that all four elements are equally important for understanding a practice or for understanding how to change a practice. This can even be relevant from an energy policy perspective. Economic incentives or campaigning might influence people's practices as they can affect their engagement in a practice; educational and informative initiatives might influence people's practices as they affect their knowledge about the practice. However, at the same time, there are many other engagements related to these practices. Furthermore, the embodied habits and the technology also take a strong part in structuring the energy-consuming practices. And these last points are too seldom reflected in the prevailing policy efforts to lower energy consumption from households.

## Conclusion

In this paper, I have been looking for theories to understand how new everyday routines and practices, related to use of energy-consuming appliances can be conceptualised. For this purpose, I have introduced the practice theory from Schatzki and I have proposed ways to extend this theory in order to better understand the role of technologies in these practices. By combining practice theory with different approaches within socio-technical understandings of technology, I have proposed a theoretical frame that is able to deal with how social, cultural, and physical structures work as the context for both the stability and the change in these everyday practices, while at the same time seeing this context as a product of practices. This theoretical frame does not necessarily provide entirely new insights into the understanding of energy consumption in everyday life. However, it is able to combine insights from many different approaches and thus highlight the fact that embodied habits, knowledge, engagements, as well as technologies and material structures are all connected and constitutive of those different practices that are the cause of household energy consumption.

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## **Participatory Design as a Prerequisite for Safer Living Environments for the Elderly**

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The steady increase in the number of elderly people in Italy and difficulties encountered in the management of the social and health services have led to such increased use of the Home Care Service that more specialised care is required.

This highlights the fact that many houses are not equipped to ensure either the safety or the wellbeing of older residents, since they have not been adapted to cater for the changes brought about by old age. A study made in Florence looked at modifications made to the houses of elderly people suffering from the first stages of Alzheimer's disease. The aim of the study was to provide tools that the elderly themselves or family members could utilise to check the adequacy of their living environments, and to make changes with or without the support of an architect. A methodology was developed for managing the participation of users (in this case the elderly residents, families, visitors, and caregivers) in the remodelling process of the housing. The study was conducted through interviews, questionnaires and focus groups. Positive aspects of the participatory process are explained, as well as the difficulties encountered.

## Background

Currently, 13 of the world's 15 "oldest" countries - those with the largest percentage of elderly people (65 or older) - are in Europe<sup>1</sup>. In Italy, the world's "oldest" country by this definition, the elderly constitute approximately 20 percent of the population (65+ 20.3%; 75+ 9.6%). This figure is expected to reach 28 percent by 2030. (Istat, 2003).

Although the most striking examples of ageing populations are in Europe, Japan and the U.S.A., they are becoming a global trend. Longer life, an achievement of modern civilization, requires changes in retirement policies and social programmes, and longer life expectancy means that people will have to re-think how they would like to spend their lives.

In Italy, this situation had been exacerbated by what used to be one of Europe's most generous state pension schemes, paying pensions of up to 80% of the final pensionable salary. Occupational and personal pension provision is now very low. Italy's finances are precarious, with a national debt of around twice the European average, expressed in terms of GNP. To address these problems, Italy recently introduced dramatic pension and fiscal reforms, with the aim of reducing the cost of the state pension scheme and encouraging private sector pension provision.

The Italian health system caters for different levels of assistance, from the initial "*home care service*", to "*day care*" and "*nursing homes*" for both self-sufficient and non self-sufficient people. This structure has been reorganised, making more room for private investment.

For the last ten years, government policies have encouraged people to remain in their own homes, supported where necessary by domiciliary services which complement the care provided by family and friends. This choice takes account of the fact that people should not be removed from their normal lives simply because they are becoming older. On the other hand, it is clear that this choice is the most economically viable for the public finances. Consequently, there is an increased call to adapt private homes and public spaces to accommodate independent older people, and this brings its own problems.

### ***Condition of elderly people's housing in Italy***

In a survey that took place in Europe on "*health and survival for the elderly*", the living conditions of families with elderly members in southern Europe was summarised by the slogan: "*rich in house - poor in cash*" (Jappelli et al., 2005).

This definition provides a good description of the situation of families in the Mediterranean region who complain about the increasing difficulties of maintaining an adequate standard of living.

In 78% of cases, the elderly in Italy are the owners of the house they live in. A large proportion of the elderly are living alone. One-person families now make up a quarter of all households. 53.8% of these families consist of people over 65 years of age.

These conditions of loneliness, which increase with ageing, affect women in particular. 50% of women 70 years or older live alone. These people live with the contradiction of owning a house where they are forced to live in very strained conditions because of the expenses arising from their financial asset. There is therefore an issue with the large number of properties which make living more of a difficulty for the elderly than a resource.

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1 According to the United Nations, World Population Prospects, Revision 2004.

The houses where the elderly population live are not naturally suited to accommodating people who are growing older. More than 24 million Italians live in apartments which are falling apart or in a poor state, with damp or with inadequate electrical, water and sanitation installations. These houses are often very old, many of them built after the Second World War during the building boom of the '60s and '70s, and they have never been renovated since then. Almost 50% of the houses are more than 40 years old, the technological threshold beyond which the dwelling requires structural maintenance to function properly. These houses are mainly inhabited by the elderly (Cresme, 2006).

Houses are also often too large (3-4 bedrooms) for the real needs of families of decreasing size (1 or 2 people on average). Furthermore, the apartments are often located in buildings without a lift. A number of potential obstacles (stairs, carpets, slippery floors, incorrect lighting) present a challenge to the independence of elderly people.

These conditions in a house can contribute to an increasing sense of loneliness and social exclusion. If the old person encounters a lot of obstacles in her daily activities (shopping, meeting friends, going swimming or to the gym, going to the library or to church, etc.), she will not want to go out as often, and she will become more isolated and lose her autonomy much more quickly.

In Italy, there is a regulation (L 13/1989) which enables major renovations to be funded by municipalities to remove architectural barriers in houses for disabled citizens. This law also applies to elderly people who require changes to their own homes. The limitations lie in the bureaucratic complexities behind the demand for this support, coupled with the fact that the elderly also have to overcome the social and psychological barriers they often encounter in everyday life in asking for financial help. Moreover, the cost of maintaining the house is additional to the various forms of taxation that affect the property, and this detracts from the elderly person's ability to live a dignified existence. In short, the low pension the average elderly person receives in Italy means that they do not even consider adapting their houses.

### ***The evolution of the concept of safety in housing in Italy***

The word "safety" in architecture is generally used to define issues linked to surviving fires, earthquakes and structural collapse. Since the '90s, there has been a new and growing interest in the safety levels in housing. Defined as "safety in use"<sup>2</sup>, it is a contemporary concept that sees human beings in the context of the houses they live in; homes have to be built with a lower a risk of accidents in mind.

The concept of "safety" in Italian housing has changed over the centuries according to a variety of factors. In particular, attempts to find solutions to natural disasters have been improved more and more, and this issue has always been seen as a collective problem. On the other hand, an accident which occurs at home is considered to be an individual problem, and episodic, attributed to a personal mistake as opposed to objective factors.

Only in the last 20 years have studies begun to be made of the dangers contained in a house itself. Previously considered a safe refuge, it is now analysed as a place full of small, daily risks which generally cause damage to the individual and not to the whole building. The growing attention paid to indoor pollution and the sick building syndrome brings into perspective the harmful materials used in construction, and promotes a strong, active consciousness among inhabitants, as well as a widespread "*discomfort culture*" (Tatano, 1998).

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2 The term "safety in use" was defined for the first time in the European Regulation EU 89/106, 21.12.1988.

### ***Statistical data for domestic accidents***

Statistics show that the most frequent accidents happen at home, and that the primary causes are the materials used in building and the lack of security systems. Looking at this in more detail, women of 65+ are the most frequent victims. The place where accidents happen most frequently is in the kitchen (31.1 % of cases for men; 58.1% of cases for women). The most frequent cause for men is falling (33.2%) and for women the incorrect use of kitchen utensils (36.7%), (Istat, 2001), (see Table 1).

Table 1a-1b. The victims of accidents.  
Statistical Data Istat 2001 ( x 1000 ).

<b>Gender and Class of Age</b>	
Women 65+	26,6
Women 25-64	23,2
Men 65+	9,0
Women 0-24	8,0
Men 0-24	6,3
Men 25-64	5,5

<b>Gender and Working Condition</b>	
Women housewives	30,9
Women workers	17,3
Women in other conditions	15,2
Men in other conditions	8,0
Men workers	4,4

The risks inside a house can be divided into the following:

- Falls from slipping
- Falls from tripping or stumbling
- Falls from gradients and sharp dips
- Crush and traumatic contact
- Burns
- Electrocution and electrical shock
- Explosion
- Drowning
- Becoming trapped

In all these cases, technical elements (floors, stairs and ramps, windows and doors, vertical partitions, heating, lighting) and the personal skills and behaviour of the inhabitants may be responsible for, or contribute to, the accident (Tatano, 1998). (See Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2a-2b. The three major causes of accidents.  
Statistical Data Istat 2001 (x 100 accidents).

Cause of accident for men	
Falls	33,2
Kitchen utensils	20,4
DIY - Do It Yourself	10,2

Cause of accident for women	
Kitchen utensils	36,7
Falls	27,0
DIY - Do It Yourself	1,4

Table 3a-3b. Rooms where accidents occur.  
Statistical data Istat 2001 (x 100 accidents).

Men - Room where accidents occur	
Kitchen	31,1
Balcony - Garden	14,5
Basement - Garage	13,6
Living Room	11,7
Bathroom	9,3
Bedroom	6,3
Internal Stairs	4,9
External Stairs	4,9
Corridor - Entrance	3,3

Women - Room where accidents occur	
Kitchen	58,1
Living Room	8,2
Bedroom	6,7
Internal Stairs	5,6
Balcony - Garden	5,5
Bathroom	4,2
External Stairs	3,7
Corridor - Entrance	3,7
Basement - Garage	2,6

Elderly participation: can participation be taught?

### ***Defining “participation”***

In the Oxford English Dictionary, “participation” is defined as “the action or fact of partaking, having or forming a part of”. In this sense, participation may be transitive or intransitive, moral, amoral or immoral, forced or free, or manipulative or spontaneous. Transitive forms of participation are, by definition, oriented towards a specific goal or target. By contrast, in its intransitive forms, the subject undertakes the process of partaking without a predefined purpose. While one is listening, loving, creating, or fully living life, one partakes without necessarily seeking to achieve a particular objective (Rahnema, 1992).

The word “*participation*” does not express content in itself, but it has a function that can change in relation to the different contexts to which it is applied. The word “*participation*” could be used to express two different kinds of behaviour: communication (when you “participate” by giving information, intervening in a debate, etc.), or the sharing of interests, ideas and situations (participation in a meeting, sharing experiences, etc.) The various forms of participation differ in their levels of intensity and performance, their features and the many degrees of applicability and impact on the process (Uspel, Ecosfera, 2001).

The first important distinction in the urban scenario is between “formal participation” and “active participation”. Despite substantial differences between these two forms, there is no single theoretical approach for regulating the mode of intervention for non-state actors in decision-making. This means that we continue to use the same term (“participatory practice”) to define an approach aimed at increasing popular consensus on policy decisions (*top-down*), as well as a method of design for socially shared future development (*bottom-up*) (Sanoff, 2000).

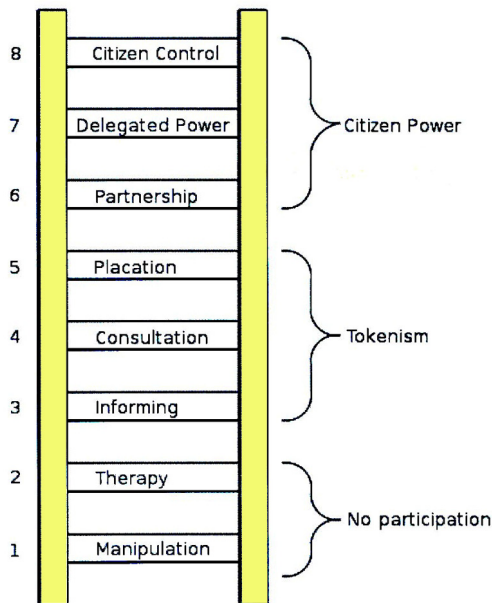
### ***Different levels of participation***

The vagueness of definition on the concept of “participation” and its different forms of application (depending on the degree of influence exercised by citizens in the decision-making processes), has given rise to a number of attempts at interpretation and classification. One of the most interesting is the “ladder of participation” created in 1969 by Sherry R. Arnstein, and many authors still refer to this. Arnstein made his classifications using an analysis of power relations established in a few experiments in the U.S.A. on development and deployment of decisions, and he based them on qualitative rather than quantitative criteria. He extracted participatory practices into eight different categories or eight steps, on a



hypothetical scale from total exclusion, to symbolic forms of participation, to a substantial increase in the responsibilities of citizens. The scale is a simplified representation of social, personal and professional interaction within a participatory planning process between administration and users (see Image 1).

Image 1. The ladder of participation by Arnstein, S.R. (1969)



### ***Design as a participatory process***

There are similarities between the community design approach (“Anglo-Saxon school”) and participatory design (“Scandinavian school”) in that both stress the importance of the user and the collaborative learning process with designers/planners. Advocates of participatory action research distinguish between *research for the people* and *research by the people* where there has been a parallel development of participatory methods in such fields as public health, resource management, adult education, rural development, and anthropology (Whyte, 1991). The participation of elderly people in the collaborative process may add to their perspective of reality. In fact, their participation in planning can solve problems and inconsistencies that the designer did not take into consideration during the design phase. The aim of this particular participatory process is to make the elderly aware of their needs and to encourage them to express them in order to improve their quality of life, influence their living environment and strengthen their sense of ownership.

### ***Finding a common language***

Projects which claim to be multidisciplinary often include expertise from different disciplines without any real integration. According to Lucien Kroll, the challenge lies in changing mindsets and organising a process of communication in both formal and informal areas. The development of a common language is necessary, and even the nuances of particular words can be important. Finding a common language for communication is not necessarily an automatic process but requires careful planning. Acronyms can prove to be particularly difficult to memorise, especially for elderly people (Kroll, 2009).

The terms “*home safety*” and “*wellness*”, for example, can be understood differently by different participants. “*Home safety*” has two slightly different meanings. It may indicate a building's ability to withstand external events (such as weather, home invasion, etc.), or it may indicate that its internal installations (such as appliances, stairs, etc.) are safe (not dangerous

or harmful) for its occupants. The term “*wellness*” is generally taken to mean a healthy balance of mind, body and spirit that results in an overall feeling of wellbeing, and from the architect’s point of view, the environment can play an important role. From a medical point of view, wellness can be defined as a view of health that emphasises the state of the entire being and its ongoing development. For the elderly, wellness seems to be a state of non-disease, as well as a peaceful and conscious pursuit of living life to its fullest.

### ***The role of the moderator***

Active participation in planning may be linked to a positive attitude towards following up participant input within the authority where the architect is based. This attitude is the first prerequisite, and being conscious of this challenge is the first condition for adopting a positive attitude. Then follows the problem of creating a “non-authoritarian place”; a communication area in which it is clear that everyone has the same right to speak, propose, discuss, create, etc. Where architecture is concerned, for example, the architect receives a lot of disjointed proposals. This chaos is a necessary consequence of communication between people, the civil area where democracy, exchanges, co-operation, justice and hospitality are the most important tools.

In this communication, the architect may be the “hinge”, but this hinge can often appear rusty and completely blocked, mainly because the participants have never been told about the role of the architect as mediator, or perhaps because they do not trust it, or because they are afraid of the consequences. People who have never had the chance to be active participants in a process can often be suspicious at first. At the start of the process, they may see the moderator as “the enemy” when they are trying to explain the conditions, what has to be done, the circumstances, the aim or the material reality. The moderator then explains, however, that the participants have to help if they are to reach the levels of quality they are looking for. When questioned, the inhabitants are no longer reluctant at all, and they willingly take on the role of participants (Kroll, Mikellides, 1982).

During the first meeting, the participants listen carefully, but they do not really believe or understand what they are hearing. The second meeting is better. The discussion is brought to a close, and we begin to construct an opinion or model. After several days, their perspective will change and they will gradually become involved in the “project”. At this point the architect may put forward his architectural proposals as they consist of what the participants have told him.

In this first phase, the moderator has to direct the process, presenting the initial problem in an easy and simple way, asking participants not to make judgements, encouraging lateral ideas, writing up everyone’s ideas on a blackboard and asking participants to think of variations on the ideas expressed by others. All the ideas from the first phases have to be incorporated (Kroll, 2009).

### ***Creative learning***

In order to create a process that can be considered “active participation”, the participants should adopt an attitude of “*active listening*” by following these “*recommendations*”:

- Do not jump to conclusions.
- What you see depends on your point of view.
- To understand what people are saying, you have to work on the assumption that they are right and ask them to help you to see the facts from their point of view.
- Emotions are very important tools of knowledge only if you can understand their language.
- A good listener is an explorer of possible worlds.

- A good listener willingly accepts the paradoxes of thought, interpersonal communication and disagreement as an opportunity to practise the creative management of conflicts.
- A good listener makes use of humour.

The right attitude is the exact opposite of what is considered a “*good observer*”, i.e. a neutral, impassive person who hides their reactions. A “*good listener*” will feel weak and will try to understand what other people are saying in order to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual learning. This is a necessary condition for addressing the various problems in a creative way (Sanoff, 2000).

## Methodology

The aim of this research was to define a simplified procedure for helping the elderly and their relatives to understand the kind of changes they need to make in their homes.

The first analysis looked at how elderly people could be made aware of their new needs by considering physiological changes related to age, and how they could be “educated” to express their vision of the environments they would like to live in. The analysis also considered how they could take the initiative in making changes to their houses in order to understand what is either dangerous or feasible within their physical abilities.

I shall now describe how the involvement of elderly people in a participatory process is an opportunity for them to express their needs.

### *Selecting participants*

The Municipality of Florence was contacted, along with a voluntary association (Auser) which develops domestic assistance for the elderly. They helped gain access to elderly people and the workers who take care of them (nurses, social workers, geriatric doctors, caregivers, etc.), so that participants could be selected. The aim was to select a group of between 5 and 20 people from which 12 participants could be chosen.

The people selected to participate in the process of evaluating housing in the elderly population were:

- four elderly residents (three living independently and one not)
- an official from the Municipality
- an architect
- two relatives of the old people involved
- two nurses
- a social assistant
- a geriatric doctor

### *Interviews*

Interviews with each participant formed the first phase of the research. The aim of this first operation was to gather information and to form a clear picture of the participants. Once the group was formed, an initial public presentation of the project was arranged. This simply involved a unidirectional flow of information from the mediator (the architect) to the participants. Initial informative material was distributed.

### *Survey*

In the second phase, questionnaires were distributed to the participants, the aim of which was to explore:

- their level of satisfaction with the houses they were living in;
- whether they felt safe at home;
- whether they had ever had a domestic accident;
- whether they could move around freely, or whether there were problems with accessibility;
- whether they could reach everything they needed in the house;
- the changes they would like to make in their house;
- whether they needed assistance in daily activities;
- the services they would like to be offered.

The aim of this phase of participatory design was to make elderly people aware of their needs and to encourage them to question the quality of their housing. A survey by questionnaire has the advantage of reaching a large number of people, and it is easy to keep a written record of the responses. Disadvantages include the lack of interactivity and the frequent and often necessary use of “closed” questions.

### ***Focus group***

The third step was the focus group, where all the participants met for the first time. The aim of the focus group was an in-depth investigation of the difficulties that older people experience at home. Unlike other techniques used, the focus group requires strong interaction and communication, where people can express their opinions, disagree with suggestions and highlight the weaknesses in an argument.

In discussing their physical problems and how difficult it was to do the things they used to do, the old people identified the major problems associated with living in their houses.

- The issues they raised were arranged in groups defined as “*elderly standard features*”:
- Difficulty in reaching high objects
- Difficulty in turning around
- Difficulty in moving sideways and bending down
- Difficulty of movement
- Reduced vision
- Impaired hearing
- Reduced sense of smell
- Possible confusion
- Incontinence
- Anxiety and stress

A second group of issues was added to the first group, related to elderly people in the first stages of Alzheimer’s Disease, and defined as “*expanded standard features*”(Regione Toscana, 2002):

- Speech difficulty
- Disorientation phenomena
- Perceptual and cognitive losses
- Loss of recent memory
- Wandering
- Irritability and aggressiveness
- (see Image 2)

Image 2. Cards describing the difficulties elderly people experience in the home.



A set of cards was made showing the requirements they had mentioned. This method helped to find creative solutions to problems defined in the previous phases. For each problem, everyone expressed “*the first idea that came to mind*” in a rapid sequence of association of ideas. In this way, unexpected solutions were generated, which were then carefully reviewed to make them more practical and feasible. This technique was limited in that the elderly people were often unable to go beyond their spatial experience, and often did not understand the two-dimensional drawings. A more effective tool for overcoming their initial shyness involved the use of pictures taken in their own houses.

### ***Performance requirements for the house***

During the analysis phase, performance requirements were defined for a house which would give elderly people a suitable environment to operate and move around in. These performance requirements were defined using the following variables, drawn from the data which emerged from the discussions:

- Accessibility
- Visual and acoustic wellness
- Orientation
- Safety
- Usability of all the elements present in the house
- Control of the level of privacy

Older people's perception of independence often correlates with their notions of self-esteem, self-determination and dignity (Hanson, 2003). Recent literature on how to address issues of control and access to public, semi-public and private spaces tends to recommend the model of "*progressive privacy*" as one of the most suitable options.

Hanson defines six categories of space: private, semi-public, public, staff only, other, and circulation. Each category is defined on the basis of the pattern of access and control, and the perceived "ownership" of the space (Hanson, 2003). Where old people's dwellings may be considered private spaces *par excellence*, it is also important to recognise that there are semi-public and public areas where elderly people with reduced mobility still feel part of everyday activities.

The different rooms of the house where they live have a bearing on the various areas of daily activity of the elderly, creating the concept of "*progressive privacy*".

### ***Definition of guidelines***

The purpose of this paper was to illustrate methodological criteria for demonstrating that the "*normal house*" should be converted into a "*house for special needs*" when the resident grows old. These criteria can hopefully help to create a cultural shift away from the concept of "*special needs*" towards "*lifestyle choices*". In this way, the fact of becoming older, or being temporarily or permanently affected by a disease, will not mean that a person's house is not ready to respond to these needs.

The idea was to give elderly people the tools to decide what was no longer appropriate in their houses. These same tools may also be useful for the relatives of a person suffering from dementia, to help them assess which elements in the house may become dangerous. The positioning of furniture, the use of natural and/or artificial lighting to avoid bad reactions, and taking a close look at the behaviour of caregivers, are all elements that ensure the physical environment does not become a further source of stress in the home for someone with dementia.

The final product of the participatory process was the drafting of guidelines listing prescriptive and specifically recommended actions. This guidance was divided into five levels of intervention, corresponding to the different levels of analysis undertaken on the housing. The first level of guidance involves the type of housing and its accessibility. The second involves the components of the house (floors, doors, windows, walls, stairs, etc.). The third concerns the arrangement of space (all the different rooms). The fourth involves the furniture and systems (electrical, heating, etc.), and the fifth accessories and equipment.

The proposed guidelines became a very technical document aimed at planners and public administrations, so they were very difficult for the elderly to understand. To resolve this problem, a simpler document was prepared which was easy to read and which did not contain any technical data. It takes the form of a booklet which explains in a simple way, through words and illustrations, how to adapt the home, with or without the help of technical professionals, if an old person is experiencing a specific problem. This information leaflet, which describes major risks and solutions in the home, was the final result of the participatory process which had involved the elderly in evaluating their own houses.

## Discussion and conclusion

Participant satisfaction is not so much characterised by the degree to which their needs have been met, but by the feeling of having influenced the decision. The role of the moderator in this participatory design experience, as the person who collected and processed the information to obtain specific results, was particularly difficult. There is always a danger that the architect will make the final decision as a “professional”, negating the major efforts made by the other participants by generalising the ideas they have put forward. In participatory design, however, the architect’s role is no longer to produce complete and unalterable solutions but to extract solutions through ongoing discussion with those who will use them. Energy and imagination has to be channelled into raising the level of awareness of the users in the discussion, and a solution will follow naturally from this exchange. The architect’s role is to give his/her opinions, provide technical information and discuss the implications of various alternatives, in the same way as the users state their opinions and contribute their expertise.

A critical reading of this study may consider the booklet too general a solution, as the participatory process on one hand, and the approach to ageing on the other, are phenomena closely connected to the people who experience them, so they cannot be strictly regulated.

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## **Everyday Life for an Ecologically and Socially Sustainable Future**

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We know what we have to do: smaller, closer, slower. If we lived these criteria daily, we would be near sustainability. We know the tips to save energy when building houses, when travelling or when consuming: use local, seasonal and organic food. Why we can't do that? I will look at the deeper reasons for our difficulties and from it, try to develop a strategy out. The central problem is the economisation of all areas of our lives. However, it is presented as a solution. Economisation is based on the idea that only things with a price have value. Existential goods like air, water, biodiversity, soil, animals and plants have become the private possession of certain people. This privatisation and monetization have two dramatic consequences. First, democratic control is decreased and people are forced to pay the rich for common goods through interest. Second, economisation leads to an abstract distance to life-giving goods. If they are traded electronically or on the stock exchange, concern for them disappears and thus respect and responsibility. Suffering children, carbon dioxide in the air, depleted soil, polluted rivers or extinct species lose their dramatics either in price or as a statistic. Men and nature are colonised, and finally our brains also. If we want a sustainable society, we must reflect on our colonialist behaviour. Value and engagement do not develop from pleas, numbers or statistics, but from binding relationships between humans and between humans and other living creatures. If we want to resolve our crisis, then financial funds must serve the common good and the value of money should be reconsidered. It cannot be an end in itself. We need to strengthen the perspective of subsistence. The supply of existential goods to all people must be the centre of all economy and all our plans. This is the path each person can take. When doing my daily activities I must ask if they serve money or if they serve social and ecological sustainability. I must ask if my behaviour helps to decrease the structural violence of colonialism or if it makes it stronger. I'm convinced that this way will appeal to many people, enthuse them and give them courage.



## **Implications of an Everyday Life Approach in Childhood Research**

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In my presentation I will try to show how an everyday life approach can be seen to have implications for the research on three different, although related, levels.

First, the impact of dealing with everyday life as a methodological perspective will be dealt with. Placing at center stage the interest in what children are actually doing and saying in their everyday life settings (in my research especially in the contexts of the daycare institutions and schools), this perspective points to need for ethnographic inspired methodological approaches.

Second, everyday life as a concept related to phenomenological traditions will be seen to have an impact as an analytical tool, looking for children's meaning making processes, negotiations, agency and the like. An important aim with the research in this perspective would be to establish some kind of conceptualization of how children perceive their own everyday life – or in other words to establish a 'child perspective'.

Third, everyday life will be seen as a sociological concept, in line with the traditions known from the work of Henri Lefebvre, Thomas Leithäuser, Dorothy Smith, Agnes Heller, and others. Especially the 'societalization' of everyday life and its impact on the increased formal structuring and organization of children's everyday life will be in focus. I will broadly be speaking about the consequences of the rationalization of children's everyday life as part of a modernization process.



## **Sustainable Epistemologies: Investigating Everyday Life from a First-Person Perspective**

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The question of developing sustainable everyday life challenges widespread practices of how to do academic research. Traditional approaches within psychology and the social sciences usually take a third-person perspective in their analysis. Building on theoretical languages and methodologies from the natural sciences, persons are constructed as objects and investigated from an external scientific perspective in abstraction of the immediate experience of the investigated subjects and their concrete social and technological life-world. In contrast to such an external, third-person perspective, the paper suggests to study everyday life from the perspective of the subject. My argumentation starts with the fundamental groundedness of human activity. This concept emphasizes that every individual action is grounded in reasons. Informed by critical psychology, phenomenology and analytical philosophy I argue that everyday experiences and reasons for action are given in the first person: they are always each person's "own" reasons, i.e., reasons from "my own" standpoint and "my own" perspective. In taking a first-person perspective in the study of everyday life I see a central prerequisite of overcoming an individualistic approach and to understand the precise social and technological mediation of human subjectivity and everyday conduct of life. This paper presents the theoretical construction of doing research from a "first-person perspective" and discusses its implications for the study of everyday life for an ecologically and socially sustainable future.



## **Large Technical Systems in Households – Visualising and Understanding the Consumption of Water and Energy as Socio-Technical Processes**

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A sustainable society demands, among other things, decreased household consumption of water and energy. Water and energy differ from other consumer goods in that they are provided by large technical systems. The proposed project will, from a consumer perspective, study the interface between user and system at a time when water and energy systems are becoming more differentiated (e.g. the liberalisation of the energy sector, introduction of volumetric billing of water and energy). These changes may improve resource efficiency, but they also place greater emphasis on the ability to gain access to and use information, to pay for new installations and perhaps spend time on management. Different households have different potential to meet these demands. By visualising household resources in a wide sense; economy, language capacity, education, IT-ability, etc, this study attempts to understand how ‘resource-strong’ and ‘resource-poor’ households respond to contemporary changes in water and energy systems and what it means in terms of sustainable consumption patterns. Then we can identify how the technical systems should change to reach all groups in society. Two municipalities will be selected as case studies in examining time-diaries and in making observations, interviews and measurements. In each of the municipalities, households will be selected from two blocks of flats with diverging socio-economic character but with comparable socio-technical systems.





## Household Appliances in Passive Houses

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These are some preliminary thoughts on a case study on household appliances and their role in homes built according to the Passive house standard in the residential area Lambohov in Linköping. The aim of the study is to investigate how the newly built rental apartments are equipped before the families move in. What sort of appliances are chosen and how energy efficient are they? Passive houses are designed in a way that minimizes the need of additional heating. By for example using the natural sun light and the heat generated from appliances like refrigerators and washing machines the need for in-house heating is very low. Because of this there appears to be a conflict between using energy efficient appliances and the ambition to keep additional energy supply for heating purposes to a minimum. Another question concerns the amount of additional electrical equipment a family uses on a daily basis. Does it affect the indoor climate or the experience of it? What are the consequences of using a lot of electrical equipment in a passive house? Do the tenants get any specific information about living in a passive house and how does the housing company deal with these issues? These are some of the questions that are to be explored as part of an interdisciplinary project within Program Energisystem this spring.



## **Helping, Informing or Coaxing the Consumer? – Exploring Persuasive Technology as Applied to Households’ Energy Use**

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Let us assume, that people could be persuaded to reduce their energy use in the home through a “dialogue” with a computer. What information, what means of persuasion could the dialogue consist of? Which is the technical hardware? Who persuades, and what about personal integrity? In this paper we explore the merging of two computer-based technologies – “smart homes” and “persuasive technology”.

There are computer programmes that persuade children to brush their teeth, and others that support regular physical exercise. Persuasive technology combines the persuasive powers of TV advertising with the computers’ interactive information handling. Smart homes technology provides residents with information and control, to keep a good indoor climate and a small energy bill. However, the merging of these two concepts has not been explored. Energy use in housing is a considerable part of society’s whole and the potentials for reduction through changes in the consumers’ habits are large. Often, dwellings’ indoor climate could become better through simple measures. There might be a conflict between low energy use and good indoor climate; but on the whole, better control can achieve both. Therefore it is worthwhile to explore how “smart homes” technology could be developed to include computerized persuasion.

Based on a “Master’s Class” at TU Eindhoven and a literature review, we discuss:

- How can households be persuaded to reduce their energy use through interaction with a computer?
- Which are the technical prerequisites?
- How much could be saved?
- What forms could the persuasive dialogue take?

- What differences in control and persuasion follow from the form of tenure?
- Which are the ethical restrictions?

We don't assume that this kind of persuasion is by necessity a good thing. Instead, we explore the issue to enable discussion on its merits and shortcomings – in terms of environmental impacts, comfort, health, technology and consumer ethics.

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## **Sustainable Behaviour at Work and in Private Life**

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How can sustainable lifestyles be supported in a world characterised through increased flexibility and acceleration? This is the main research question of the project “Sustainable Behaviour at Work and in Private Life”, financed by proVISION for nature and society - a programme of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research (BMWF).

Nutrition, health and mobility are fields of high priority for a sustainable lifestyle, as they have a high impact on the environment and are closely linked to well-being, health and quality of life for people in their everyday life.

The main focus of the project is put on the possible contributions of companies. It investigates how experiences and practices on the occupational level affect sustainable behaviour on the private level. The project’s output will be a toolkit for companies (good practice examples, instructions, fact sheets, etc.), showing how to link already existing company activities and how to supplement and implement management methods in an integrated manner, so that they facilitate sustainable practices and conduct at work and in the private lives of individuals.

The fields ‘workplace health promotion (nutrition and exercise)’ and ‘mobility’ will be investigated as well as measures to support work life balance, gender equality and diversity.

The key innovation of the project:

- It investigates the effects of behaviour on occupational level on everyday life.
- Environmental protection and work place health promotion (ecological and social topics, which are usually handled separately) are considered together.
- The perspective of the companies and the perspectives of the employers are compared to each other, with emphasis on trainees and sustainable education within the company.

The project provides usable knowledge for research into, and the practice of, sustainability management in companies, for education for sustainable development and for research on sustainable consumption and lifestyles.

*Links:* [http://www.ifz.tugraz.at/index\\_en.php/article/articleview/1637/1/78/](http://www.ifz.tugraz.at/index_en.php/article/articleview/1637/1/78/)

*Key words:* sustainable lifestyle, CSR, health promotion, work-life-balance, trans-disciplinary research.

## **Gender in Sustaining Everyday Life – through Policy, NGO and Media Texts**

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The paper describes the research design of a new research *Gendered agency and Technically mediated nature* and presents its first preliminary results. The research aims, firstly, to analyse the shaping of gendered agency in the everyday practices and in institutional texts related to these everyday practices from the perspective of sustaining everyday life, by focusing on food and information and communication technology (ICT). In the second phase, it further aims to search for connections between the gendered agencies in the localities of selected global production chains of food and ICT.

In the research design, the practices of local people, non-governmental organisations (NGO) and local producers of food and ICT will be examined, similarly to institutional texts such as (national and trans-national) governmental policies, NGO strategies and guidelines, public newspaper and Internet discussions, and codes of conduct of the companies involved in the production of food and ICT. The research methods include theme and focus group interviews and text analysis. Dorothy Smith's institutional ethnography is used in the analysis. The connection between sustainable everyday practices in the two cases are analysed through the conception of technology-mediated nature. The nature in everyday practices, present in the materiality of food and ICT, which participates in the environmental changes, is of a technologically mediated kind. The research draws on research on gendered practices, agency and citizenship, institutional textualities, including technology as a textuality, and Science and Technology Studies tracing the mutual shaping of society, technology and nature (e.g. Donna Haraway, John Law, Annemarie Mol, Ingunn Moser).

The preliminary results of the paper focus on the institutional texts related to gendered agency in everyday practices. Governmental policies (e.g. the Finnish Information Society Strategy and its section Sustainable information society), NGO strategies (e.g. WWF ICT strategy) and guidelines and texts of a daily Finnish newspaper (2008 and 2009) on food and ICT will be analysed by asking how they define gendered agency in the context of sustaining everyday life.





## **Everyday Life Sustainability at the Semiperiphery of Europe: Gender and Locationality Perspectives**

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Organizing and structuring of everyday life, its practices and discourses, are heavily dependent on locationality, positioning of a region, society, subregion, or a community within the globalised hierarchical structures of power. Location provides the immanent environment and frames the resources available for sustainability, prescribes micro strategies as optimal for sustainability of the everyday life, and provides discourses which inscribe meanings into daily practices. Semiperiphery is a concept used to denote those societies which went through transition (postcommunist societies), and experienced complex de-development process. Every aspect of everyday life at the semiperiphery from the early 90s until today has been affected by global transformation which had specific and often devastating impact for large parts of the population, turning many into the “losers” of transition. Prescribed neoliberal policies for transition underestimated social capacity for change and social and human costs of change. The population responded with a set of strategies to enable sustainability of their everyday life, including: conservation, re-traditionalisation, diversification of the resources bases, intensified networking, intensified migration, or intensified withdrawal into the privacy, delayed marriages, and decreased fertility rates. Those strategies, in reverse, are producing quite ambivalent effects on macro societal level: they often block possibility for change and development. One of the major obstacles is related to the quantitative and qualitative limits of the human resources. However, since the semiperiphery is an object of strategic silence, both in scientific and policy development discourses, and since this issue of population as a resource, cannot be properly framed within “North-South” paradigm, although essential for the development, it stayed largely invisible as well. Gender perspective will be addressed in relation to the specific and diversified effects transition had on both women and men.



## **Local Opportunities in Energy Guidance to Improve Energy Efficiency in Households**

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This paper discusses local opportunities for improving energy efficiency that arise in households' everyday practices and in relation to energy guidance. I discuss municipal energy consultants and information targeted households in relation to "local opportunities". That is, situations where householders have a wide influence on the energy consumption: how to make investments, routines and behaviour more energy efficient and at the same time where energy consultants has the possibility to reach households and discuss how to make their routines and behaviour more energy efficient. The central question is: what are the local opportunities for energy consultants to reach households and contribute to increased energy efficiency in households? In the analysis I use the results from interviews with municipal energy consultants and householders done in five case studies. The analysis shows that the households are aware of behavioural issues and how to behave in an energy-efficient way. Information campaigns about switching off the lights, washing with a full machine, etc., have reached the households. They could repeat such advice, though that did not indicate that they had implemented it. While homeowners looked for specific information, the tenants and tenant/owners did not ask for any information at all. Disseminating information on energy efficiency to tenants and tenant/owners is one opportunity for the consultants to increase these groups awareness of their local opportunities for energy efficiency. General energy efficiency advice was often so general that households had difficulties relating to it. Conducting individual inspections and keeping individual statistics regarding family energy use was often mentioned as an attractive measure. It was when information was combined, for example, with the installation of a meter that measured the reduction in energy use, that households realized the practical implications of, for example, advice to turn off the lights systematically. The combination of advice and direct feedback from a meter exemplifies how an often missed local opportunity can be turned into a seized opportunity.

## Introduction

The EU directive (2006/32) on more efficient energy use and services states that by 2016 member states should reduce energy use by 9% compared with their average over the five years before 2006. The reduction, to be achieved by improved energy efficiency (SOU, 2008:25, 399), concerns all end-users and energy efficiency measures must be implemented in all sectors. This paper focuses on households as end-users and on one means to achieving the end of better efficiency, namely, information provision, specifically municipal energy counselling in Sweden.

In public policy household energy use has long been treated as a “black box,” something one might, should, or could not intentionally attempt to influence. Energy use has usually been regarded as something to be regulated only by individual consumers. Notwithstanding this, a possible means of control is general information provision, as formulated in phrases such as: “Turn off the light when leaving a room,” and “Do not waste water.” The state then tries to influence its citizens, using logical argument to persuade them to do the “right” things. Policy aiming to promote energy efficiency in the household sector must relate to and rely on individuals and on their daily choices, household routines, and everyday lives. The values and knowledge of individuals are important for the development of an efficient and ecologically sustainable energy system. People’s understanding of their own responsibilities and willingness to shoulder them are seen as key factors in creating a sustainable society.

But how effective is it to disseminate the same general information to all households and how do the households relate to this kind of information? This will be discussed here in relation to municipal energy guidance directed towards households.

The Swedish energy guidance model is considered unique for Sweden, where the energy consultants are employed by the municipalities but financed by state subsidies. The purpose of this municipal energy guidance is to disseminate objective knowledge of environmentally friendly energy sources, energy distribution, and energy use. Both the Swedish Energy Agency (SEA) and the commission of an energy efficient Sweden believe municipal energy guidance is especially important when it comes to reaching single-family houses (SEA, 2007; SOU, 2008:25). The municipal energy consultants are important as a communication link between public policy goals and the citizens.

An important restriction on the municipal energy guidance programme, though, is that the consultants can only provide general information and cannot conduct individual house inspections (Swedish Government Decree, 1997:1322). This prohibition is in place so that municipal energy consultants do not compete with private consultants on the market. According to the commission of energy efficient Sweden, which investigated important public measures to help Sweden achieve a 9% reduction in energy use by 2016, information and education are basic and necessary, but not sufficient preconditions for achieving more efficient energy use. According to the Commission, information provision can influence knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour (SOU, 2008:25:89).

In this paper, I will discuss municipal energy consultants and information targeted households in relation to “local opportunities”. That is, situations where householders have a wide influence on the energy consumption: how to make investments, routines and behaviour more energy efficient and at the same time where energy consultants has the possibility to reach households and discuss how to make their routines and behaviour more energy efficient.

### *Aim*

In this paper, I will discuss local opportunities for improving energy efficiency that arise in households’ everyday practices and in relation to energy guidance. What are the local opportunities for energy consultants to reach households and contribute to increased energy

efficiency in households? When and how do these opportunities arise? That will be discussed below.

### ***Outline of the paper***

The paper starts by discussing the concept of local opportunities and how it can be related to households' energy use and municipal energy guidance. I give a short description of the municipal energy guidance in Sweden. Then, I describe the field studies on which this paper is based. The results of interviews with municipal energy consultants and householders are then presented. The paper ends with conclusions concerning local opportunities identified and possible consequences for the efficiency potential of households in the future.

### **Finding and making use of local opportunities**

Strong pro-environment attitudes and values (i.e., environmental consciousness) are common among Swedish citizens, and people generally claim to be willing to undertake activities promoting environmental sustainability. However, the challenge is to translate these attitudes and claims into everyday routines and make them part of everyday practices (SCB 2006). There are on the other hand examples of people actually changing their behavior, and one profound one in Sweden concerns waste sorting. According to a 2008 study for the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, 57% of Swedish citizens had increased their waste sorting activities over the previous two years (Söderberg 2008). Clearly, this is one area where translating norms into behavioral change has been relatively successful. In the case of waste sorting, public policy and personal behavioural norms has merged and new habits have been developed.

In the public policy literature, the “window of opportunity” concept has been used in discussing why certain policies can change direction and for example develop new routines. Kingdon's (1984) window of opportunities is a rather structural approach, where the model explains decision making in public policy processes and how and why policy can be changed. Kingdon arguing that the agenda consists of three streams: the problem, policy, and political streams. The critical situation is when these three streams merge and a problem is recognized and a solution is found that can be accepted by the political community and where resources is possible to uphold—a window of opportunity for policy change has been opened.

Later on, Svane (2008) used similar terms, stating that it is important to identify a Situation of Opportunity, that is, *what* to do, but also discussing *when* to do it. This includes the importance of taking account of the cost of *missing* an opportunity. An opportunity situation can be a chance lost or a chance taken. Opportunity situations are periods when actors have a wide influence on the outcome of a process. According to Svane (2008), the concept of opportunity differs from that of policy window in that the latter is used in analyzing historical policy-making processes, while the situation concept is used in the early identification of opportunities in a process, as well as in retrospective analysis.

Inspired of these perspectives I will discuss what the local opportunities for increased energy efficiency in households and in relation to energy guidance are in relation to five case studies conducted in Sweden. In this context local opportunities is situations where householders have a wide influence on the energy consumption: how to make investments, routines and behaviour more energy efficient and at the same time where energy consultants has the possibility to reach households and discuss how to make their routines and behaviour more energy efficient.

Before I describe the five case studies this paper emanates from, I will give a short historical description of municipal energy guidance in Sweden.

## Energy guidance targeting households in Sweden: an overview

Swedish municipalities first began receiving state funding to provide energy inspection and consultancy services to households in the 1978–1986 period. The activities generally involved outwardly directed energy advice, which was often imparted through a guidance office or at special informational meetings. (Palm, 2004, 2006).

State support for municipal energy guidance was withdrawn from 1986 to 1998, but reinstated on 1 January 1998 (SEA, 1999). It was intended to provide impartial and locally adapted information and guidance on energy issues; this guidance concerns areas such as energy, technology, and consumer advice but cannot include inspections. The Swedish Energy Agency supports municipal energy guidance activities by providing both information and funding. The official purpose of this municipal energy guidance is to disseminate knowledge of environmentally friendly energy sources, energy distribution, and energy use (Palm, 2009).

Every year the municipal energy consultants report their activities over the course of the year to the Swedish Energy Agency. This report is related to the state financing of the municipal energy guidance: municipalities only receive state subsidies if they complete and submit this report, which results in 100% submission frequency. According to these the municipal reports all municipalities provided some sort of energy guidance in 2007, and 5% of the Swedish population or 500,000 people had contact with a municipal energy consultant (SEA, 2008). Information provision over the telephone is the most common activity and the most common issues advised on concern energy subsidies, pellets, heat pumps, and general energy advice. The implemented measures are not evaluated, however. Informational activities are also generally considered hard to evaluate, because of validation problems in isolating and specifying the effect of a single information campaign (Bemelmans-Vidéc, Rist, & Vedung, 1998).

## Methodology – five case studies

In the analysis I will use the results from interviews done in five case studies. One of the case studies was an energy use reduction project arranged by municipal energy consultants where homeowners have been part. This was a time-limited project where the energy consultants were allowed to visit the homeowners and conduct individual inspections. In this study, we conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with the two energy consultants and six of the 10 households included in the project. Four households declined to take part in our research. We asked about the information given by the consultants, what information was included and excluded and what opportunities they saw to influence household to increase energy efficiency at home. In another ongoing research project, we interviewed householders who had invested or are interested in investing in wind turbines and/or solar panels and/or solar heating. Then, another 17 homeowners and three tenants were interviewed about how they perceived the general information they received from the energy consultant and what issues they thought were too private to discuss.

We also interviewed 14 energy consultants in the counties of Östergötland and Dalarna using the above questions. The turnover of energy consultants is quite high, so not all municipalities had energy consultants in place in autumn 2008 when the interviews were conducted. It is also quite common for municipalities to cooperate and share energy consultants. In Dalarna, 12 of the county's 15 municipalities are represented and in Östergötland, 10 of the county's 13 municipalities are represented.

A third case study concerned households that had built new houses. The fourth case study included tenants living in apartments. The last case study involved households that had bought their apartments and were members of housing cooperatives.

In all case studies, we partly used the same interview guide, which asked about: awareness of energy use, ability to decide on energy-related factors, energy-efficiency measures and their implementation, and information and opinions on energy policy. Altogether, we interviewed 23 homeowners, 8 tenants, 15 tenant/owners (i.e., housing cooperative members), and 17 homeowners who recently built their houses. The interviews were recorded using an MP3 recorder/player and then transcribed.

In discussing the results of these case studies, I will consider the householders' views on energy efficiency according to whether they rent or own their homes. I will use four categories: tenants, tenant/owners (i.e., housing cooperative members), buying homeowners (who had bought an already built house), and building homeowners (who had built their own house sometime over the previous three years).

The interviewed householders are made anonymous in this paper and will be referred to as: tenants (T1-8); tenant/owners (TO1-15); home-owners (HOBuy1-23) and; homeowners who recently built their houses (HOBuid1-17). Where two members of a single household were interviewed, this is indicated by appending 'a' or 'b' to the number. I will refer to the energy consultants as energy consultants A–N. This lets the reader see, for example, how often a single interviewee is quoted or referred to.

## Local opportunities for energy efficiency in households – results from the case studies

Using an inductive method, I will discuss the results of the in-depth interviews and the local opportunities for energy efficiency that appeared during our discussions.

In this section, I present the results of the interviews with municipal energy consultants and households. First, I discuss the energy consultants' view of the guidance and their possibilities to influence the households' energy related activities in everyday life.

### *Experiences of energy consulting*

The consultants emphasized that their main task was to disseminate information. The main topic for discussion with the citizens was technology, and the households wanted to know about various technologies available on the market and what products were comparatively better. The consultants are also supposed to be neutral, so they can inform about different technology available on the market, but not recommend a certain technology such as district heating.

The most common way to contact an energy consultant is by phone or e-mail. A problem the consultants mentioned was that citizens often phoned them with a specific question in mind: often they wanted to know whether there were any subsidies for a particular investment, or what product was the best to choose in a given situation. The consultants realized that this contact was an important opportunity for them to reach the households with information on energy efficiency, but at the same time they often felt that the household would be better off if they had more of a systemic perspective and perhaps started with another issue. The most common question in Sweden in the autumn and winter concerns the heating system, due to the cold climate. For a while, there has been a trend to invest in heat pumps, so the homeowners call the energy consultants to get more information about various related products available on the market. The consultants, however, thought that the homeowners were starting with the *last* question, and that they should start by investigating their building envelope before comparing various heating products on the market. If they saw this as an local opportunity to energy efficiency and started by changing windows and insulating the walls or attic, then they could invest in a smaller heat pump, which would make them save more money and the environment in the long run. This was the tricky part for the consultants. The citizens just wanted comparative information on the products on the market

and did not want to discuss consequences or alternatives. The consultants felt they had to answer the specific question asked them, and found it hard to direct the discussion towards energy-efficiency measures and reduced energy use. So, this often become a missed opportunity for the consultants

One consultant said that ‘people hear what people want to hear’, meaning that often people called him for confirmation that a planned investment was good:

*When we perhaps mention some critical or negative aspects of the investment, then they can be a little disappointed and think that we just mess things up. (energy consultant J)*

A common view was also that behaviour issues were hard to initiate and discuss with the householders. The energy consultants could inform and appeal to the households but not really interfere with their decisions. This energy consultant developed his ideas when he said that he could only appeal to people:

*And this with showering and bathing. You should know that it costs six, seven kilowatt hours to take a bath and it costs two, three kilowatt hours to shower. If you know that, then it is ok whatever you do. /.../ It is not that you are not allowed to use energy, but it is the awareness that energy costs money. That is what I want to achieve; that is the message. (energy consultant N)*

In general the energy consultants meant that if the households had knowledge and could do an informed choice, then their mission was completed. There exist in this way trusts in that knowledge and awareness on energy efficiency were coupled to behaviour, and that increased awareness will in the long run change attitudes and benefit energy efficiency.

At the same time the consultants had several examples on the problem that people not always act according to their attitudes, so even if the households are aware of the climate change issue and how they should act, it can be hard to put this into practice. One common example was when energy efficient advice was connected to reduced consumption:

*Anything where people regard their quality of life as decreasing is hard to deal with. Even though the things are not really necessary...it is still hard to change. (energy consultant J)*

There are several behaviour-related trends that point in the wrong direction in relation to the energy use reduction goal of society and about which the consultants felt they had no influence. One such trend was that of garden and patio heaters that make it possible to sit outside or on the balcony even when it is just a few degrees outside. Most people are not prepared to sacrifice these items just to reduce their energy consumption. One tactic used by the consultants in this situation was to make people at least choose an ‘energy smart alternative’ (energy consultants G and H).

In the time-limited project ‘the Energy Hunt’, run in 2005–2006 by energy consultants in Linköping the energy consultants had the opportunity to use more individual tailored information and was also able to do house inspections. Ten detached-house owners were involved. The goal of the project was to foster ‘sustainable energy use’. The included families received energy counselling over the course of one year on how to reduce both household energy costs and environmental impact. Every family received an energy inspection in their home, during which the consultants followed a set routine. In every house, they inspected the



insulation, windows, ventilation, and how the building envelope in general was constructed. In terms of energy use, they examined the household electricity use of appliances and noted the ages of the fridge, freezer, dishwasher, washing machine, and electric stove. Every family also received advice on energy-efficiency measures, such as insulating the attic, sealing windows and doors, buying a new water heater, and converting to a system with water as heat carrier. At the first meeting, the homeowners also received a bag of useful products, such as a low-energy lamp, electricity meter, sealing strips, an indoor thermometer, and brochures. The energy hunt project was successful in such way that the 10 householder in average reduced their energy consumption with around 10 percent. This was mainly due to behavioural changes, because most households had not done any major investments at the time for the evaluation, which was when the project had been running for one year. I will come back to this below when discussing the answers of the householders.

### ***The householders' perspective on public information and energy efficiency measures***

Regardless of whether the householders rented or owned their homes, most of them knew the general energy-efficiency advice, for example, “turn off the light,” “wash with a full machine,” and “turn off stand-by.” One householder said:

*I have begun to think about the stuff we have at home, and, like, aha, this is an energy thief! (HOBuid1)*

The expression “energy thief” is something that the energy consultants try to promote to increase the reflection on invisible electricity use in homes, and this is something that this householder has picked up.

Regarding receiving information about energy efficiency, interest in this matter varied however between the different household categories. Tenants and tenant/owners rarely asked for any information about energy efficiency and did not actively search for it either:

*Nah, it is nothing. It is what you get through TV, but nothing except that. (TO10b)*

The tenants and tenant/owners, for example, were less aware about their indoor temperature than did the homeowners. One tenant thought that the heat in the apartment could not be adjusted: “It is always warm and that [i.e., the temperature] is controlled centrally, even if you turn off the radiators. You must open the windows to get air and ventilation” (T1). Three tenants also meant that they could not directly influence either electricity or heat consumption in the home. The tenants generally also had less knowledge of how much electricity different appliances consumed, which probably is related to that they do not take part in the buying process of these capital goods.

Those who built new houses had better knowledge about appliances energy use, but felt they lacked information about related issues for example the benefits of alternative, environmentally friendly heating systems and about the up-front costs and cumulative savings of such systems. They also requested descriptions of the various heating systems, and asked how they could be combined with each other, how much money could be saved by reducing the heat one degree, and how they could visualize their energy consumption.

The buying homeowners also asked for more tailored information, but were generally more critical than were the other categories of households regarding the information available and the energy advice offered, for example, by municipal energy consultants. They often thought that the public energy advisers were ignorant and that they just gave “simple” energy-saving tips that could simply be looked up in a brochure at any time. The buying homeowners

wanted to have home visits and individual inspections in which consultants measured the family's energy use and gave feedback on how family habits could change in order to reduce energy consumption. They had specific questions for which they had sought and not found answers, for example: Should you turn off the water heater when leaving the house for longer periods? How much energy should a house built in 1964 use? They wanted more individually tailored, specific information related directly to their houses or living conditions.

Several householders emphasized at the same time the importance of nagging about the need to improve energy efficiency. A common sentiment was that households were happy to receive information, but that it should then be up to them to decide how to act; for example:

*I gladly receive tips and advice, but then it is up to me what to do with it, what suits my home the best. I want to decide on my own. (HOBuy21)*

Another way to reason was to state that authorities could make sure that people had the opportunity and information to make good choices if they wanted to, but that they did not need to tell them how to act: 'But they can facilitate those of us who want to contribute to the environment' (HOBuy26).

Not all households, however, were grateful for all information and tips. One was annoyed at the requests, for example, to shower for less time and not use the tumble drier: 'This makes me only angry, and this is something that I should decide on my own' (HOBuy22).

### ***Wanted tailored information***

Several of the householders meant that authorities needed to make information personal for people to react. One homeowner said for example that a better method would be to give every household an individual report on their energy use, i.e., how much was used by the tumble drier, heating, various appliances, etc. Then it should be up to every individual to decide what s/he wanted to give up. The individual report should only show the potential energy savings instead of requesting specific things to do (HOBuy22).

Surprisingly, several householders said they wanted more individual inspections where the consultants measured all energy-related activities and appliances in their homes and gave them feedback on what they could do to reduce their energy consumption. That these inspections would result in figures seemed to make such advice neutral and could explain why the householders did not feel that they should be supervised. One homeowner, who was rather critical of municipal energy consultants, said that they should make individual inspections because they needed to

*... go to the individual consumer and look at individual needs in order to suggest suitable solutions: what can different individuals in different phases of life do to reduce their consumption, how are individuals living, what habits, priorities are they doing, and so on. (HOBuy19a)*

This statement was related to the desire that authorities should inform citizens better about how to behave in various situations. Instead of 'interfering in people's lives', as one homeowner put it, government should give concrete advice on how to act in various situations. She cited an example of a question related to a hot water tank: should she turn it off or was it more energy efficient to keep it on when going away on vacation? (HOBuy33) Several households lacked such specific and useful information.

In the 'Energy Hunt' project, the energy consultants visited the participants' homes and gave practical tips on how to save energy. Even though these inspections were seen as a

positive element of the project, some of these households felt that the consultants could have been even more specific during the individual inspections and given even more practical tips.

The households were generally supportive of the Energy Hunt. Not that many of the suggested measures had however been implemented by the households. The most common reason for that was economic: the suggested measures were simply too expensive. Another common reason was related to design. It was important, for example, that a new more energy-efficient door should match the overall design of the house. If the homeowner could not find such an item, then the measure was postponed until they found one (HOBuy13). One family, for example, had handmade windows that they wanted to keep at any cost (HOBuy10). One householder could not 'sacrifice' an aesthetically attractive thing for one that was more energy efficient. Several of the suggested measures were rejected by the households because they could not find solutions for their house design.

A common problem was that the households had difficult to relate to general advice and that general advice was not implemented. Energy use was successfully reduced when specific information was combined with concrete measurement techniques and experimentation. This was done in the Energy hunt project:

*We monitored the freezer in the basement for a month. We defrosted it and tracked how much we could save by defrosting it more often. We got a meter that we put in the electrical outlet... I was surprised at how much energy we could save. (HOBuy13)*

Although awareness of energy and environmental issues was high, it was sometimes difficult to understand the implications of this awareness in practice:

*Yes, the most shocking thing was to see how much [energy] the television consumed, and all the other appliances. It was the biggest shock. ... And you think then when you hear people talk about "do this and that" and you can save SEK 100 and SEK 200, but the total sum of that can be a big deal in a year ... It is quite another thing to see how much you can save. Because you don't see the money before you try to put into practice the different tips at home. (HOBuy11)*

The measurement contributes to visualize energy reduction and how much money a family could save by many small energy-efficiency measures in the aggregate.

## Conclusions

The households are quite aware of behavioural issues and how to behave in an energy-efficient way. Information campaigns about switching off the lights, lowering indoor temperature, washing with a full machine, etc., have reached the households. They could repeat such advice, though that did not indicate that they had implemented it.

Homeowners can save more money from energy-efficiency investment than can tenants, which contributed to their interest in finding information about available efficiency measures. While homeowners looked for specific information, the tenants and tenant/owners did not ask for any information at all. Disseminating information on energy efficiency to tenants and tenant/owners is one opportunity for the consultants to increase these groups awareness of their local opportunities for energy efficiency. Today, most public energy-efficiency information, such as municipal energy counselling, is directed toward homeowners. This seems to be a waste of time and resources and a missed opportunity for municipal consultants,

because homeowners already have this information. It would be wiser to target the tenants and tenant/owners with this information.

Various local opportunities for energy efficiency appear in the households' everyday lives. Today it also exist both considerable knowledge and sustainable energy-efficient technology, but the problem is diffusion. Existing knowledge is in general also disseminated through information. As we have seen this general energy efficiency advice was often so general that households had difficulties relating to it. They could not grasp what it would actually mean for their energy consumption if they implemented this advice. That is why it was only when such advice was combined, for example, with the installation of a meter that measured the reduction in energy use, that households realized the practical implications of, for example, advice to turn off the lights systematically. The combination of advice and direct feedback from a meter exemplifies how an often missed local opportunity can be turned into a seized opportunity.

It is also interesting that conducting individual inspections and keeping individual statistics regarding family energy use often was mentioned as an attractive measure. That this could expose and give a rather detailed picture of family life is not problematized. Instead, the householders highlight the possibilities of such mapping, letting the consultants give them specific information on how to change behaviour to reduce energy consumption.

Individual inspections and keeping energy statistics on households would be a local opportunity for consultants to encourage the active involvement of householders in energy-efficiency measures. The consultants could discuss both new investments and behavioural issues in terms of kWh or money spent on a special activity, and in this way discuss lifestyle issues without judging or moralizing on the household's way of life. The households perceive figures and statistics as neutral and objective knowledge. If the consultants inform them by visualizing their actual consumption patterns and point out various ways to reduce energy consumption, leaving implementation decisions to the families, then most of our householders meant that this would be a way to make general information more personal and meaningful for them.

The problem for the Swedish consultants, however, is that they are not legally allowed to go far enough into the home that they can give such specific advice. This prohibition means that the consultants are forced to keep giving general advice with which the households are already familiar and to inform them about technology available on the market that the householders have already found for themselves on the Internet. With the development of smart meters and other technological devices, energy consultants have possibilities to develop their methods and still follow the directive to not do home visits. This is an opportunity that needs to be developed further.

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## Female Discourses about Household Services

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Domestic work has an important role in everyday life. Especially families with the both providers having a full-day job are afflicted by rush when children are small and the amount of household chores is great (Pääkkönen & Niemi 2002).

Household services have been seen deemed to provide a solution to combine the careers and the family. Although the use of household services has increased, it is still in a low level in Finland. The recent Finnish research shows that only about 10 % of the households have used household services (Varjonen, Aalto & Leskinen 2007).

The work done at home is time-consuming. The time spent in household work equals to one long working week (Takala 2005). However, this household production is not present in the official statistics of national economy, because the work done at home by the members of household is unpaid and for this reason it is work that does not enter the national economy.

The growth in the demand for household services would have an effect to develop this sector and create more jobs as well as enlarge our national economy.

The research presented here is a preliminary study and it includes the analysis of female discourses about outsourcing household work.

The data for the research has been collected in focus group discussions. The data includes five different group discussions that were held during summer 2008 in four Finnish cities: Helsinki, Turku, Tampere and Jyväskylä. The discussions involved 3-8 entrepreneurial women with families. Women with families and with entrepreneurial background belong to the so-called households-in-a-rush-category and are the most active users of household services (Varjonen, Aalto & Leskinen 2007). The analysis used is content analysis.

As earlier said, the study is in its preliminary phase and therefore more data is needed. This preliminary study gives good guidelines to proceed in the doctoral thesis. The forthcoming research will include also data from peer groups of workers in household services. The ultimate research aims at answering to the question why Finns do not regularly use household services.





## **Technology and Behaviour in the Use of Electricity**

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In the literature on the potential of reducing householder's consumption of electrical energy, two interpretations can be discerned. On the one hand a technologist's view that technological change will do the work; on the other a sociologist's view that practice is at the heart of the matter. I argue that both views are important for our understanding, but at the same time reductionist. In this article I will discuss this based on studies of the use of electrical equipment among households in Sweden.

## Two views on energy consumption

One and the same graph can be interpreted quite differently. Figure 1 on the next page shows individual differences in electricity consumption for lighting among single person households in multi-dwelling houses in Sweden 2005–2008. According to a technologist's view individual differences indicate differences in lamps and fittings. According to a sociologist's view individual differences indicate differences in habits and routines. These interpretations are part of two separate masses of concepts and way of reasoning taking place in different journals and scientific departments. To be sure, within each of these discourses there are considerable differences too. I will disregard internal discrepancies in order to cultivate two positions. Thus, the positions presented here exist among real researchers, but not necessarily the whole argument among any of them. In that sense the positions are my constructions.

### *There is always a technical solution*

It came as a surprise to me, attending a hearing on electricity consumption, to see the same database I had used myself be presented as a kind of index of degrees of energy efficient equipment. There was no talk of use, behaviour or people at all, just the matter of the matter. The database I am referring to is the result of the monitoring study of nearly 400 households in Sweden organized by the Swedish Energy Agency, and performed during the 2005–2008 period. Electricity consumption was studied in detail—basically electricity used for each lamp, computer etc. was registered six times per hour for a month or a year. Also, information about the brands of the refrigerators etc. was noted, and so was information about the households: the number of persons, their age and income level, type of dwelling, and so on.

The graph presented at the hearing showed “cold appliances”, short for fridges and freezers put together. The graph had the same message as the one shown here in Figure 1, namely the large individual differences. But there were also something else. A red horizontal line was drawn a bit above the X-axis indicating the best available cold appliances in store at the time. The conclusion was that households with staples above the red line, primarily those with the highest staples, had some replacements to do. If households with a high level of electricity consumption changed to cold appliances of better energy efficient classification according to labelling, a whole lot of gigawatt-hours would be saved in the totality of Swedish household's use of such appliances.

Deep down in the mind of the technologist we find a conviction that the world can be improved by technological change. This leads to an interventionist attitude, where the result of behaviour can be altered by way of, for example, switching from old white goods of a household to new energy efficient ones. In this view we see a stock of refrigerators, for example, distributed among millions of dwellings, demanding such and such amount of energy. Starting out with needs of households as given, and energy production as associated with environmental problems, the solution is focused on improvements in energy efficiency of this stock. It is possible to get the same amount of utility with less energy from an efficient refrigerator than an inefficient one. When the technologist confronts a sociological interpretation, he may be interested in how residual differences can be explained, or if acceptance among households of new items can be found. However, he is sometimes deplored by the lack of knowledge of fundamental physical properties.

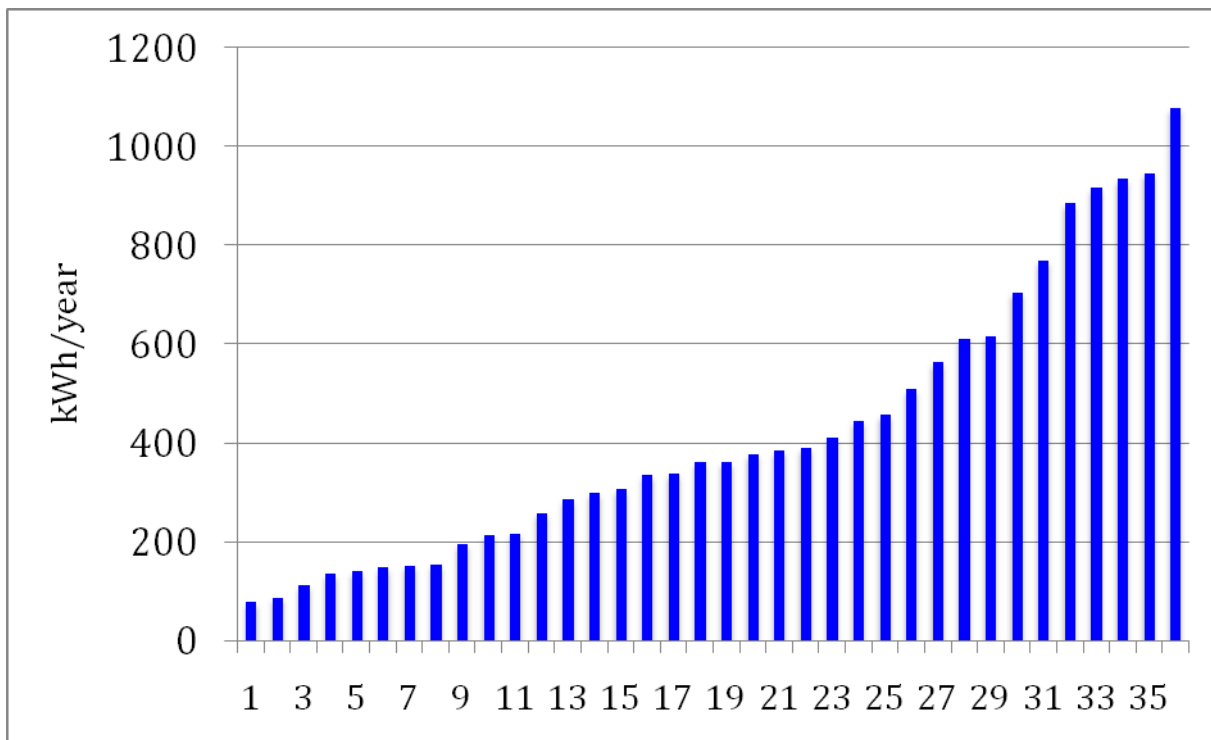


Figure 1. Consumption of electricity among singles living in multi-dwelling houses participating in the 2005–2008 monitoring study. KWh per year. Source: Data from the Swedish Energy Agency.

### *The social embraces the technical*

It came as a surprise to me, reading an article on householder’s electricity consumption in another country, to learn a lot of social differences and differences in use patterns among households, but nothing at all of differences in efficiency of their technical equipment. Attention was drawn to lifestyles, manifested in such things as income level, dwelling size, age, education, gender, ethnicity and income. Correlations were sought between levels of consumption in terms of kWh on one hand and the social categories just mentioned on the other. No or weak correlations were found. The number of electrical items in possession was mentioned only in passing, and the quality of these items was totally disregarded.

It was stated that people do not really consume energy instead they consume services such as heating, lighting, cooking etc. The consumer can satisfy her needs for these services in different ways, with different devices. At the centre we find routines. Routines may originate from childhood, and they are influenced by, or rather co-evolve with, cultural norms and physical infrastructures. The number and quality of energy consuming lamps and appliances is seen as the result of in-grained attitudes of the users. Even the electrical system is seen as malleable, with reference to historically different technologies for heating, lighting, cooking etc.

Deep down in the mind of the sociologist we find a conviction that people make the difference. Technology cannot just be taken as given; it must be seen as one component of the social, the result of a choice somewhere, someplace. The world is made up of social relationships, directly or indirectly so, in the latter case mediated by infrastructures and technologies. If change is to occur we must understand what people do—in the case of electricity consumption, what people do in everyday life. This life is filled with apparently boring activities like sleeping, reading, cooking, transporting etc. Understanding is something qualitative that cannot be reduced to numbers. When it comes to solutions recommendations are less clear compared to that of the technologist. One general recommendation is that the

way of life must change, and in that view technology is part of the problem, not of the solution. When the sociologist is confronted with a technical interpretation, she would consider it as being technocratic and manipulative of ordinary and innocent people.

### ***Both sides now***

Whenever a story is presented in this way, with two positions presented far apart, the reader is directed to a middle position—a combination of both sides. This goes for this story too, even though the positions presented here are simplified. Individual differences on both sides are countless and cannot possibly be covered in this paper. Nevertheless, there is an effect of specialization turning some researcher's attention to the artefacts and other researcher's attention to "the social". An example of a focus on technical change is the idea of potential energy efficiency: First, we have level actually used; second, the level of the best available purchase; third, a techno-economic level including future cost effectiveness; fourth, the technical level representing the best available technology demonstrated; fifth, the theoretical potential limited only by the law of thermodynamics (Neij & Öfverholm, 2001). Such a focus is often followed by questions on "acceptance" of new technologies, and on "drivers" and "barriers" for the introduction of them by way of campaigns, information, regulation, subsidies and pricing. The technological solution is already, or will soon be, available, while obstacles connected with prices and information can be overcome by political intervention.

The social focus is radically different from the outset: "Start with service, not device!" Cooling, heating, cooking, lighting etc. can be accomplished in many ways. The dominant technology for any of these services today is just one of many solutions, and some of these other options are less dependent on technology than the current dominant mode of satisfying the service in question. When we look at differences in electricity consumption, for example, we look at the result (in energy terms) of different ways of solving a service problem. A device focus is an example of technological optimism, a kind of self-deception, as the number and/or size of energy demanding devices increases. It is impossible to make such a device more than 100% efficient. Increasing dependence on energy consuming solutions, and its social normalizations through adaptive habits and routines, point at a problem with much broader scope than just technical changes (Wilhite & Norgard, 2004; Shove, 2004; Gram-Hanssen, Kofod & Nærvig Petersen, 2004).

I've looked at clouds from both sides now  
From up and down, and still somehow  
It's cloud illusions I recall  
I really don't know clouds at all (Mitchell, 1969)

I believe that technologists and sociologists can learn from each other, and thus that interdisciplinary collaboration is welcome. However, as I believe that a socio-technical perspective is something more than just an adding up of two perspectives I will below discuss an overlap of technology and behaviour. The idea of "script" has been developed theoretically (for example Akrich, 1992 and Wilhite, 2007), but I will propose an empirical generalization inspired by the general of idea of "script", not its theoretical detail. Another area where both sides can meet is around the issue of "the rebound effect". A rebound effect means that some or all reductions in energy consumption, made possible by improvements in energy efficiency, are offset by an increasing demand for energy. It implies a critique of the naïve position of technology optimism presented above, but we cannot assume the rebound effect to be so strong as to make efficiency measures worthless. I will discuss energy efficiency using the results from my studies on use of domestic electric appliances in Sweden. Beside my empirical findings I will also interpret the rebound effect as composed of a tendency and a

counter-tendency. This will take the rebound effect closer to a critique of economic growth and consumerism, which I think is the strong point on the part of the sociologists.

#### Four types of “script”

Returning now to the technologist’s interpretation of his graph on cold appliances presented at the beginning of this paper, I would say that his choice of appliance was no accident. Energy consumption of some appliances is more technologically determined than others. Appliances can be grouped according to the degree of automaticity, namely whether the machine is always on, or turned on and off automatically or manually. Some things are on all the time, and thus beyond “behaviour”. In this group we find clock radio, answering machine, aquarium, transformer, and stand by functions on other appliances. In the second group we find appliances that are turned on and off automatically. In this group we find refrigerator and freezer, regulated as they are by a thermostat controlling starts and stops. In the third group the appliance is turned on manually, but stops running due to a program. Washing machine and dishwasher belong to this group. Lastly, in the last group the appliance is turned both on and off manually. In this group we find many kitchen utensils, but most prominently lamps.

This grouping of appliances is modified sometimes and in some cases. Stand by functions can be interrupted using a separate socket with a switch. Freezers are sometimes turned off for defrosting. Washing machines can be pre-programmed to start at a certain point of time. Lamps can be turned on and off by timers. However, individual or temporary modifications do not change the general division in groups.

The point with this classification, in relation to the technological and sociological views, is that technology and behaviour are more or less important depending on the type of appliance we are studying. However, even in the first and second groups the user can make a difference, albeit to a limited degree. Electricity consumed by a refrigerator, for example, depends on the user’s adjustment of temperature, defrosting and the frequency and duration of opening the fridge door. For the class of manual appliances routines play a prominent role, but (for lighting) also the natural light, the design of the dwelling and adherence to a lighting culture matter.

Getting deeper into the question of the role of technology and behaviour, it becomes increasingly hard to distinguish between the two. Agency on the part of the user is not strictly non-technological. Separate sockets, timers, interrupted programs etc. are technical gadgets or functions consciously used by the user, sometimes to overcome expected use ingrained in the design of the technology. Lighting experts, for example, spend a lot of effort in measuring the spectral field of a particular light. However, the user’s experience of that same light source may be fundamentally different when a lampshade is put on. Technology and behaviour overlap here because people learn how to use appliances, and in this learning internalize expected use from the designer, but also overcome expectations by unintended use.

#### Three estimations of energy efficiency improvements

I have investigated this problem on the case of cold appliances in Sweden for the period 1980–2000. One tendency is increasingly energy efficient fridges and freezers: A new one in 1980 would require more electricity than a new one in 2000. Another tendency is a growing number of cold appliances, because of growing number of households, and/or a larger mean size of fridge and freezer.

The investigation was made in five steps. First, data on electricity consumption for all the brands of cold appliances for the years 1965, 1980 and 2002 was collected from “Market overview” published by the Swedish Consumer Agency. Second, data on household’s possession of refrigerators and freezers was collected from censuses and other studies, including the share owning more than one unit of fridge or freezer. Third, the number of units

based on housing statistics. Fourth, the distribution on six different types of cold appliances was estimated using industrial and trade statistics 1965–2000 (domestic manufacturing + import – export). Sums of yearly data 1966–1980 were used as the base for the distribution in 1980, and 1981–2000 for 2000. Fifth, applying efficiency data from step one on the six types from step four, assuming that efficiency in the stock of cold appliances in 1980 was the average of that of new units in 1965+1980, and for 2000 that of 1980+2002 (for details see Bladh, 2005).

The result of these estimations was that the total number of cold appliances had increased from 7.2 million in 1980 to 9.7 million in 2000. The average volume, in litres, had increased during the period for all types except chest freezers and absorption fridges. Fridges, fridge-coolers and fridge-freezers had increased in number and in average size. Despite these increases in number and volume, the total consumption of electrical energy had decreased, from 4.8 to 4.5 TWh. Counterfactually, if average volume had not increased but had been the same as in 1980 (while the number had grown as it did), then energy consumption would have been 3.6 TWh. On the other hand, had energy efficiency improvements not taken place, total energy consumption would have been 8.8 TWh.

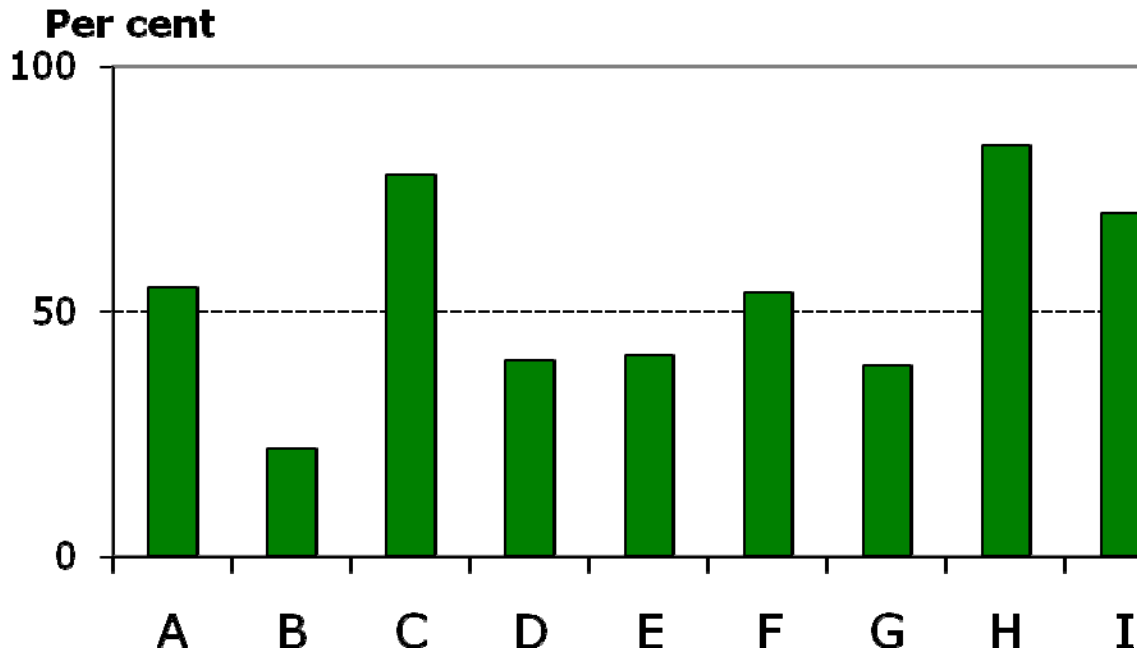
The conclusion from this study is that the tendency towards increasing energy efficiency was stronger than the opposing tendency of growing number and growing volume. It is possible to make real gains in energy saving despite growing consumption.

I made a similar investigation of washing machines, drying cupboards and tumble dryers used by Swedish households. For information on energy efficiency I used data sources partially the same as those mentioned above for cold appliances. Added to this were results from questionnaires where people were asked whether they had access to washing and drying machines (it is common in Sweden that households in multi-dwelling houses use a collective laundry), how often they used them, and at what temperature. For the number of machines housing statistics were used 1975–2002 (for details see Bladh, 2005).

The result showed that access to washing machines and tumble dryers had increased, while drying cupboards had decreased (being replaced by tumble dryers). There was a significant rise in the average size of both washing machines and tumble dryers in the 1990's. Despite this the estimated total energy consumption had decreased from 2.4 TWh in 1980 to 1.4 in 2000. However, in this case behavioural change was important—washing frequency had decreased (but data quality on this is weak), and so had average water temperature used when washing. Increased energy efficiency also contributed to the lowering of energy consumption, and so did the replacement of drying cupboards.

The conclusion is that householder's behaviour can be just as important as energy efficiency improvements. Even though reliability of data on frequency of washing and drying is poor, it is reasonable considering that both machine types used have become larger. If the volume of clothes to be washed and dried is constant, using a 5-kilo machine instead of a 3,5-kilo means washing fewer times (if the machine is loaded full).

Together with Helena Krantz I made a third investigation, this time on lighting. This was different from the other two in that only nine households were studied and no long-term change explored. Instead data was very rich in detail, based as it was on measurement data from the monitoring study mentioned in the beginning (Bladh & Krantz, 2008; Bladh, 2008). To this material, interviews with nine of those metered households were added. We collected electricity consumption data on all lamps six times per hour for one month, and installed power on each lamp. One aspect analysed was the saving potential: Keeping the number of lamps and burning hours as they had been registered, a simulated replacement of all incandescent lamps with the equivalent compact fluorescent lamps would show how much electrical energy would be saved. The result is illustrated in Figure 2.



*Figure 2.* Realistic saving potentials on lighting among nine households in Sweden. Source: Data from Swedish Energy Agency and visits.

The staples show the amount of simulated electricity consumed for lighting in relation to actual consumption, in per cent. Differences between households depend on the share of incandescent lamps that can be replaced and their share of total burning hours. The result is very realistic as actual possession and behaviour is kept constant, but it is hard to generalize from only nine individual cases. Nevertheless, judging by the result from the nine, a reduction by half seems reasonable.

What makes this judgement seem probable is the recent development in regulations and in lighting technology. On the 18 of March 2009 the European Commission adopted the eco-design directive on lighting (EU, 2009). This means that inefficient lighting, in fact incandescent lamps, will be phased out stepwise 2009–2012. The consequence will be a successively reduced level of consumed electricity for lighting (and for other appliances as well, as eco-design regulates all domestic appliances), if the number of lamps does not increase per household and the number of households is constant. Secondly, light-emitting diodes are developing fast and will probably appear on the market during this transition period. LEDs are even more energy efficient, in terms of lumen per Watt, than CFLs, and probably have a much longer lifetime.

### Rebound effects

If eco-design is effective, does that mean that technical solutions are sufficient? Will soft (labelling) or hard (phase-outs), energy efficient measures do the work? I would like to turn this question around: Is it preferable to regulate behaviour—a law banning the use of stand by, perhaps? Compared to that, an eco-design regulation seems both more humane and effective. A weak point in the critique of technical change, which is part of a broader critique known as technological determinism, is the lack of suggested political measures. However, I will argue that societal, social and behavioural aspects are important in the long run and in the big picture. In the long run all technologies are malleable and replaceable (perhaps with the

exception of nuclear waste), and in the big picture other tendencies are at work that cannot be discovered at the micro-level. One way to discuss this is the “rebound effect”.

The rebound effect is a paradox: Improving efficiency tends to lead to an increase in consumption. Improvements in efficiency reduce consumption when *ceteris paribus* (other things being equal). However, other things do not stay the same. When James Watt improved the efficiency of Newcomen’s steam engine, less coal was needed for each engine performing a certain amount of “work”. This meant that costs were reduced, thus more people became interested in getting an engine. So, when the number of steam engines increased, more coal in the aggregate was used, eventually out-doing the saving from the original improvement. This is called “The Jevons paradox” after Stanley Jevons who wrote about this already in 1865 (Rebound, 2000, 2009).

Two aspects must be added to this. The examples I have presented above, that of cold appliances and that of washing and drying machines, tested just that. One tendency was improved efficiency; another was an increasing number and use of the machines in question. The result was that the former was stronger than the latter. In those cases the rebound effect was limited. Secondly, behaviour (or “practice”) can be as important as pure technical change. This means that behaviour is part of the improvements in efficiency.

The second aspect is that energy efficiency is a sub-class of general efficiency, or productivity. This, in turn, touches upon the very foundation of how growth and wealth has been accomplished, often to the detriment of the environment. The rebound effect discussed above is limited to cases where energy efficiency improvements are partially or wholly offset by increasing use and demand for the energy consuming service in question. However, it is relevant to broaden the picture so as to include external counter tendencies (external in the meaning not emanating from energy efficiency improvements). One example is the case of set-top boxes. Many Swedish households obtained set-top boxes a few years ago. They had to do so because of a political decision to introduce digital TV and closing down analogue broadcasting. This affected electricity consumption, especially stand by-consumption, as these boxes could not be turned off. Now, the eco-design directive says that there should be a power limit on boxes. Thus, first electricity consumption is raised, and then measures are taken to reduce it.

In the literature the rebound effect is often analysed as composed of three types of effect: a direct effect (increasing demand for the same service), an indirect effect (increasing demand for other services), and an economy-wide effect (affecting the whole economy) effect (Ruzzenenti & Basosi, 2008). There are several problems with this division, one is the unclear difference between the second and the third, and another is that we lose sight of some of the mechanisms at work. I will try to show this below using the example of lighting.

### ***Analysis of the rebound effect on lighting***

A direct rebound effect would appear at the household level as longer burning time for a relatively efficient kind of lamp, and on the aggregate level as a general increase in the use of that product. Furthermore, the Jevons’ example hide the distinctiveness of cases where improvements require purchase of new products, for which decorative design and fashion is important. A rebound effect of this kind would be extended use. Thirdly, there is the mechanism of indirect effects, effects on other products and services. Here we can distinguish between a technical and an economic mechanism. The technical has to do with the inefficiency of incandescent lamps, namely that a lot of the energy put in comes out as heat. This waste heat contributes to the heating of the dwelling, so in case of substitution heating demand will rise. This can be called heat compensation effect. Fourthly, the economic indirect effect has to do with money saved when energy consumption is reduced. This money will be spent somehow, something we can call re-spending.



Another result from the close study of nine households mentioned above was that burning hours for CFLs (4.2 hours) were double that of fluorescents (2.1) and incandescent and halogen lamps (1.8). Does this indicate a direct rebound effect at the micro-level? Not necessarily. A possible, and probable, interpretation is that CFLs were placed in those fittings that would have had many hours-of-use regardless of the kind of lamp used. Sweden belongs to the “cosy” lighting culture in which background lighting is common. Lamps placed on the windowsill or other places are considered to create a pleasant atmosphere typical of the Nordic lighting culture. These lamps are used for several hours per day (depending on the season). Fluorescent tubes are avoided for such purposes, and therefore used only for functional reasons, exclusively in the kitchen ceiling, in the bathroom, in the garage, the washing room or the basement. A typical Swedish household, following the Nordic lighting pattern, would turn on the tubes when preparing a meal in the kitchen, and turn them off when it is time to eat.

Even if this interpretation is wrong and the longer hours-of-use really was a direct rebound effect, the reduction in energy consumption switching from incandescent lamps to CFLs (only 20% of power needed) is so big that a doubling of the time cannot out-do the saving (Bladh & Krantz, 2008).

The next type of rebound effect becomes relevant in the case of LEDs. Using only 10% of the power required for an incandescent lamp, and at least 20 times longer life, LEDs will lower user costs significantly. However, this does not mean that incandescent or halogen lamps will be replaced. Now, the banning of incandescent lamps is taken care of by the eco-design directive, but we cannot be sure that LEDs will replace remaining lamps. In fact, many of the LEDs existing today are designed for new functions, in the form of bendable tubes or in the shape of a stone to be used around banisters or in the garden. It is possible that LEDs will extend the use of lighting to functions not used before.

The third type of rebound effect—that the heating system is compensating for the heat loss when inefficient lighting is replaced by efficient—is small. Studies from Britain and Sweden say that the maximum rebound effect would amount to the equivalence of 2.7 and 3.4 % respectively (MTP, 2006; Fahlén & Sikander, 1998). It is highly probable that it is less than that, because during summer time the heating system is off and cannot compensate at all. Furthermore, compensation depends on how fast the heating system reacts on changes in temperature. However, heat from lighting is accentuated by the new extremely heat efficient houses built now, the so-called passive houses heated solely from sunshine, bodies and electric equipment. A study of a household living in such a house showed that people had decided to reinstall incandescent lamps precisely because they wanted to gain the heat from them (Isaksson, 2009:110).

The last type of rebound effect, re-spending, is the most general. Is there such a thing as environmentally sound consumption? Let us imagine a person consuming a certain basket of goods and services determined by his or her preferences, socially accepted practices, actual prices and available income. Let us, secondly, imagine that the total cost for this basket is reduced by energy efficient measures so that an unused margin of the income appears. On what will this be spent? If it is saved in the bank or in stocks, it will be used for productive purposes (assuming an efficient financial system). If it is spent directly it will be spent on products of lower priority and higher income elasticity. This could mean anything from investment in parking lots, to the buying of ecological wine (Nässén & Holmberg, 2009; Barker, Dagoumas & Rubin, 2009).

According to Nässén and Holmberg income elasticity of demand in Sweden is highest for “purchase of vehicles” and for “consumption of transport fuels” (the financial crisis 2008–2009 is a proof in the negative of this). This means that car traffic will increase when disposable income increases, and the authors estimates show a high rebound effect when

preferences include a change from a small to a big car: nearly 50% take-back. However, we should not rely too much on these estimates now considering the attention given to global warming and citizen's willingness to pay for this. Extending electricity use can be defended in some cases, but complicates our view on energy saving.

It can be said that the main problem with electricity is its advantages: It is silent, secure and flexible. It can be used for many purposes, and historically electricity has won battles with other types of engines in manufacturing industry, with other types of lighting, and other types of cooking, cooling etc. in the homes. However, it has won one battle too many (electric heating), and it has lost one battle that could have delayed global warming (electric cars). It is wasteful too use such a useful energy carrier as electricity for heating purposes. Energy of lower quality—waste heat, ground heat, etc.—should be used first. On the other the electric car is much more energy efficient than the ordinary car: About 70% is converted to useful work, while the petrol car converts only about 15%. Even if electricity is produced using fossil fuels, a replacement of the combustion engine still offers a radical reduction in greenhouse gases. Where electricity production is based on hydropower and nuclear power, and where a considerable part of consumption is used for electric heating, as it is in Sweden, the contribution to global warming mitigation is quite big. A conversion from electricity to energy of lower quality for heating purposes would save 15% of Sweden's total electricity consumption. Further savings, with take-back taken into account, would add to this. Then, if production capacity is constant, some of that capacity could be used for charging batteries in hybrid and electric cars.

Now, let us not forget the sociologist's warning about technological optimism. Car driving is not only a matter of the car and its motor, but also of infrastructures, routines and cultures built around it. Furthermore, batteries are associated with environmental problems too, and make the car heavier. Replacing the whole car fleet of a nation will take considerable time, and as Nathan Rosenberg (Rosenberg, 1976:205) has taught us, an old technology improves fast in a period of technical competition—increasingly fuel efficient cars can delay or even divert the transformation of the car.

## Conclusions

Someone trained in economic history and working at an inter-disciplinary department will perhaps always feel somewhat uncomfortable with a typical technological and a typical sociological view. Inter-disciplinarity contains a struggle for preferential right of interpretation beneath the openness and politeness of the seminar and conference. This paper is no exception.

In my mind energy efficiency is not only a matter of devices, but also a matter of use of given technologies. It seems to me to be a mistake to associate efficiency solely with improvements of devices. However, I believe technical efficiency not only to be more important but also more humane. Exerting control of householder's use of their electric equipment must somewhere get in conflict with individual freedom. The eco design-directive will phase out several inefficient types and brands. For lighting this means that lamps of 60W, 40W and 25W will disappear, and must be replaced by lamps of only a fifth (or less depending on the future of LEDs) of the power for approximately the same lighting service in terms of lumen. The result of this replacement will not mean an end to huge differences between household's uses of electricity for lighting, but it can lower the overall level.

It seems to me that sociologists are trapped in their own critique of "technological determinism", making it impossible for them to see anything sustainably good coming out of technical change. The suggested solutions presented by sociologists are not realistic from a social point of view: regenerating the siesta in Southern Europe, wearing a waist coat in Britain, returning to natural ventilation or cold storage without refrigerators (Wilhite &

Norgard, 2004:996; Shove, 2004:1058). You can save on electricity for lighting by using candles, tea lights and kerosene lamps, but you increase the use of other sources of energy instead and raise the risk of causing fires. It is hard to ban the Nordic lighting culture or excessive use of decorative lighting. The service a refrigerator provides is not only cold storage, but also a uniform temperature for the storage. For that service putting your food on the balcony or in the larder (if there is one) is not an alternative, because the temperature is influenced by the surrounding milieu, while the fridge is isolated from such variation.

The rebound effect has reminded the naïve technical optimist of other matters than the pure technical efficiency improvement measures. What would happen when people learn that twenty yards of LED stripes consume no more than an ordinary Edison-lamp? It is still possible that without the assistance of the buyer and the user, improvements in energy efficiency will turn out as a go ahead-signal for extended use. It cannot be ruled out today (October 2009), without the participation of the intelligent switch, the user, that light-emitting diodes will open for massive façade decoration with glowing tubes of all colours. On the other hand, the attention given to the problem of global warming, offers an unprecedented opportunity to change user practices. It is difficult to see a revolution from close range, but the concerted attention given to energy saving, a peak load, so to speak, of environmental consciousness, is the window of opportunity many scientists talk about.

While a technological focus—technology without people—has its strong point in energy efficiency, but it has no recipe for the rebound effect. Especially re-spending is troublesome in the long run. A sociological focus—people without technology—can question consumer culture but has difficulties in formulating feasible solutions. If energy efficiency is not enough, well, then I see no other solution than a significant reduction in average income, the ultimate solution to the problem of “re-spending”. A substantial reduction of working hours can get us out of the growing spiral.

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## **Older Women and Men in Public Transport: Active Actors in Creating their own Mobility?**

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In recent years there has been an increase of older people in the western world. In Sweden the amount of elderly in the population almost doubled since 1940. In year 2000, 17 percent of the population were 65 years or older, five percent were 80 or older. This can be compared to 1940 when only nine percent were older than 65. With a greater amount of elderly in the population we must be prepared to meet new possibilities and problems in relation to planning and development of our future transport system. The need of mobility is not decreasing as we get older. Seniors today have more or less the same needs for social relations, recreational activities and services as younger people, both in the local community and at home. The primary mode of transport for these activities is the car. At age 65-84 nearly 60 percent of the trips are made by car and only eight percent by public transport. On the other hand, the situation for people over 85 years is much different since many are not able to drive a car anymore, if they at all have a driver's license. To be able to stay active with good quality of life, great demands are placed on future accessibility and a safe transport system. If not, there will be a great number of people who will risk not getting out of their homes. The aim of this project is to study older women's and men's experiences, perspectives and ideas about public transport as a resource for creation of their everyday mobility. What power and influence do older women and men have over their mobility, during various stages of the life course, and at various places? The study is based on field work within two Swedish regions (Östergötland and Jönköping) and contains in depth interviews with 18 women and 12 men at age 58-93 years, living in town, urban area or on the countryside. The study also contains travel diaries and focus groups. The results show that the informants, even the very old, are travelling a lot: one or two trips a day are not unusual. According to the informants' own stories, the primary needs are short walking distances, extended traffic, no calls for reservation, spontaneous trips but also outdoor activities such as walking and bicycling and not at least - time for recovery. Older people want to be responsible for their own agenda, i.e. their planning of every day activities and

their everyday mobility. According to these results, measures that need to be considered are attractive alternatives to car use, more positive experiences of public transport, changing minds and behaviors among older people and providing public transport for impaired people. In the whole, the public transport should be more convenient. If the buses are late or uncomfortable or if the trips are complicated, older people choose not to go by bus.

## **“Can I Get a Little Space, Please?” A Cross-Generation Comparison of Leisure Time and Mobility Patterns of Adolescents**

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Comparing mobility patterns of adolescents across generations requires methods that incorporate the historicity of human activity. This study examines how adolescent use of space, in terms of leisure time and mobility patterns, has changed across generations in relation to diverse geographic and socioeconomic histories. The data collected from Nashville families includes interviews, parent oral histories, free recall maps, and teen mobility tracks gathered using a wearable Global Positioning System (GPS) device. This paper describes how changes in artifacts, and different levels of community embeddedness have shaped the ways in which today’s adolescents experience and create spaces outside of school, in comparison to their parents’ generation. I analyze how daily activity schedules reflect a division of labor in families between parents and their adolescent children, the variety and place-based structure of community learning opportunities in which adolescents participate during their leisure time (with and without parental oversight), the mutually accountable practices through which teens produce and regulate these spaces, and recurring use of cultural materials and artifacts for producing and engaging with these spaces. Observing geography, class, gender, and age constantly working in confluence in the construction of space through time, this paper further challenges the idea that children from urban working-class families experience “deficits” while participating in and making practices outside of school. While extant models of activity systems (e.g., Engestrom et al., 1999) provide considerable guidance in making sense of adolescents space-time mobility and use of community spaces in leisure time activities, there are dynamic, imaginative components of these spatial practices (de Certeau, 1984) that are not well captured by concepts of rules or divisions of labor within the already-existing community. Finally, this paper reports on a comparison of adolescent and parent/guardian (as recalled, in a map construction task) space-time mobility, where both are treated as a linked collection of activity

systems. If culturally relevant pedagogy is important for educating students and challenging institutional inequities in the future (Ladson-Billings, 1995), then we must also know what defines youth culture and learning outside of school in the present.



## **The Housing Situation as a Part of Everyday Life among Older People**

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Housing and housing environment as part of everyday life changes character as people get older. Housing that at a time was suited for a family with children or for working life, later in life has to cater for a time when possibly more time is spent in the home and at different hours of the day and in a different family constellation. As such older people may well reconsider their housing situation and how this is done and what becomes the effect of this as regard their everyday life is the central theme of this study. A group of 20 households, a mix of single and two person households, aged between 55 and 92 have been interviewed about a forth-coming move into senior housing. A number of issues were raised in these interviews relating to everyday life. It is evident that residential mobility among this group, at this time in life, takes into account the possibility of making everyday life easier, in order to continue living a good life without the factors that are considered or might become a burden later on. Social factors also become an issue and by changing housing situation the interviewees expect to move into a new social constellation that will enhance their quality of life. With an ageing population it is important to planning processes to understand the way older people reason regarding their housing situation.



## **Going in Dialysis is Time to Live: Family's Experiences of Everyday Life with Haemodialysis Treatment**

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Time is a central concept when attempting to capture how life develops as results of the interaction between the individual and those in his/her immediate environment. Chronic renal disease such as ESRD with chronic haemodialysis not only shortens life but also places everyday life on a thin line survival paramount. The haemodialysis is also a time-consuming treatment that makes it necessary to carefully plan of everyday life and involves next of kin to a large degree. The aim of this study was to explore the content of time in everyday life as experienced by the next of kin of haemodialysis patients. This study used explorative and descriptive design with a content analysis approach. The interviews, which were conducted in the informants' homes, lasted 20-60 minutes and were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim in order to not to lose any information. Twenty next of kin were selected purposive with the criterion of having at least one year of experience as a next of kin of a patient on haemodialysis. The content of time in everyday life can be described as follows: fragmented time, vacuous time and uninterrupted time. Conclusion which illustrate how time is minimised and life space contracted for next of kin and their family. They were aware of the prognosis of renal disease and the fact that haemodialysis is life-sustaining treatment, which forced them to live for the moment. It is important to gain insight into how time influences the next of kin's experiences of everyday life and how this knowledge can be communicated in the nursing science.

## Introduction

Everyday life can be complex when next of kin of haemodialysis patients are preoccupied with taking care of patient and his/her health, which the difficulties and requirements needed. The experience of time varies during the life span due to the changes that continually take place in the life of every human being (Novotny, 1994). Time is a central concept when attempting to capture how life develops as a result of the interaction between the individual and those in his/her immediate environment (Jepsson, 2001). As human relationships can last a life time, they are affected by the past, the present and the future. Next of kin are part of the individual's closest circle, and the care and attention they exhibit when a family member becomes ill is influenced by their common past and can help them to look to the future (Waerness, 2000). Consequently, experiences over time are valuable for next of kin and can provide the details of individual identity and group relations in everyday life. When a life-threatening disease strikes, life changes not only for the person affected but also for those in their environment who are emotionally and socially close to them. Chronic and serious diseases are a reminder of human vulnerability and, in cases where the course and prognosis of the condition are uncertain, lead to a sense of uncertainty in everyday life (Charmanz, 1997).

Chronic renal disease often requires haemodialysis, which is a time-consuming treatment that necessitates careful planning of everyday life and involves next of kin to a very large degree (White & Grenyer, 1999). The patients require dialysis three to four days per week for three to four hours on each occasion. As the treatment is both time-consuming and tiring for the patient, his/her next of kin and social life are very much affected (Hagren, 2001). Furthermore, the next of kin have to adapt their lives to the haemodialysis treatment schedule. A person's time can be severely restricted when his/her life is devoted to the needs of another. Feelings of insufficiency and strain may surface when everyday life is experienced as restricted, and personal space is perceived to be contracting (Davies, 1996; Ziegert & Fridlund, 2001). It is therefore important to investigate next of kin's experience of time in connection with the care of haemodialysis patients. The aim of this study was to explore the content of time in everyday life as experienced by the next of kin of haemodialysis patients.

### *Time experiences*

Time is defined as a numerical measure of change involving movement in both action and thought, which distinguishes between the past, the present and the future (Aristotle, 1941). Novotny (1994) describes time in terms of the human being's social environment and the changes that take place during the life span. Time is divided into personal time or perceived time, which varies from individual to individual throughout life, and time as defined a social institution, as a symbolic means of orientation, which is visible and measurable in units. The perception of time in adulthood has been described as private time and public time. According to Ingthorsson (2002), the present becomes frozen in the absence of knowledge about the future or when life is focused on living from day to day. An image of the future is necessary for the present. Davies (1989) states that perceived time is the most important time in the everyday life of the individual. Human beings need time for reflection, which is afforded by self-perceived time. The sense of having unlimited or sufficient time generates feelings of happiness and a zest for life. When the day is planned in detail and the diary overflowing, everyday life can be disrupted, giving rise to a sense of meaninglessness. Jönsson (1999) describes time as an important part of life, due to its central role in the existence of each individual. Time is described as a visible band around the life of each human being. McNerney (1993) regards the experience of time as a conception of scarcity, due to the fact that an enormous number of events take place simultaneously, which can influence a person's

everyday life. However, time can also be perceived as endless, when the individual finds tranquillity in everyday life, which happens when he/she experiences nature and feels as if time is standing still. Craig (2000) highlights the fact that major changes in everyday life lead to a loss of a sense of time. Time is reflected by the measurable time, speed and rhythm. Each individual has his/her own body clock and individual rhythm. The time measured by the clock often dominates life, as the individual reacts to measurable time as opposed to perceived time. Nevertheless, both the biological and the cognitive rhythm are central. Novotny (1994) emphasises the importance of questions dealing with perceived time when attempting to capture experiences of everyday life, due to the fact that perceived time and everyday experiences are strongly linked. An individual's thoughts are also guided by his/her rhythm, which can make it difficult to reflect with people who have a different rhythm. However, in close relationships with family members, an understanding of each other's rhythms is developed, which means that time is a central concept for capturing the interaction between an individual and the people in his/her immediate environment.

### Study design

This study used a qualitative, descriptive design with a content analysis approach. Qualitative content analysis is a tool for drawing validated conclusions of verbal, visual or written data in order to describe and evaluate a specific subject (Berg, 2004). Qualitative content analysis closely adheres to the original material and does not paraphrase the reality (Polit and Beck, 2004). The participants were based on consisted of 38 eligible patients on haemodialysis who lived in a county in south-western Sweden (270 000 inhabitants) (SRAU, 2004). The participants were selected by purposive sampling with the inclusion criterion of having at least one year of experience as a next of kin of a patient on haemodialysis. Twenty next of kin fulfilled this criterion and agreed to take part in the study, thus forming the sample.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of next of kin to haemodialysis patients (N = 20)

Characteristic	Sample
Mean age (range) years	58 (31-80)
Type of Dialysis	
Hospital haemodialysis	20
Gender	
Female	15
Male	5
Relationship to the patient	
Wife (Spouses)	11
Husband (Spouses)	2
Adult children	5
Mother	1
Father	1
Next of kin' experiences of dialysis years	
1-2	12
3-5	5
6-15	3
Education	
Elementary school	4
High school	13
University/post graduate	3
Spatial closeness	
Living with patient	13
Living close to patient	6
Living far away from patient	1

The study was approved by the operations managers at the selected county hospital in south-western Sweden as well as the Ethics Committee, Lund University, Sweden. The interviews were conducted over a four-month period in 2004. The participants were fully informed about the voluntary nature of participation, how their data would be treated and the procedures that would be used to ensure confidentiality. Informed written consent was obtained from all participants. Further, they were informed that they could withdraw their participation anytime. The main researcher then introduced herself and explained the purpose of the study to the next of kin. Codes were used to identify the participants. The transcripts, audio-tapes and consent forms were stored in a locked cabinet. The ethical issues were reflected on and harm

minimised, through following the guiding ethical principles of the World Medical Association's Helsinki Declaration 1964 (The Swedish Medical Research Council, 2000).

### ***Data collection***

The main focus of the interviews was the next of kin's experience of time in their everyday lives when caring for a family member who is on haemodialysis. The research questions concerned the everyday life of the next of kin and how they viewed their own time in relation to caring for the patient, with focus on the past, present and future. The first interview questions were broadly formulated "Can you describe your everyday life?", "What has been your experience of time since your family member started haemodialysis treatment?", and "How do you view your everyday life in terms of the past, the present and the future?" Follow-up questions could be "What do you do on an ordinary day?" and "What is your experience of your time that you have to yourself?" The interviews, which were conducted by the main researcher in the next-of-kin's home, lasted 30 to 60 minutes, were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim.

Data were analysed according to the principles of content analysis (Berg, 2004). The following steps were chosen:

1. Impression. The analysis started when the transcripts were read and compared to the audio-taped interviews in order to check the accuracy of the text and to gain a first impression of the transcribed interview texts.
2. Coding. While reading the transcripts of each interview, notes were made in the margin indicating the subjects dealt with in the interview and the emerging ideas. The entire text was then read through once again, and text units that corresponded to the aim were coded.
3. Inductive process. In this step the text units were condensed in order to filter out irrelevant information. An inductive process was initiated by the main researcher becoming deeply absorbed in the written material with the aim of identifying dimensions or themes that appeared meaningful in relation to how the information was presented.
4. Reduction. The condensed texts were read and coded into broad categories in a so-called category list. The analysis continued with another reading of the texts to identify different nuances in the broad categories, which were then reduced to new, more nuanced ones.
5. Validation process. In this step, new categories were formed based on the aim. The texts were read through in order to verify that quotations and categories were in agreement. All 440 quotations were extracted from the transcripts and documented under the respective category. All quotations were discussed and processed in order to reduce and highlight the meaning-carrying quotations. When the researchers (KZ, EL) had reached agreement, the validation was completed by selecting quotations for the results that corresponded to the description of each category.
6. Writing process. The texts were re-read in order to link the original material to the category descriptions. Thereafter the main researcher selected the most important information from each category together with the quotation that expressed it, after which the meaningful information about the respective category was identified.

### **Findings**

Analysis of data from the interviews revealed experiences of time in the everyday lives of the next-of-kin of haemodialysis patients. Their experiences are reflected in the concepts fragmented time, vacuous time and uninterrupted time. The next of kin described how their own time drastically reduced when they prioritised the patient's health problem first.

### ***Fragmented time***

Fragmented time contained descriptions of restricted and divided time in the next of kin's everyday life, due to being constantly on hand to help the patient, thus limiting the time for his/her own activities. Fragmented time also meant less freedom, as daily life was divided in order to accommodate the patient's treatment times. This resulted in reduced mobility and difficulties going away, having fun or spending time together with other people. Next of kin's time was governed by the patient's schedule, which left them no opportunities to do what they wanted or to shape their day based on their own ideas. Furthermore, time restrictions brought with them increased responsibility for the patient's health and for the home, for contact with the healthcare services and the local authority as well as for making applications for aids of assistance. *"My hubby's disease is very restricting and affects all social aspects of life. Nothing but musts, everything hinges on the dialysis"*.

Next of kin were hindered in their everyday life by a multitude of tasks which were concentrated on the patient, such as assisting with personal hygiene, administering medication, shopping, cooking, cleaning and transport. Their everyday life was full of obligations, and time to consider themselves or opportunities to get away from it all was limited. Time was devoted to the patient's needs, and there was no possibility of handing over responsibility to somebody else: *"Well, my day became quite different. I can't stay away from home more than an hour at any one time, as there is nobody else here"*.

Fragmented time dominated the everyday life of the next of kin, as their whole attention was focused on the patient's disease, health and haemodialysis treatment, which meant that they had no time to themselves. They planned their time to coincide with the patient's daily activities in order to give priority to his/her needs. The restricted time mainly consisted of time focused on the patient at the expense of their own unbroken time. Next of kin adapted their day to the fixed times of the patient's haemodialysis treatment, with the result that their daily life was fully planned, which gave rise to the feeling that their energies were divided.

### ***Vacuous time***

Vacuous time comprised descriptions of the present as vacuous, empty and without a future of one's own, as the patient's haemodialysis treatment prevented the planning of long-term goals. Next of kin were aware of the prognosis of the disease and of the uncertainty associated with each day, due to the life-sustaining nature of the treatment and the inherent risk of complications. Vacuous time was also linked to the knowledge that the disease could lead to death, which strengthened the next of kin's ties to the patient. They dared not stop thinking about the patient, which constituted a hindrance in their everyday life, as the present made it impossible to plan for the future. The feeling that time was vacuous restricted the next of kin's daily life, as they dared not plan ahead, since the patient was their main focus. *"Well, it somehow feels as if I don't have a future. Of course you sometimes wonder what will happen to her, if she will be given a kidney transplant and able to return to a normal life"*.

The patient's disease was the focus of the next of kin's everyday life, which they adjusted in order to cope with the development of the disease, thus restricting their possibilities of envisaging the future in a long-term perspective. Aspects that could inspire them with hope for the future were limited. Daily life was experienced as empty and vacuous, as their time was focused on the fully planned existence of the patient and dominated by restrictions related to the treatment. Previous wishes to travel or undertake enjoyable activities together with the patient had to be abandoned due to uncertainty about the health of the latter. *"We had planned to travel but one has to take each day as it comes. That's what I do anyway. Her future is my future"*.

The strict division of time contributed to the vulnerability of the next of kin, as they had a feeling that time was running out for the patient, which resulted in an emotional void due to



uncertainty about a different future. The fact that there was no hope of an improvement in the patient's health prevented the next of kin from undertaking major changes in their daily lives. The emptiness of their existence played a central role. Furthermore, they made no plans for the future, as their thoughts were concentrated on the here and now. Next of kin were uncertain about their own future. Time was measured from day to day and they lived in the present.

### ***Uninterrupted time***

Uninterrupted time comprised descriptions of the next of kin's private time, when they could devote time to themselves, their own activities and needs and feel free. There was also time for experiences that gave them the urge to do things and the energy to create happiness in their daily lives. Their time was filled with everything from experiencing nature, travel and cultural activities to socialising. *"I have to see my friends fairly regularly, otherwise it becomes tedious"*.

Uninterrupted time had the potential to provide renewed strength, when next of kin could undertake something special that they enjoyed. They described how cultural activities or spending time in the countryside gave them a feeling of time as connected and uninterrupted. *"I like sitting at the computer and working with image processing. Then I have time to myself, which I enjoy very much"*. The next of kin's experiences of uninterrupted time were related to uneventful days or when they enjoyed themselves. They also experienced time as uninterrupted when they did not have to keep an eye on the clock and the time was their own. During periods of uninterrupted time, the next of kin could rest and recoup energy to cope with the strain of their daily lives. *"I think Friday is quite a good day as being on my own, perhaps because you have the whole weekend ahead of you. There is no dialysis on weekends"*. For the next of kin, uninterrupted time implied having time to themselves, which they spent on various pastimes that they found enjoyable or relaxing. Uninterrupted time also created an opportunity for reflection and occurred during calm days, on which there was no dialysis, when the next of kin could feel free. Uninterrupted time thus had the potential to be beneficial, as they could relax from the supporting of the patient.

## **Discussion**

The existential knowledge that one cannot live forever constantly in focus, which can create insecurity in everyday life and the feeling that time is running out, especially as haemodialysis take up so much of it. The role of next of kin changes when they become involved in the care, which in turn can lead to a change of lifestyle and restrictions in everyday life and the life cycle.

A qualitative descriptive and explorative design with a content analysis approach was used to capture experiences content of time in the everyday lives of next of kin of haemodialysis patients. This method was considered suitable for the present study due to its naturalistic approach without paraphrasing reality (Berg, 2004; Polit and Beck, 2004). In order to ensure the quality of the findings and methods used in this study, trustworthiness will be discussed in terms of the following criteria: credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability (Polit and Beck, 2004) Credibility was ensured by the use of a reliable method and the fact that the interviews were in line with the aim of the study. Furthermore, the data analysis was carried out in accordance with the clearly defined steps described above in order to generate reasonable results. Although the results cannot be generalised or transferred in a statistical context, they are in a qualitative sense transferable to similar samples in a similar clinical context. The participants were purposively selected, and the inclusion criterion was one year's experience of being a next of kin of a haemodialysis patient, sufficient times enough collecting thoughts and experiences of being a next of kin of haemodialysis patients.

Surprisingly, the education level was relatively high, indicating the possible failure of this analysis to capture the experiences of less well educated people. On the other hand, as it is well known that well-educated people are better at verbalising their experiences, it is possible that the next of kin contributed further knowledge Table 1. Confirmability refers to the objectivity of the data and implies balancing the researcher's knowledge with the content emerging from the data. The study was conducted by means of qualitative analysis, a tool for drawing validated conclusions based on verbal data and aimed at describing and evaluating a specific subject. The selection criterion, use of a tape recorder, verbatim transcripts of interviews and the steps of content analysis further guarantee the dependability of the results. To increase reliability of the analysis, the researchers (KZ, EL) had reached agreement and assessed all text responses independently, and level of agreement was assessed.

The results showed time in the everyday lives of next-of-kin of haemodialysis patients as fragmented time, vacuous time and uninterrupted time. Next of kin described fragmented time as their daily existence being split and restricted by their responsibility for the patient's health and haemodialysis treatment. Ekvall et al.'s study (2004) reveals that the next of kin's responsibility for the patient's care in the home can comprise several different caring interventions, such as nursing tasks, which include keeping in contact with the nurse and physician responsible for the patient, assisting the sick person with everyday activities and being available to provide help in the home. The study also revealed that next of kin of severely ill patients assume increasingly greater responsibility for nursing interventions in the home, which can leave them little time for themselves. Fragmented time occurred when next of kin were involved with the patient, both physically and mentally, resulting in a lack of time for themselves. Nieboer et al. (1998) describe how spousal caregivers' free time is drastically reduced when they prioritise the patient's needs, thus allowing themselves no opportunity for relaxation and activities of their own. There is also an increased risk of depression when the demands and duties in the home become greater and the opportunity for relaxation is accordingly fail. In the present study, the majority of quotations described fragmented time, which may indicate that next of kin of haemodialysis patients were exposed to a health risk due to their time being divided and restricted (Table 2). When time was constantly restricted and divided, they were at risk of being afflicted by tiredness, which phenomenon has also been described by Ekstedt and Fagerberg (2005), who focused on experiences of time in involved people stricken by tiredness.

The second category described vacuous time as empty and useless, which also weakened the next of kin's belief in the future. They were aware of the prognosis of renal disease and the fact that haemodialysis is a life-sustaining treatment, which forced them to live for the moment. They also had to live with uncertainty, as they were aware that haemodialysis can fail and they were unable to plan for the future. This uncertainty prevents next of kin from planning activities that demand a great deal of time, as they feel imprisoned in their everyday existence, which, according to Ingthorsson (2002), results in a focus on the present, which leads to paralysis and lack of goals in their daily lives. Vacuous time was associated with the wish to live one day at a time and in the here and now. This strategy can help the next of kin to cope with the emptiness of their uncertain existence caused by the patient's disease. In contrast, Pelletier-Hibbert and Sihi (2001) underline the importance of next of kin living from day to day and in the present, which can reduce their level of uncertainty about the future. According to Calvin (2004), haemodialysis patients are aware of the life-threatening nature of their renal disease and that they cannot survive without haemodialysis. The patient shares this knowledge with his/her next of kin, which can create insecurity in everyday life and the feeling that time is running out. Benzein et al. (2004) argue that open communication in the form of discussions between health care professionals and next of kin can strengthen the feelings and beliefs of family members who are responsible for the patient's care in the home.

The next of kin are also resource mainly because of the latter's belief that one should take care of one's own family. However, they point out the risk that the next of kin will not have sufficient strength to cope if their belief in the future is extinguished. Vacuous time was present in next of kin's daily lives and, in order to understand their feeling of emptiness and believe in their own future, they needed to be continuously informed about the patient's health during conversations with health care professionals.

In the uninterrupted time category, next of kin of haemodialysis patients described their own time as beneficial. Time was experienced as uninterrupted or infinite when they could relax and engage in activities of their own. McInerney (1993) holds that uninterrupted time is when an individual experiences a feeling of tranquillity in his/her everyday life, which can arise from nature or other pleasurable activities. The content of the uninterrupted time category described the next of kin's wishes and needs to escape from their everyday life in order to gain the energy necessary to cope with the strains of caring for the patient in the home. This is in line with Kuuppelomaki et al.'s (2004) study, where family carers needed repeated positive experiences, a break from everyday life and to follow their own intuition when choosing activities to afford them relaxation. The family carers also reported that uninterrupted time was when they escaped from their daily routines and had an opportunity to pursue activities other than their daily chores. Renal disease and its treatment in most cases play a central role in the everyday lives of next of kin, due to their uncertainty about the patient's symptoms, which can also influence the family's rhythm and give rise to their experience of time being affected (Charmanz, 1997). In the nursing process, the next of kin's opportunities for uninterrupted time can be identified by means of the assessment conversation, when they are asked about their psychosocial situation. Renal care professionals should also be able to create such opportunities when planning the patient's care. The everyday life of next of kin is shaped by various experiences and perceptions in the interaction with other people during a long period, which can be related to Rollands's theory (1998) about the role of the individual in his/her own everyday life. The patient's closest relations are family members who are normally available 24 hours a day, which is consistent with the findings of the present study. When next of kin of haemodialysis patients play an important role in the patient's life, and when they assume responsibility for their joint existence and its smooth functioning, their personal life becomes minimised and their common life space also contracts (Waerness, 2000).

## Conclusions and implications

The experiences of content of time in everyday life among next-of-kin of haemodialysis patients demonstrated that time for themselves was minimised and that the common life space contracted. The results identified three categories: fragmented time, vacuous time and uninterrupted time. Next of kin's everyday life was characterised by fragmented time, due to their responsibility for the patient's health and care in the home, while uninterrupted time, which provided relaxation and recovery, rarely reduced. Vacuous time generated emptiness and uncertainty regarding plans for the future as well as leading to the narrowing of their common everyday life. It is important to gain insight into how experiences of time influence the next of kin's everyday life and how this knowledge be communicated in the nursing process. Attention should be focused on time in the nurse's assessment of the next of kin's everyday life, so that the nursing care plan can take account of the time required for the patient's care, and whether or not next of kin have sufficient time for relaxation and recovery. There is a need for further research that focuses on a generalisation of the findings by means of the development of instruments that can contribute to improved assessment of the ability of next of kin to care for the patient in the home and whether or not time can be made available in order to promote their well-being.

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## **Day Care Work as the Creation of Coherence in Everyday Life**

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Day care institutions serve a central function in modern society; not least because taking care of children is a prerequisite for parent's participation in the labour market. This is certainly the case in Denmark, where 90 % of children attend day care institutions. In this sense, day care institutions are a prerequisite for a sustainable everyday life in modern society. Without day care for children it is not possible for families to create a coherent everyday life. At the same time, life in day care institutions shares a lot of similarities with everyday life. It is extremely important and yet hidden, unnoticed and invisible (Bech Jørgensen 1988, Bloch 1988, Baagøe Nielsen 2005). This is a central work condition for the kindergarten teachers who work in day care institutions.

A central hypothesis in our research project, "Developing and strengthening the professional competences of kindergarten teachers: confronting neoliberal regulation", is that a great deal of the work of kindergarten teachers is oriented towards creating coherence in the every life of children and their families. But this central function is threatened by neoliberal forms to the regulation of work in day care institutions.

In recent times, a number of neoliberal forms of regulation have been implemented in day care institutions. For example, there are now demands that institutions prepare specific plans for enhancing and testing children's linguistic development. These forms of regulation tends to separate certain "learning" activities from other activities of "ordinary care", and to classify them as more important (Bernstein, 2000). At the same time, these activities seem to offer the professionals a chance to shed light on their otherwise hidden, unnoticed and invisible work. But we think that the professional competences of the kindergarten teachers are expressed in many other activities and situations in the everyday life in day care institutions. Our project intends to raise awareness of how professional competences (In Danish: "faglighed") are expressed in many ways other than those that the neoliberal forms of regulation focus on. This should be used to formulate political alternatives to neoliberalism based on the necessity of a coherent and sustainable everyday life.





## **Everyday Family Life: Investigating the Individual/Social in a Radicalized Modernity**

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What are the implications of ongoing processes of modernization and individualization for social relations in everyday life? This overall research question is the pivotal point in empirical studies at the Centre of Childhood-, Youth- and Family Life Research at Roskilde University. One research project takes a social psychological approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods in a longitudinal study of family life. The knowledge interest of the project is the constitution of communality and individuality in everyday family life. This article presents the theoretical framework and the conceptualization of everyday family life of the social psychological research agenda in this field.

The main line of argument is that ongoing modernization is synonymous with accelerated processes of detraditionalization and individualization. This calls for a re-conceptualisation of 'the family' which enables researchers to grasp both continuity and change. The article refers to everyday life studies and social psychology and argues that the term 'family life' may serve as one stepping stone for transgressing the dichotomy.

Furthermore the article unfolds the implications of this framework for the research design and methods and it illustrates this by presenting a research design which comprises a multi-methodological approach combining quantitative and qualitative methods in the study of the relationship between the individual and the social (the individual/social), thus enabling analysis of both meaning and practices and of both continuity and change in family everyday life.

Lastly the contours of further research are outlined.

## Ongoing modernization and individualization

Ongoing processes of modernization and detraditionalization bring the individual to the fore of social life and install her as the privileged point of reference in her lived biography (Bauman, 2001a; Bauman, 2001b; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Dencik, 2005; Dencik, Jørgensen, & Sommer, 2008). This gives rise to a number of questions, central to social studies. Such questions are: What are the implications of these processes transformation and individualization for families and social networks of everyday life? Through what practices are individuality and communality constituted and interpreted? What tensions between continuity and change can be identified? What can we learn about the contemporary relationship between the individual and the social by studying family life?

The aim of the research agenda presented in this article is to develop insight into the impacts of individualization for family life. It has been argued that these impacts can be identified as a proliferation of family forms (e.g. one parent families, LAT-relationships<sup>1</sup>), as shift in meaning of friendship vis-à-vis kinship or as a individual orientation in family life *away* from the collective projects and commitments *towards* the individual life trajectories and its idiosyncratic projects (Budgeon & Roseneil, 2004; Dencik, 1997; Levin, 2004; Pahl & Spencer, 2004; Roseneil & Budgeon, 2004). Dencik talks of

a tension between the increasingly individuated family members' goals of individual self-realization and the sense of communion necessary for a collective to function as a family unit. (Dencik, 1997:266)

The tension identified by Dencik is the same tension which theories of ongoing (radicalized or reflexive) modernization discuss (Beck, 1994; Beck, Bonss, & Lau, 2003; Giddens, 1992; Giddens, 1994). These theories posit that individualization brings the individual to the fore of social life. Individualization can be understood as

... a historical process that increasingly questions and tends to break up people's traditional rhythm of life – what sociologists call the normal biography. As a result, more people than ever before are being forced to piece together their own biographies and fit in the components they need as best they can. They find themselves bereft of unquestionable assumptions, beliefs or values and are nevertheless faced with the tangle of institutional controls and constraints which make up the fibre of modern life (welfare state, labor market, educational system, etc.) [...] the normal life-history is giving away to the do-it-yourself life-history. (Beck-Gernsheim, 1998:56f)

Individualization is a constitutive part of modernization processes but the concept is weighed down by misunderstandings. It is important to distinguish between the neoliberal idea of the free-market individual and the concept of individualization as *institutionalized individualism*. The latter concept of individualization is construed as “*a product of complex, contingent and thus high-level socialization*” (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002:xxi). Individualization does not imply the notion of the self-sufficient individual but rather of an individual who is tied to others through a complex web of social relations, networks and institutions *as* an individual. Individualization is a “*nonlinear, open-ended, highly ambivalent, ongoing process.*” (Beck-Gernsheim, 2002:221) These processes of individualization go hand in hand with processes of de-traditionalization, which means that all matters of life can be called into question without

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1 A term promoted by Norwegian professor Irene Levin. LAT means living-apart-together, which describes the relationship of adults constituting a romantic couple who does not share a household.

any authoritative guidelines to formulate answers by. Bauman writes eloquently about this in his discussion of tradition in modernity:

Tradition is invoked for the authority of its silence: a silence that neither needs nor brooks argument and which renders all argument superfluous, pretentious and impotent. Yet in order to yield its authority (...), tradition needs to be argumentatively established: its silence must be broken. But once it has been broken, its authority becomes of a kind altogether different from the now lost, virginal, unthinking allure. It is now but an authority of choice and declared loyalty: of a choice among choices, a loyalty among loyalties. (Bauman, 1996:49)

This means that lifestyle choice and orientation in life become reflexive processes. This brings the individual to the fore of social life and place the individual as the general manager of the individual biography; a biography which cannot be modeled by the standard biographies of industrial society. The self becomes the privileged instrument of navigation and orientation as we move through life. Hence, biographies are individualized and become 'do-it-yourself-biographies' (Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). Individualization entails historical new forms of individual identity and new forms of collectivity and coherence. But individualization also entails a demand for social sensitivity. Individualization does not – by default – endanger social integration and the experience of we-ness. In fact it facilitates social integration, but in a new way. These developments and trends can be studied in many areas of society, and surely also in family life. Family life may in fact work as a prism which emphasizes the impact of individualization and detraditionalization on everyday life.

According to Budgeon and Roseneil (2004) Europe is witnessing a shift in the way intimacy and sociability is organized. This shift is both produced by – and constitutive of – a proliferation of relationship practices. Referring not only to the patterns of reconstituted family life which has been visible on the sociological and demographic radar for some time, but also including same-sex relationships, LAT-relationships, the neo-tribal nature of shared housing of young adults and novel trends in the crisscrossing of friendship and family life, Budgeon and Roseneil identifies processes of individualizations as the dominant feature in the social dynamic underlying the erosion of the conventional family. This means that the concept of 'the family'

... is increasingly failing to contain the multiplicity of practices of intimacy and care which have traditionally been [the family's] prerogative and its *raison d'être*. (Budgeon & Roseneil, 2004:127)

More than anything this calls for new research approaches and strategies in the study of family life.

### A social psychological approach

In our focus on the relationship between the individual and the social we take a social psychological approach to the study of family life. Swedish social psychologist, Johan Asplund (1983) argues that it is exactly the relationship between the individual and the social which is at the heart of social psychological enquiry. He presents this relationship as *a slash* between the individual and the social thus combining the dichotomized concepts into and interrelated figure: *the individual/social*. Social psychology studies the slash between the individual and the social.

Asplund aligns with a long tradition of social psychologist tracing back to Simmel who has insisted that individual and society cannot be conceptualized and much less be studied independent of each other. Simmel's concept of *vergesellschaftung* – *societalization* – implies

just this: that the constant processes and connections between the individual and the social constitute both the individual and the social at the same time (Simmel, 1908). The daily, routinized practices and social interactions are crucial parts of the answer to the question formulated by Simmel: How is society possible? These interactions - the processes of *societalization* - are social life in its making. Individuals are connected and interlinked in and by these processes even if these processes do not stabilize as structures or institutions. These processes of mutual, ongoing constitution of the individual and the social, which Simmel identifies as the microfibers of society comprising the macrostructures, is also what is referred to by the concept of everyday life.

### ***Everyday Life***

Following Simmel, everyday life can be understood as a world of face-to-face relations where humans construct themselves and each other by negotiating historical and cultural norms and values, traditions and social institutions (Bech-Jørgensen, 1988). Everyday life unfolds in interpersonal social practices. The world is interpreted and becomes meaningful through social interaction, and through these practices everyday life is constituted. At the same time, everyday life is made up of material structures and social contexts that are in a sense independent from the singular individuals yet constituting the conditions for individual existence; this makes the contexts and structures a part hereof. The structure of the material world can be understood as one of collective meaning which serves to frame and recreate norms and needs; one that connects individual's practices with each other. This means everyday life is always also a part of the social field studied by macro sociology and yet the local present in which individuals are situated.

In her 'reinvention' of the definition of everyday life, American sociologist, Rita Felski, contemplates the conceptual dissonance between 'modernity' and 'everyday life' (Felski 2000:22). For Felski, everyday life is grounded in three key facets: Time, Space and Modality. The feature of time is *repetition*. The rhythm of everyday life revolves around cycles of events which reoccur with more or less fixed intervals. Getting up at the same time, going to work at the same time, having dinner at the same time - doing the same things day after day - are easily identifiable features of everyday life in many households and families. Furthermore, the spatial ordering of everyday life is anchored in a sense of *home*. Felski refers to Agnes Heller when she claims that we experience space in circles of increasing proximity or distance from the experiencing self and that home lies at the centre of these circles (Felski, 2000:22). Thirdly, Felski identifies *habit* as the mode of everyday life. Much like Bauman (Op.Cit.) identified the power of traditions as stemming from their hidden or taken-for-granted position in culture, Felski claims that habits rule everyday life exactly because they are unnoticed.

Unless a specific problem emerges to demand our attention, we rarely pause to reflect upon the mundane ritualized practices around which much of our everyday life is organized. (Felski, 2000:27)

Yet, as tradition (in its traditional form) stands counter posed to modernity, so does these features: repetition, home and habit. In other words there seems to be an opposition between modernity and everyday life; as if processes of modernization erodes the very foundation of everyday life. While this may be true in some cases, Felski's discussion comprises a more nuanced picture of everyday life in a radicalized modernity: one of ambiguity and ambivalence.

Notions of modernity and modernization rest on processes of transformations and ruptures. It entails a breakup with traditions and movement towards the new and unknown. On the other hand, everyday life is almost synonymous with the familiar, the self-evident and that

which must be transgressed. The routines of everyday life are carried out as our bodies go through the motion while our minds are elsewhere. Key features of development in modernity seem to be resolution and reflection which are oppositions of everyday life. Yet such a dichotomization is the unfortunate result of conceptual short circuits. Felski draws on Heller again, when she argues, that we would not be able “*to survive in the multiplicity of everyday demands and everyday activities if all of them required inventive thinking ... Disengagement is an indispensable precondition for continued activity*”. (Felski, 2000:27)

Repetition and continuity are not strange visitors in the life of actors in a radicalized modernity. Rather, repetition is “*one of the ways in which we organize the world, make sense of our environment and stave off the threat of chaos. It is a key factor in the gradual formation of identity as a social and intersubjective process.*” (Felski, 2000:21) German psychologist, Klaus Holzkamp, also writes about this in his discussion on life conduct (Lebensführung) (Holzkamp, 1998). He argues that the repetitive practices of everyday life constitute a circular structure where chains of actions assume a position and acquire meaning, and it is this structure he calls life conduct. Despite the circular nature of the life conduct it must be emphasized that it is driven by individual - or rather subjective – actions.

So, rather than a clear opposition between radicalized modernity and everyday life, what emerges are interconnected ambivalence and ambiguity. Everyday life comprises both stability and change. It encompasses meanings and practices, as well as structure and action. Everyday life is the site of the individual/social of a radicalized modernity and the focus of empirical studies. Bech-Jørgensen cautions us not to employ a formal definition of “everyday life” prior to investigation but rather, to develop our insight and knowledge through a progressively detailed description of everyday life. Everyday life should not be the object of reflection but the point of departure for reflections (Bech-Jørgensen, 1994).

### ***Re-conceptualising ‘the family’ as family life***

Having arrived at this conclusion, that modernity and everyday life are not dichotomized contradictory terms, but rather two sides of the same ambivalent coin, we are left to ponder the question of how to study this. How can we study processes of change in family life while at the same time recognizing that key features of everyday family life are stability and continuity?

Beck-Gernheim has suggested that we reinvent the category of the family. She coined the term, ‘the post-familial family’ (Beck-Gernsheim, 1998; Beck-Gernsheim, 2002) as a conceptual framework of analyzing the proliferation of new lifestyles. Others have proposed a range of concepts from “post-modern families”/“late modern families” over “network families” to more elaborated terms such as “dual earner families” or “multi-local multigenerational family” (Bertram & Kreher, 1996). According to Karl Lenz (2003<sup>2</sup>), to look for what is new about family life, social science needs to liberate itself from the concept of ‘the family’ in order to escape its value-laden ties. Similar arguments are made by Swedish professors Bäck-Wiklund and Johansson in their edited book on network families (in Swedish) (Bäck-Wiklund & Johansson, 2003; Bäck-Wiklund, 2003).

The metaphor of *network families* is coined to aid the analysis of social change which brings about complex family forms. Bäck-Wiklund and Johansson (2003) argue that while statistical and demographic data provide some overview of the changes in the family, research drawing solely on such data also tend to exclude family forms which does not meet the criteria of conventional sociological and demographic categories or which simply deviate to

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2 Lenz, K (2003): Familie – Abschied von einem Begriff? In: Erwägen – Wissen . Ethik, 14. Jg., Heft 3, 485-498.

strongly from the norms. However, abandoning the notion of the conventional, nuclear family is not a viable solution for researchers. One must include both stability and change in ones research focus. According to Bäck-Wiklund and Johansson the new concepts of the family may steer the researcher's interest towards ruptures and change in family life, while the notion of the nuclear family, directs the analytical attention towards stability and continuity in people's lives in a reflexive modernity. But since stability is a key feature of people's experience of their own family life, a one-sided focus on social change may lead to the evaporation of the subjective perspectives of the individuals. Individual motives and actions, individual's sense of self, escape our focus if we devote our attention entirely towards new tendencies and social change. Hence, Bäck-Wiklund and Johansson propose a research strategy which works simultaneously with a notion of new trends and old forms, analyzing stability and change. They suggest the concept 'the network family' as an attempt to broaden the focus and to include in the research perspective the actual lived experiences and everyday life of people. According to this line of thinking, family research should attempt to include, describe and explain people's lived experiences and their reading of cultural codes and routines within the practices of interaction in everyday life.

While Bäck-Wiklund and Johansson have their primary focus towards the ethnographic avenues of research, they argue for a methodological approach which combines qualitative methods with quantitative approaches.

In an empirical study we have done exactly this: we employed questionnaire based surveys as well as in depth, qualitative interviews in our study of everyday family life. We refer to the same networks of relationships that is comprised by the notion of 'network families', when we speak of 'family life'. It is the social relationships which constitute the meaning and practice of 'family' in a radicalized or reflexive modernity.

### Using both quantitative and qualitative methodology in the study of everyday life

Henningsen and Søndergaard (2000) argue that the difference between quantitative and qualitative methods is often overstated and claim that even though research approaches apply different methods they may actually share a common interest in knowledge. Instead, Henningsen and Søndergaard argue, the methodological demarcations run between experimental and empirical designs. We align with Henningsen & Søndergaard when we employ a complementary use of methods embedded in the same meta-theoretical framework, where knowledge interests are shared. Henningsen & Søndergaard are interested in "*developing the complexity of the possibilities of actions and of the varied forms of socio-cultural patterns.*" They work to "*differentiate and complicate that which appears taken-for-granted, the simplified, common-sense discursive and possibly crudely categorized phenomenon.*" (Henningsen & Søndergaard, 2000:31)<sup>3</sup>. Our knowledge interest is similar: we aim to transgress everyday life by critically scrutinize established social categories used by research and laypersons in order to analyze and understand new tendencies.

We do this by using quantitative methods to create new categories that yield more relevant information, compared to conventional categories, about the phenomenon under study. This is done through a form of deconstruction of the conventional categories through specification of sub-categories and the creation of new categories. The aim is to describe complex relationships in a non-reductionist way in order to preserve relevant information. In this way quantitative methods contribute to the explorations of social landscapes, enabling the creation of new categories which may expand and differentiate our understanding of that which

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3 My translation (AW).

otherwise would have been taken-for-granted. Qualitative methods aim at the same issue: to destabilize and deconstruct conventional categories, but also to gain access to the cultural conditions for the making of meaning through analyzes of the everyday, subjective management of these conditions. Qualitative methods may seek to investigate central collective narratives and common interpretative reservoirs with the purpose of studying how situated individuals come to overtake these resources, for instance through self-narratives

Despite the similarities between quantitative and qualitative methods there are also differences. One difference is that quantitative methods enable the researcher to focus on the subtle processes of discursive positioning and the constitution of subjectivity, while qualitative methods are better geared towards uncovering the effects of this dynamic and these processes regarding specific actors' positioning in the social landscape. (Henningsen & Søndergaard, 2000:33)

The crucial question is not one of methodological synchronicity but rather the consistency between the knowledge interests, the theoretical foundations and the analytical perspectives of the research.

### ***Studying everyday life of families***

In 2003 we used this approach for the first time when we investigated family life using a design that combined questionnaires and in-depth interviews for the first time (Dencik et al., 2008; Westerling, 2008)

We developed a questionnaire, IFUSOFF1<sup>4</sup>, in a study of the implications of individualization for family life. We were both interested in studying what individualization meant for the structure and practice of family life, and what it meant for the practice and meaning of family life. We were interested in uncovering what kinds of family life we could identify in a Danish Welfare Society (which we argue can be characterized as reflexive modernity), and we were interested in studying how individuality and commonality was practiced and constituted in this family life.

IFUSOFF1 was administered among a representative sample of 35 year old people, living in Denmark in 2003 (born in 1968, N=1003). We chose people of 35 years because this generation of people living in Denmark comprised the highest degree of difference in family types, according to demographic studies, using conventional statistical categories (Qvist, 2003). Since our aim was to uncover the meaning and practice of family in everyday life, we chose not to depart from any fixed typology of families. Instead we created a sample of individuals, without considering what conventional category of family they belonged to. Instead we made sure that the sample was large enough to guarantee statistical representativity. This meant that our conceptual point of departure for our notion of family life is home.

Rita Felski argues that the vocabulary of modernity is the vocabulary of anti-home.

It celebrates mobility, movement, exile, boundary crossing. It speaks enthusiastically about movement out into the world, but it is silent about the return to home. (Felski, 2000:23)

The argument seems to be, that home is where we start from but not what we are confined to. In this respect our research design is parallel to this argument. From this point of departure we investigate the social relationships constituting family life.

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4 which is an acronym for "InterviewFormular til Undersøgelser af Socialt Fællesskab og Familieliv". This translates into interview guide for the investigation of Social Networks and Family Life (SONEFAL).

The focus of the questionnaire was on the social relationships of the everyday life of the respondents. IFUSOFF1 consisted of 139 questions. Some questions inquired about who the respondents shared a household with, who they shared childrearing responsibilities and related tasks with, who were engaged in the household chores. Others were focused on who the respondents leaned on for social and emotional support. The aim was to uncover what persons participated in the household and to study the role of kinship, neighbors, friends, colleagues, former romantic partners and anyone else who might be involved in the everyday social networks of the respondents. The questionnaire sought information about the persons whom the respondents interacted with in everyday life; about which parts of the networks that took part in the practices of family life, and vice versa; what the family members did together, and to some extent the emotional investments in these relationships. The questionnaire is inspired by social network analysis (Marsden, 1990; Marsden, 2005a; Marsden, 2005b; Milardo & Allan, 2000; Mizruchi, 1994). Social Network Analysis tends to focus on the relationship between social actors and objects (nodes), and this vein of research usually directs its attention towards the relationship between the nodes in a network as well as the network structure. The objects of research within Social Network Analysis are diverse and deal with the social status, social integration, social support and social capital. Attention is also directed towards structural aspects such as differentiation, centrality or density (Fyrand, 2001; Marsden, 2005a).

IFUSOFF1 has its focus on the personal networks of the respondents. It uses social categories (such as parents, siblings etc.) in the identification of nodes of the personal networks. Social Network Analysis also distinguishes between a) the social network as a configuration of relationships and b) the social support which is exchanged within these relationships (Fyrand, 2001; Garro, 2003). Marsden argues that social networks studies which focus on support tend to overlook the problematic side of social relationships.

According to Marsden, key studies<sup>5</sup> have concluded that people generally do not provide accurate information about their social interactions. However, other studies indicate that this is not the case if the relationships have some durability (Marsden, 2005b). Problems of validity can also be countered if researchers probe respondents by limiting the time frame (within the last week, within the last 24 hrs) or by focusing on specific social activities (household chores, arguments etc.) or specific categories of persons (parents, siblings etc.).<sup>6</sup> In IFUSOFF1 the social networks are uncovered by asking questions about "how often" the respondents are in contact with the nodes of the network, and by asking questions about interactions "during this last week" and about the events and activities which have occurred 24hrs prior to the time of interview. The respondents are also probed with events (household chores, babysitting, arguments etc.)

The questionnaires were administered as Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews. The duration is approximately 45 minutes. 1414 persons were included in the sample and 1003 were interviewed (70,9 % of the sample). Out of the 98,6 % of the respondents who agreed to a second interview a strategic sub sample was generated (N=16) and this sample was contacted for an in-depth, face-to-face interview. The sample was constructed based on principles of maximum variation.

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5 Bernard, H. Russel, Peter Killworth and Lee Sailer (1981) "Summary of Research on Informant Accuracy in Network Data and on the Reverse Small World Problem" in *Connections* 4(2): 11–25.

6 Bailey, Stefanie and Peter V. Marsden (1999) "Interpretation and Interview Context: Examining the General Social Survey Name Generator Using Cognitive Methods." *Social Networks* 21: 287–309.



### *The qualitative interviews*

The qualitative interviews were semistructured, departing from the everyday life practices of the informant. It was the informant's subjective and personal narratives which constituted the ground for on-the spot explorations and elaborations in the interaction between interviewer and informant. The informant was initially asked to give an account of the events of an ordinary day. The last ordinary day (most often the day before) was the preferred proxy. This way the everyday life of the informant structured the interviews. In such cases, "time chooses the theme" as Haavind (1987) puts it. The well known events of the daily day are made the topic of the interviews which enables a collective exploration of the social events and relationships of everyday life which is often simply taken-for-granted and more easily ignored in survey research. In many ways this kind of interviews follows the agenda of the ethnographic interview, formulated by Spradley:

I want to understand the world from your point of view. I want to know what you know in the way you know it. I want to understand the meaning of your experiences, to walk in your shoes, to feel things as you feel them, to explain things as you explain them. Will you become my teacher and help me understand? (Spradley, 1979:34)

In this way the research interview is a site for the researcher to get access to the informants' subjective perspectives on the social interactions of everyday life: the conceptions, ideas, feelings and reflections over the persons and situations all making up everyday life.

Certainly the differences between the questionnaire interview and the ethnographic interview are evident. To the ethnographic interviewer the interviewee is an *informant* whose life world and subjective perspective must serve as the point of departure for the interview. It is this life world – this subjectivity – which must be explored. In the questionnaire driven interview the interviewee is a *respondent*. One who responds to the questions and categories already established prior to the interview setting providing information about a list of topics deemed relevant by the researchers.

The informant and the respondent yield different types of data, which constitute the backdrop of different types of analysis. Through quantitative analysis we are able to unfold the way households are comprised by different kinds of actors, the networks of everyday life and the daily practices and activities connecting the respondents with other actors in family life. By analyzing the qualitative data we learn about the interpretive frameworks and reservoirs of meaning which are constituted in and by the social relationships and practices of family life. By unfolding the subjective perspectives and narratives of the informants we are able to find collective and shared understandings of family, kinship, and friendship etc. And we are able to see how these everyday understandings of family life facilitate and negate subjective experiences and identities.

By combining qualitative and quantitative analysis we are able to generate unique insights into the relationship of the individual and the social in everyday family life.

### The individual/social in family life

Through our multi-methodological approach we are able to study how a sense of coherence and belonging between the actors of family life is constituted. We may learn what constitutes we-ness (*gemeinsschaft*) in family life.

When we focus on the relationships between partners in a romantic relationship – 'the couple' – we are aware that this relationship does not exist in a social vacuum, isolated from other social relationships. For this reason, other kinds of relationships (such as kinship, parenthood, friendships etc.) as well as wider social networks and the work-life are also included in analysis.

It goes beyond the scope of this article to present the analysis itself. This is done in Westerling (2008). Through this analysis we are able to identify different and contradictory *grammars of interaction* which serve as action frameworks and interpretative resources for doing care and support in family life. On the one hand a social grammar of reciprocity acts as both resource and framework in the distribution of care giving and care reception. Ideals of *symmetrical justice* or *fairness* work as an important point in the orientation of everyday life relationships. On the other hand, asymmetry may also be said to act as an important point of orientation. This point is particularly evident when we focus on the generational relationships (children and parents/grandparents, kinship). In such cases unconditional (asymmetrical) *devotion* and *solidarity* tend to serve as another important point of orientation. In this way, caring in family life unfold in an ambiguous field of tension, constituted by apparently oppositional grammars of interaction.

A third grammar of interaction may also be identified. Within this framework *togetherness and coherence* act as important markers of orientation. This grammar is most obvious when we focus on relationships between adults where children are involved. In caring for children we often find an alignment of individual and collective modes of orientation. The commensurability of the individual's, subjective orientation with the orientation of other family members towards a shared project (of caring) is the central point of orientation in this grammar of interaction.

The results reveal that it is through practices of care in everyday life that the relationships between actors of family life are constituted. This takes place in different and ambiguous ways, by no means void of conflict and power struggle. In the everyday life of a reflexive modernity characterized by flexibility and change, the establishment and maintaining of routines needed in the production and exchange of care is a constant and ongoing challenge.

With a focus on care it is possible to investigate the processes of everyday life which contributes to coherence of family life; and it is possible to investigate the processes which do not. Care may be understood in a variety of ways. Caring and nursing for sick, disabled, children, elderly or other categories of persons, who are not considered to be able to take care of themselves, is one way to comprehend care. In the Danish literature this way of comprehending care is most prevalent in studies of healthcare, childcare or caring for the elderly within the welfare state (Hjort & Baagøe Nielsen, 2003; Juul, 2002). Caring in this sense primarily refer to the custodial type of *practical support* and assistance. However, caring may also refer to the emotional participation in other people's life and wellbeing. Caring for how someone is doing also entail assuming some sort of moral responsibility for others. We may talk of *emotional care* in this sense. Practical and emotional care go hand in hand – or they may constitute fields of tension loaded with (potential) conflicts. In everyday life caring is part of the routines and activities of the daily life. It may often be subtle, invisible and taken-for granted but it may also be the object of open contradiction and struggles. In this sense caring is always also a matter of power relations. Detailed and focused research is required to analyze these processes. The analysis must both focus on the specific *practices and practicing* in everyday family life and at the same time it must consider the meaning of these practices. It is this kind of analysis which is made possible by the concept of grammar of interaction if the research design also allows for a combined investigation of practice and meaning.

### Further research

It seems almost self-evident that processes of change in family life could be studied more thoroughly in a longitudinal perspective.

It appears as if such research could gain much insight into the individual/social by a focus on care. Caring and care relationship may both develop and enable the sense of we-ness in a family in constructive ways, and it may act to hinder and dissolve family life.

A longitudinal design would allow research to follow more closely how ongoing changes and transformation affect family life. Sometimes changes occur slowly and almost unnoticed. At other times it happens abruptly and without prior notice. Family life change because of a variety of events: moving, getting a baby, death of a family member, unemployment, getting a new job, beginning to study, falling in love, accidents, new technologies, financial crises etc. In and by these changes the relationships and practices of care also change. A longitudinal research design which is made sensitive towards changes of everyday life and aim at describing and exploring the processes of family life would surely provide an excellent starting point for analysis of the impact of modernization in family life.

This would demand an updated and developed version of IFUSOFF (IFUSOFF2) which would also focus on the development in family life and social networks since IFUSOFF1 was conducted. IFUSOFF2 would have to be administrated among panel from IFUSOFF1 (the sample of the 1968-generation) some 10 years after IFUSOFF1 and it would have to be combined with qualitative studies.

This would allow us to study how care is practiced in different parts of the social network and the ways in which these patterns of care practices change over time. It would be interesting to study if care practiced in the wider parts of the social networks compensate for care deficits in the household? Or do the different parts of the network enhance care practices? We would also be able to see if there are any correlations between practices of care in the social network and the stability of a couple's relationship, and if there are any correlations between the equal distribution of care within the couple and the stability of the couple.

By virtue of a multi-methodological design we would also be able to study the meaning of care practices in family life. We could analyse the processes by which caring practices and routines of everyday life promote and hinder coherence and togetherness in family life. Furthermore we would be able to study what form of individuality the framework of we-ness, which is constituted in and by the relationships of care in family life, enable.

This research would draw on the data generated on the basis of IFUSOFF1 and IFUSOFF2, but it would also depend upon analysis of qualitative data generated through face-to-face interviews. The overall outcome of this study would be insights in the way in which stability and change manifest in family life. In doing so we would be able to provide new knowledge and insights into the consequences of individualization and modernization for family life, and through this we will contribute to the development of social psychology of everyday life.

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## Queer Time? Queer(y)ing Moments in the Everyday Life of Lesbian Mothers

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The paper focuses on queering in everyday life by presenting the tactics of lesbian mothers in various everyday spaces. In this paper the act of queering is analyzed as a moment of questioning the heteronormative backdrop of everyday life. This paper focuses on how Finnish lesbian mothers queer the taken-for-granted heteronormativity of everyday spaces through parenting practices and by living their cyclic daily life. The analysis of the interview material (31 in-depth interviews) implies a broader theoretical question: If the act of queering presumes an overt citation of queer representations, acts or sexual identities, how can queering be done in places, which are polished as nonsexual, like in children's places, or in everyday life with its unarticulated indistinctiveness, the daily backdrop, which has become habitual? The connections between temporality and everyday life bring to the fore the un-eventfulness of everyday life and its opposite character to the transgressive moments. The paper is based on my PhD-thesis on Finnish lesbian mothers' everyday spaces.

*Keywords:* everyday life, queer-theory, habitual.

*Literature:* Valentine, Gill: Queer Bodies and the Production of Space. In Richardson, Diane and Seidman, Steven (eds.) (2002) Handbook of Lesbian & Gay Studies. London; Sage.





## **Mastery of Everyday Life in Families: Dream or Reality?**

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This article introduces the theoretical model of the mastery of everyday life in the household and family context. The model created by Liisa Haverinen uses three dimensions and three levels to describe the development and the content of mastery. The common good of the family and care for others are crucial objectives for mastering everyday life. However, not all families and individuals lead a balanced and functional everyday life. Many difficulties with one's duties may arise, and one problem may follow another. A drifting everyday life might lead the family towards the threat of exclusion, which necessitates case support from the community and other outside quarters. This article presents the "one family work method", which aims to help and support the family so that they can cope interdependently without continuing help. This method also takes account some perspectives that are not accounted for by the traditional view of the mastery of everyday life in order to show the complexity and multidimensionality of daily life in families.

## Introduction

I first met my husband Kaj in comprehensive school, but our love blossomed a few years later and we set up a family. Now our children are 14 and 12 years old. Our family is lively and we talk a lot. In recent years, life has revolved around the everyday life of our children, Christer and Charlotte. Evenings are organized around their hobbies. This has been a really nice period in my life. The children are now older and I learn all the time through them. We all have friends and congenial acquaintances.

I have not had time to think about my own dreams because I enjoy our everyday life very much. I like my work as a practical nurse and my workmates. I appreciate the company of the old people, and my family life is the kind of positive tumult that gives me energy and pleasure. We laugh a lot. I dream about new journeys; they refresh everyday life remarkably. Recently we visited Thailand with three other families. (Tuusvuori 2009)

Family life may simply flow as it does in the example above, but everyday life does not always engender energy and delight. Everyday family life may also raise many questions and challenges. How do we master or manage everyday life with all the processes we carry out daily with different kinds of materials, tools and interaction with other people (Tuomi-Gröhn 2008:10)? What does mastery of everyday life really mean? What is understood by “everyday life” and what is understood by “mastery” in family life? This article deals with the concept of mastery of everyday life in a domestic and family context and is a development of some ideas raised in the doctoral thesis of Haverinen (1996), *Mastery of Everyday Life as a Vision of the Activities in Households. Philosophical and Theoretical Inquiries of Household Activities*. The approach in the doctoral study is philosophical and theoretical, the intention of outlining a conceptual framework for use in describing the qualitative characteristics of family household activities (Haverinen 1996).

In the sphere of domestic work and family life, the model of mastery of everyday life is related to duties in different households and how they are shared and managed between household members. The model has mostly been applied to describe and to compare family life in different families. The main purpose of the model is to create and clarify concepts connected with everyday family life and mastery. The model also provides some criteria to evaluate the skills and knowledge of pupils at school when they study Home Economics.

The activities of household members are considered in a larger context which opens the way for research into the phenomena of everyday life through disciplines such as philosophy, economics, sociology, social policy, nutrition, ethnography, history, handicrafts and education. Everybody has some vision of action in the household and home, but as a researcher it is difficult to sense all the meanings associated with it. Many material and spiritual needs are fulfilled at home and many activities promise to guarantee the well-being of family members.

The mastery model provides some tools to evaluate daily family life, but pays little attention to situations that are out of line with the typical and traditional Finnish nuclear family with two parents and children. In my own ongoing study the adequacy of the mastery model is considered in exceptional circumstances such as unemployment or in the single-parent family. The aim is to evaluate the concepts of the mastery theory and to try it in investigations of the everyday life of families living on the edge of exclusion (i.e. in families, where everyday life is drifting).

This article first introduces the theoretical background to mastering everyday life as well as the method used in my own study. The article then presents a model of mastering everyday life and elaborates on its main concepts. The model is applied to the everyday life of families

living on the edge of exclusion and, finally, the article proposes some modifications to the model.

### Theoretical paths to the mastery of everyday life

Studies of everyday life have a long history. In sociology and philosophy, the subject grew in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, not least among the Chicago school as well as Schutz and colleagues (Scott 2009).

The philosophical background to the model of the mastery of everyday life may be divided into two parts ontological and epistemological reasoning (Haverinen 1996). The ontological analysis deals principally with the holistic idea of man and the phenomenological-existential philosophy which underlies it (Rauhala 1970, Heidegger 1979). The epistemological basis rests on the idea of knowledge found in classical antiquity (Aristotle 1984) and pragmatism (Rescher 1975). Holism in the mastery of everyday life is a common point of view in both ontological and epistemological reasoning.

The holistic idea of man claims that the individual consists of three closely interconnected modes of existence: corporeality, situationality and consciousness, where the psychological and mental areas exist (Rauhala 1970). The core of this view is crystallised in the notion of responsibility, which is based on the spiritual aspect of human consciousness. Spirituality enables self-assertion and reflexivity. Self-assertion is manifested in everyday activities, enabling individuals to evaluate their own actions and to take responsibility for them. In compliance with the holistic idea of man, ethicality is viewed as responsibility in household action. The personality developing towards responsibility means that one learns to make decisions according to ethical values in situations of choice and that vulnerability to external influences decreases. In family actions, decisions often affect all family members consequently, the directive significance of ethical values is important in the mastery of everyday life (Haverinen 1996:50–76).

The holistic view is that “The whole is more than the sum of its parts,” where the entity is evaluated from the point of view of the aim (von Wright 1987:48). For households, in order to achieve the aim, the actions of its members require above all that the common aim be recognised and the necessary practical skills be known. In the *Nichomachean Ethics* (1984), Aristotle discusses practical actions as either poiesis or praxis. Poiesis actions are related to techne knowledge, where action is separated from output. In praxis actions, phronesis knowledge is crucially practical intelligence clearly linked to desirable aims (Aristotle, 1140a24–1140b12.)

The Aristotelian view of practical action is useful because it helps us to understand the connection between knowledge, skills and intentions as a holistic unity. The pragmatist view of the rationality of action (Rescher 1975; Dewey 1958) is crucial in epistemological consideration together with Aristotelian thinking.

### ***Critical considerations about concepts in everyday life research***

Both the “mastery” and “everyday life” concepts could be interpreted in many ways. Different disciplines have their own emphases, so providing a single explanation that covers all approaches would be impossible. Words in other languages also have different implications, and translations from one language to another may alter the original meaning.

### ***The concept of mastery***

Dictionaries define the verb “to master” as “to gain a thorough understanding of” or “to become skilled or proficient in the use of something” (Merriam-Webster dictionary online ). We may inquire whether it is possible in general to “master life” or “everyday living” if one must be proficient or skilled. And how could we gain a thorough understanding of such a

complicated and multidimensional concept as life? What kind of situation or life is mastered, and what is the opposite of this? How does one evaluate conditions between extremes and explain alternation during a lifetime or over a shorter period?

The same word may have different meanings for different people, and it may be difficult to reach the final truth or even consensus. For some, everyday life is mastered when every little thing is perceived to be under control, whereas others perceive this mastery with much more flexibility. For example, one may still consider life controllable despite some neglected duties (e.g. overdue payments or unfulfilled promises). Everyone occasionally has problems and may lose control over things either temporarily or permanently. We may consider whether there are any criteria for mastery. Is mastery a condition that could be evaluated according to a particular standard or is it rather a sense of coherence perceived by an individual?

A study by Erlandsson, Rögnvaldsson & Eklund (2004) examined working women and their daily occupation patterns in order to identify indicators of stress and illness. Three types of occupations occur during one's day, which cause complexity or instability in daily life. These "main occupations" monopolise both the performer's time and awareness. Cooking and cleaning are examples of such occupations at home. "Hidden occupations" (e.g. picking up the morning paper, brushing one's teeth or making coffee) are performed with less attention, but are considered as necessary elements of one's daily routine. "Unexpected occupations" interrupt the rhythm of the main and hidden occupations and may be initiated by the performer's own thoughts or some stimulus (e.g. a phone call) from the performer's environment. According to Erlandsson et al., when life involves many hidden and unexpected occupations, everyday complexity is high, and the risk for falling ill is greater (2004:10). In families with small children, numerous situations interrupt actions, and one must always be prepared to change plans and to react immediately.

We are seldom capable of influencing or deciding what happens to us and our families. Our own environment and community affect not only our lives, but also our actions and activities. As Tuomi-Gröhn states in her book, home and household is not an isolated unit in the society (2008b:47). When people live in relation to each other, it is impossible to predict all interactions and to be prepared for everything. Haverinen (1999) discusses the complexity of everyday life in families, claiming that household activities should be considered as "body" and "soul" processes in which material and human interaction is closely interconnected.

In the model of Haverinen (presented below), the concept of mastery is used to sketch a situation in which, according to certain criteria (described above), life is under control. The word mastery is considered a neutral translation from the Finnish word "hallinta". Later on in the context of everyday life, the verbs "sustaining", "controlling", "managing", "maintaining", "practising" and "ruling" serve to add nuanced emphasis to the life situation. Tuomi-Gröhn (2008a) has brought the expression of everyday making to the vocabulary.

### ***The concept of everyday life***

Everyday life has become a popular topic of research and discussion in recent decades, although the phenomenon is as old as human society. Henri Lefebvre published his [\*Critique of Everyday Life\*](#) as early as 1947, on which many philosophers and other scholars have expressed their opinions and in relation to which they have devised their own concepts. Another classic is *The Practice of Everyday Life* by [\*Michel de Certeau\*](#), which examines how people individualise mass culture, altering things from utilitarian objects to street plans to rituals, laws and language, in order to make them their own. The work was originally published in 1980 in French under the title *L'invention du quotidien. Vol. 1, Arts de faire*.

Felski claims that everyday life is the most self-evident yet, at the same time, the most puzzling of ideas (2000:15). Everyday life seems to be everywhere all the time, a continuum of mundane activities which is taken for granted. At the same time, everyday life is a concept

that is almost impossible to research and to explain. Everyday domestic life is very often loaded with negative connotations and associated with social “running errands” and roles such as “housewives”. On the other hand, everyday life with its routines and repetitiveness is considered to be an anchor and a sanctuary in the midst of the hectic and intricate modern course of life (Jokinen 2005). Heinilä (2007:IV) claims that domestic skills could be viewed as like the *poetry of everyday life*. Everyday life could thus be experienced in many different ways, either positively or negatively. Our opinions and experiences about everyday life are unstable, and when we encounter difficulties, the likelihood that we will experience negative matters is greater.

For scholars of home economics, everyday life is an interesting sphere of research because it offers many opportunities to grasp its nature (Tuomi-Gröhn 2008a:7). Everyday life is thus a challenge both for people living it as well as for researchers attempting to investigate it. Managing everyday life presupposes diverse cognitive, social, emotional and practical skills because societal structures and institutions, together with people, constitute everyday life. Perhaps one reason for the lack of scientific research into everyday life patterns and their complexity is that everybody considers him- or herself an expert because of his or her own experience.

### The methods and material used in the ongoing study

The target group in my study are those families experiencing severe difficulties in their daily lives and who have already received help and support from social workers and other local authorities. The study is linked to the Arki haltuun project of the Family Federation of Finland, which has been working with 30 families. The working method (the sequence map) developed by Korvela is explained later in the article. The data are collected by family workers and contain recorded discussions between family members and family workers in various situations. Negotiations with local authorities are also documented.

An initial negotiation always takes place at the beginning of the working phase, followed by a middle evaluation after some weeks of intensive work and a final evaluation at the end of the aid and support period. Two follow-up meetings also take place later on: one after two or three months and another after one year. In addition, some conversations that take place during the practical work under the family’s roof are recorded. Thus several moments are documented such as when family workers cook or clean together with another family member. Notes and diaries also documented when family workers hold meetings with the project team or guidance group. Some pictures and video clips are also taken during working periods with families. I have met none of my informants and am conducting my research on the basis of readily collected material.

In my study, the participants’ experiences and opinions of everyday life are drawn and analysed from transcribed discussions between family workers and family members. For example, if we compare the view of different people, the concept of home, family and the mastery of everyday life may vary considerably. The same happens when the notion of a proper meal or sufficient care of a child is noted. I think that family members must permit to have their say about their situation, so that their own voice can be taken into account in the interpretations. More often, the analyses are carried out with data and observations that express opinions of professionals such as social workers or therapists. The ethnographic method would be very useful in social and family studies, but unfortunately very few researchers have the opportunity to use it because they have no access to field. The same happens in my study. Outsiders, such as researcher, would interfere in the relationship between family workers and family members. Most people want to keep their family life private and do not want to share it with others.

This qualitative case study deals with individuals and their experiences in the world in which they live. In such a study, meanings are essential and are manifested in the actions of people and communities, in setting down objectives in planning activities, and in administrative structures (Varto 1992). The researcher belongs to the same world of experiences and makes his or her interpretations based on that. The material guides the research process, and the researcher must be aware of any pre-comprehension stemming from his or her background and interest. My deeper analyses will include three to five families whose situations I study based on my research themes.

### The Haverinen model of the mastering of everyday life

The concept of the mastery of everyday life is closely related to other concepts, such as the mastery of resources (Deacon & Firebaugh 1988) and the mastery of life (or life control). The mastery of life means that individuals have the necessary facilities to establish aims and to work to attain them (Roos 1988). The definition of life control is the individual's basic belief concerning his or her ability to control the course of his or her life and the extent of this control (Antonovsky 1979). The individual reaches a sense of balance between his or her resources and aims. He or she feels capable of influencing what happens in his or her life rather than simply to go with the wind or to knuckle under the demands of someone else. The mastery of everyday life and resources are included in the mastery of life, which develops gradually.

The core phenomenon of the mastery of everyday life is responsibility, which is manifested by controlling selfishness. Actions in the household develop features keenly associated with the sense of being human. Recognising the meaning of life, one's own aims and resources and trying to adapt them to the demands of the community is therefore crucial. Individuals are active and seek knowledge for use in household actions. The person is aware of his or her values when making decisions or choices. (Haverinen 1996:62–75).

The concept of the mastery of everyday life can be summed up as follows: in terms of objectives, the qualitative content of mastery entails the priority of the common good. Rescher (1975) calls this principle Adequate Moral Economy. As it relates to knowledge and skills, it entails solutions based on individual values, and in the context of interaction means to strive for consensus.

#### *The qualitative content of the concept of the mastery of everyday life*

The mastery of everyday life (Figure 1) generally proceeds from material to mental, from detail to generality, and from individual to community. Qualitative change can also occur from totality to details (Haverinen 1996:146–179). Changes can also happen in the opposite direction, as the two-way arrows in Figure 1 demonstrate. One can identify three different levels and three different dimensions in the mastery of everyday life (Figure 1). The levels are: *repetitive mastery*, *applicable mastery* and *reformative, creative mastery* the qualitative dimensions are: the *aims of actions*, *knowledge that guides action*, and the *interaction in action*. The range of household activities is described as three circles, and its dimensions are represented by two-way arrows intersecting the circles. Beside the qualitative features, Figure 1 also shows the development of the mastery of everyday life, which can be considered in terms of both the individual and the household. The elements of the model in Figure 1 will be described below in more in detail.

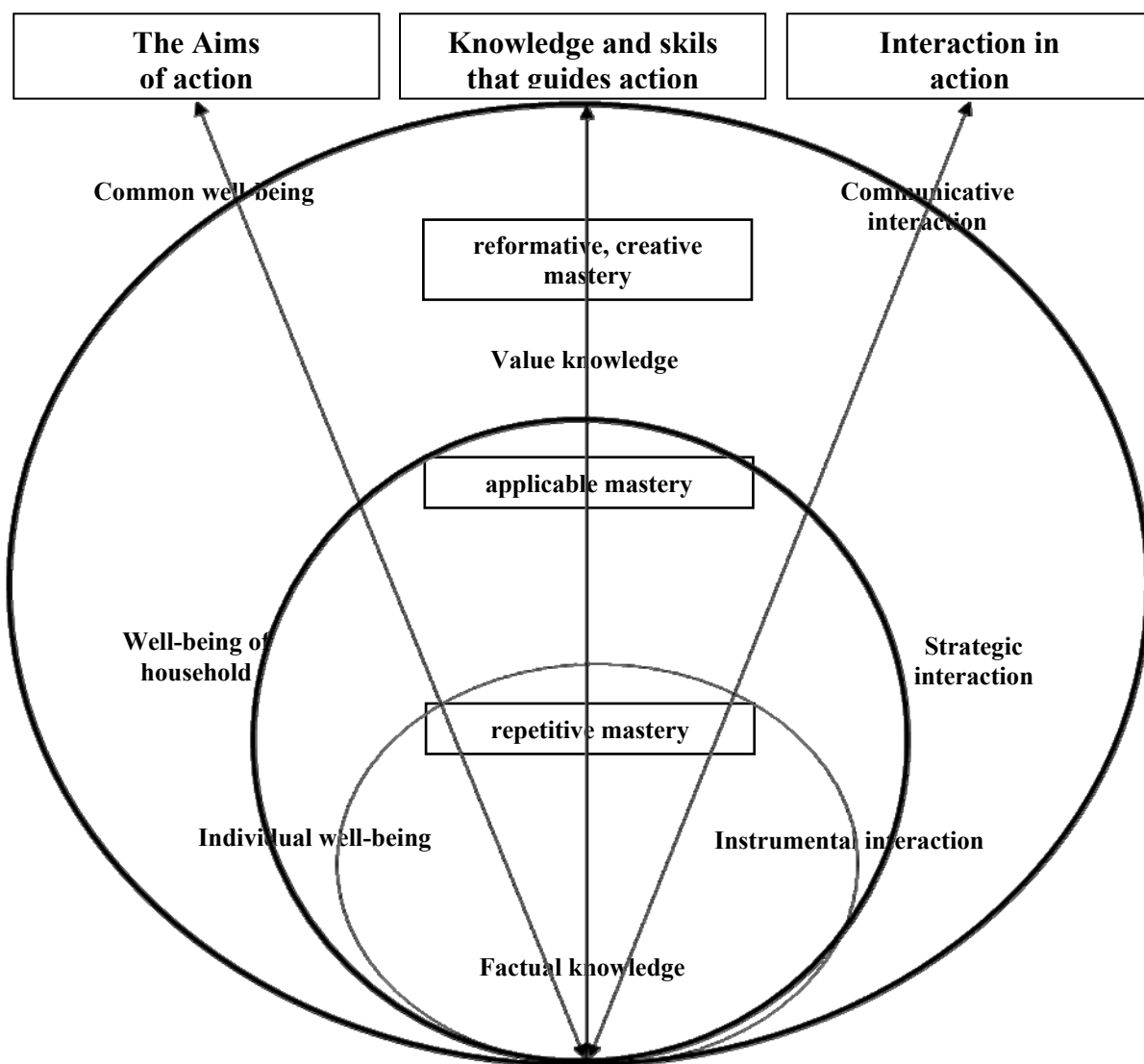


Figure 1. The model of the mastery of everyday life (Lisa Haverinen 1996).

### ***Dimension 1: The aims of action***

Various researchers view the aims of action in the household differently but according to Haverinen (1996), they may be summarised as the common good, human betterment, welfare or the well-being of home and family, and interaction between private and public life (oikos/polis) (Thompson 1995). Ethics, based on the model outlined in this article, is considered the core of household action, and entails responsibility in all activities.

Three levels of the intention of well-being can be distinguished. *Individual well-being* is, in a way, the first and primary level and is quite often related to the actions of children. Personal requirements are the most immediate, and the individual seeks to fulfil them. Nowadays, many adults in Western societies also seek to fulfil their own personal needs and requirements first, which makes it difficult to put the interests of somebody else ahead of your own (Dencik 1997; Vaines 2004). According to Haverinen (1996), the maturation of the personality enables one to reflect on ethical values before hedonistic values.

When individuals plan and execute activities in which every family member and their current circumstances are taken into account, we see that from an ethical point of view, the

*well-being of the household* is essential. Someone may have to forego egocentricity if the aim is the well-being for all. Family members are particularly interconnected and negotiate together. In an ideal situation, responsibilities and chores are shared equitably (Haverinen 1996:148–150). Power relations in families may also affect how duties are handled (Vaines 2004), but the model of the mastery of everyday life ignores this view.

The idea of the common good raises questions, such as whether the common good may also describe the actions of children. Should the small child have the right to be selfish and only see to his or her own well-being (Haverinen 1996:149)? Rousseau (1762) thought that there were two types of egoism “amour de soi” and “amour propre”. The former is natural for children and is the bedrock of all positive feelings. The latter, however, is negative because it evokes jealousy and the will to dominate others.

We strive for the *common well-being* when a particular action extends beyond the household. We focus our attention on our immediate surroundings, relatives, friends, neighbours and even the entire world. When parents participate in societal actions at school or through hobbies, they demonstrate their general responsibility for well-being. The holistic view of man offers a context in which to consider care-giving at its most extensive (Haverinen 1996:150).

### ***Dimension 2: Knowledge and skills that guide action***

The mastery of everyday life in action rests on three different kinds of knowledge. Knowledge which involves daily skills and facts is called *factual knowledge*. A person’s viewpoint may be narrow, so he or she applies his or her knowledge and abilities to only one type of action or in a familiar environment. The action is bound to a particular context, and the individual is incapable of coping with new situations. Tasks are carried out one by one, and the overview remains unclear (Haverinen 1996:151–152). For example, the mother of the family is able to prepare a meal when she has all the necessary ingredients at home and has a cookbook with clear recipes. But if something is missing the task becomes impossible.

*Procedural knowledge* directs everyday action when an individual finds new solutions to problems. Activities are based on facts and learned working habits, and one can find general guidelines or principles in the background. Bits of knowledge are aggregated together, and their meanings are combined into general phenomena and basic rules. The individual can also justify decisions, and the action is characterised by practical rationality (Haverinen 1996:152–154).

*Value knowledge* is the highest and, in a sense, the most sophisticated level of knowledge. Ethical actions, to which the Finnish philosopher Niiniluoto (1990) links a comprehensive and balanced ideology, are crucial. The most fundamental elements are essential, and other actors are taken in account. For example, ecological consciousness in the selecting of groceries or a mode of transportation would be a manifestation of the use of value knowledge because the environment is taken to account, not merely one’s own family or oneself.

### ***Dimension 3: Interaction in action***

Interaction in this study is analysed by classifying activities as either poiesis or praxis in nature, while the aim of the action itself differentiates the types. The nature of interaction is determined according to the classification of Habermas (1981). In *instrumental interaction*, the target is material (non-social), and the action aims to produce tangible results. The individual must know how to use equipment and methods. New knowledge is acquired and technical challenges are overcome. Instrumental interaction in the household is applied to particular tasks such as cleaning, food preparation or care-giving.

*Strategic interaction* means that individuals interact with other individuals, and that both are subjects. The purpose is to influence another actor. In the household, someone assumes



the main responsibility and motivates the others to act. The result is crucial. In families, children are often asked, pleaded with and told to perform their duties and the mother or father serves as their guide and supervisor.

In *communicative interaction*, both subjects are equal, and nobody controls the activities of the other. It is possible to negotiate, to compromise and to mediate in order to find a shared understanding in the end. Intuition and creativity are also often used (Haverinen 1996:157–160).

Although discussed separately here, we must recognise that in real life, household activities are often interpreted as an interrelated whole and the dimensions mentioned above are difficult to separate. In the mastery model, dimensions and levels serve to clarify progress in developing the skills to master everyday life according to one's view of child rearing. The experience of mastery depends on the aims of family members, functional skills, knowledge, values, relations and contacts outside the home (Haverinen 1996: 139–183).

### ***Levels of the mastery of everyday life***

Haverinen (1996) names the levels of mastery as follows: the first, and lowest, is repetitive mastery, the second is applicable mastery, and the third, and highest level, is reformative, creative mastery.

Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986) discussed their five-stage model of mental activities involved in directed skill acquisition in the case of clinical nursing practice. Benner (1982) used the same idea to explain the improvement of skills. At the outset, the individual (e.g. a nurse) starts out as a beginner or a novice, then becomes an advanced beginner, later a proficient, competent actor, and finally an expert. According to Benner, expertise acquired through practical action contains tacit knowledge and common meanings associated with it. These life skills, the basis for the mastery of everyday life, are also referred to as metaphoric know-how (Haverinen 1996: 162).

#### ***Level 1: Repetitive mastery***

Every level of mastery must be considered in relation to the qualitative dimensions discussed above (see Figure 1).

Repetitive mastery is based on facts and skills that individuals have acquired by following operations models. Their experiences are associated with particular situations and duties, but the overview remains unclear. Pre-existing routines and traditions may also hinder progress or change. Because the individual sets aims to fulfil his or her own desires, the level could be designated “individual mastery of everyday life”. The actual situation in the household and the needs of other family members are impossible to recognise because all energy is concentrated on one individual performance (Haverinen 1996:164–168).

When individuals attempt to solve the practical problems of everyday life in a familiar way, a situation Vaines (1992) calls “custom-bind”, the action is instrumental. The use and control of all kinds of technical equipment have proliferated in recent decades such that we all need to use such equipment sometimes. More than two decades ago, Von Wright (1987) claimed that many people are at high risk for exclusion because so many household activities necessitate the use of devices and machines. Interaction is instrumental, and duties are carried out when someone asks someone else to perform them, not spontaneously. In a family, this usually means that a child or a spouse performs a duty when his or her parents or partner gives the orders and instructions. In child-rearing, according to the research conducted for this study, parents hope that the child will assume more responsibility for chores in the future and attend to them independently (Haverinen 1996:178–181).

### ***Level 2: Applicable mastery***

The mastery of everyday life skills improves and changes in behaviour, and actions, become apparent during individual development. Increasingly often the common good of all family members is the objective. Many chores are either done simultaneously or various tasks are linked together in order to achieve the goals. For example, to arrange a party at home requires much preparation (e.g. cleaning, planning meals, and inviting guests). The environment may also be taken into consideration. Applicable mastery has two dimensions; working is more ethical and problems are consciously reflected upon. Vaines (1992) calls this “interpretative action”. The ecological perspectives in food choices or in buying domestic appliances could be an example of applicable activities.

According to Dreyfus (1986), a person is “competent” when she or he has reached the level of applicable mastery, bears wholeness in mind and plans actions. In interaction, this entails more freedom and mutual understanding. Interaction is strategic or communicative, depending on whose needs and wishes are the priority.

### ***Level 3: Reformative, creative mastery***

Critical reflection is the basis of reformative mastery. Life experience is crystallised as wisdom, intuition and creativity. One chooses activities on the basis of one’s own experience, or finds solutions without rational consideration, action is holistic, and situations are recognised immediately (Haverinen 1996:172–178).

Haverinen (1996) note that the contacts of the household with society, nature and culture are seen broadly, and demands from the community are considered rational and in the interests of the common good. Sarvimäki (1988) describes evaluative rationality as an axiological orientation in which ideals and principles guide action.

When household members take into account the environment, society and culture in their actions, their view of life may be based on particular life choices and their personality may be ethical in character. Social appreciation and interactional skills are emphasised and cooperation involves negotiation and discussion. The family interacts with various institutions; a lot of planning, organising and caring take place. This all presupposes intellectual resources from individuals.

In brief, repetitive mastery means that everyday life carries on, but without clear common aims for household activities. Applicable mastery involves some common aims, and personal activities are evaluated in the context of others. Reformative mastery is an idealistic view of how we should live with each other, aiming at the common good and negotiating together (Haverinen & Saarilahti 2009:73–74).

The mastery of everyday life may be considered either “interior mastery” or “exterior mastery”. The exterior mastery of everyday life involves elements and features, such as cosiness, domestic cleanliness or orderliness, which are noticeable to outsiders. As the action develops, one first notices exterior changes. Plans are made and the situations are considered carefully. Technical skills manifest exterior mastery. Interior mastery, in contrast, is more complicated to observe for a researcher because it concerns an individual’s experiences. When life is experienced as balanced, the individual feels able to master events in life and to keep them under control. This balance means that the individual can negotiate between the principles of life and the solutions one creates. High quality in the mastery of everyday life means that individual aims and needs are balanced with the aim of the well-being of other family members and those closest to them. The immediate surroundings and environment are also taken account. Even global welfare is borne in mind (Haverinen & Saarilahti 2009).

## Living an everyday life on the edge of exclusion

Parental problems with everyday life have a powerful impact on children and the whole family often needs support, not simply one family member. According to Rainio (2006), the marginalisation of children is connected with the exclusion of families from standard livelihood, living conditions and control over life. The most important reasons for children's exclusion are parental drug use, psychiatric problems and factors connected with family situations such as a divorce or change in partners (Lasten syrjäytyminen 2008). The example below is a rather common story in the modern welfare state and in my study entitled *Lapsiperheen arjen hallinta syrjäytymisen rajapinnalla* (in English, *The mastery of everyday life on the edge of exclusion*). This example describes the situation in one family that has participated in a family work project of the Family Federation of Finland (Väestöliitto).

*The family has two boys, 9-year-old Tommy and 13-year-old Henry, who live at home with their parents, while 17-year-old Susanna has just moved away to her own flat. Their father is co-owner of a small company and says that he has to work in the office during the evening quite often, although he tries to return home before 5 p.m. Their mother has been out of working life for many years due to her illness. She has been treated in the hospital many times, sometimes for several months at a time and the family has received domestic help twice a week from the municipality for eight years. The mother explains that she always feels tired and can't do anything. In the mornings she wakes the children up, but then goes back to bed while the boys get their breakfast themselves and go to school. Tommy has had some detentions at school and has also neglected his homework. The teacher has called home about it. Tommy should see a family therapist, but he refuses, and the mother is generally worried about Tommy. In the negotiation, the social workers say that they are worried about both boys. Henry will soon retire and Tommy is too lively, readily forgetting his duties. The children must also be responsible for many things that are normally the parents' responsibility (e.g. cleaning the house or making appointments with the dentist).*

In the course of visits to homes, family social workers often observe that many families have problems coping with everyday life with many situations resembling the example above. The parents' capacity to deal with everyday life is low, and the families often lack a regular structure and a daily rhythm. Children may experience problems in day-care and at school as a result. The concept of "household chaos" resembles drifting daily life (Korvela, Holmberg, Jonsson & Kupiainen 2008). A balanced daily life reflects moderate flexibility and regularity and routine. The extremes of this continuum are drifting, unpredictable chaos and rigid discipline with no flexibility. Household chaos means that the environment is noisy and restless with no clear structure or rhythm to daily practices. The children may be awake as late as midnight or have no real and fixed mealtimes.

Institutions and society are bound to timetables, and the structures of function and customers (families often function with such frameworks) cannot neglect them without encountering difficulty (Tuomi-Gröhn 2008b). The societalisation of everyday life means more formal structuring and organisation for children's lives at school or day-care. Children in one class, for example, must eat at the same time and all have lessons and breaks organised according to a regular timetable.

The understanding of time is completely different in many other cultures, such as those in Africa. Immigrants can seldom understand or appreciate the importance of timetables because for them, there is always time. Our country and society have become more multicultural in recent decades. People who work with immigrants must be aware of cultural differences in order to deal with such situations more easily. Refugees often bear the brunt of

unemployment most acutely, which creates a greater need for social services and social support (Statistics Finland n.d).

Family work, a way of supporting families in difficult life situations, may take the form of child protection services, family therapy, private care, institutional care, or home help services. In a project of the Family Federation of Finland, family workers (social workers working with families at home) used the sequence-map method as a tool to help and to support families. The main objective of the method is to assist families in establishing routines and structure in their everyday lives. Various daily sequences and the “tasks” within each sequence are listed and discussed with the family. The method focuses first on the actions and skills needed in daily life and on how to develop routines. The fundamental concept is that developing a structure for a drifting everyday life frees resources that can now be enlisted to solve problems in other areas (Korvela et al. 2008).

The sequence map makes the structure of the day apparent. Family workers draw up the sequence map together with family members so that they can express their opinions about the various matters involved (Korvela et al. 2008). The idea of sequences is based on the research of Korvela (2003), who found that weekdays in families with small children are organised in a group of four to six sequences, each of which has a kind of “programme” for the actions that constitute it. As one sequence fades out, the second sequence fades in. That moment known as a “transitional phase” is when the actions of two adjacent sequences overlap. When the actions of two different sequences are performed concurrently, tensions readily emerge.

When we consider the levels and qualitative characteristics that are needed to attain a particular level in Haverinen’s model (1996), we may wonder whether all people really are included in those levels. Even the lowest level necessitates a considerable degree of mastery of everyday life and a variety of skills and knowledge. Many presumably remain below even the zero level. How should such people be categorised? Are they excluded from society and do they have any mastery in their everyday lives at all? An ongoing study by Saarilahti entitled *Learning challenges on the edge of mastering everyday life* focuses on finding answers to such questions as:

1. How is life experienced at the edge of exclusion?
2. How does Haverinen’s mastery model function in exceptional circumstances (e.g., unemployment, psychological problems or in single-parent families)?
3. How can families and family members find empowerment in their lives when threatened with exclusion?

The following example shows how family life could carry on in one project family.

*A Mother has three children: 10-year-old Anne, 4-year-old Evelyn and 3-year-old Nick. Some months ago, the children were taken away by the child welfare authorities. The father was drunk almost every day when he took care of the children while their mother was working outside the home. The oldest child was afraid because she often had conflicts with her step father (he was not her biological father). Her mother said that Anne suffered mental violence very often because her stepfather could not stand her. He used abusive language and once even attacked her; an outsider had called the police.*

*After the authorities secured custody of the children, their mother had decided to divorce the father of the two youngest children. She also quit her shift-work to be able to care for her children. She thinks that her biggest problem at this moment is that her ex-husband has no flat and his things are still at home. He also visited their home quite often because he wanted to see his children, which was both irritating and terrifying to Anne. The child welfare*

*authorities were also worried about the basic care of the children because their daily rhythm was destroyed, and the home was very dirty and messy.*

## Marginalisation in the mastery model

One crucial question in pondering and evaluating everyday life is how to determine who is “competent” and within one’s rights to establish borders and criteria for levels of everyday life. How can someone else determine whether a particular family has mastered everyday life? The external evaluator may decide that some features indicate a family living beyond rules and without mastery, whereas the family members themselves may feel that their life is satisfying and organised.

We may assume that certain types of families are at greater risk for poor mastery of everyday life, which may later lead to the threat of marginalisation and exclusion. People often claim and believe that single-parent families have more problems with children, but is there suitable evidence of this? According to Haverinen’s (1996) mastery model the level of mastery in the household is lower in families where individuality is strongly emphasised and the fulfilment of personal needs take precedence over the common good. More research is needed to explain whether it is possible to identify types of individuals and families that are at high risk for losing control over life permanently. It is also important to know how such people feel about their own situation. Do they see themselves as excluded or marginalised or is this diagnosis made by outsiders? Such questions are considered in the ongoing study of Saarilahti. Most studies consider the view of family workers and other authorities to be the only valid one and attach less importance to the view of family members even though it is their daily life that is in question.

Niskala claims that social workers set targets for their work together with their clients (2008:93). The needs and wishes of the clients are taken into consideration, and the relationship is based on mutual understanding and respect. Unfortunately, this is seldom the case in reality. Social services deal very closely with human privacy, and clients often feel they have had no opportunity to be active actors in their own lives because they are too often powerless and dependent on money and help (Niskala 2008:160).

Haverinen’s (1996) study strongly emphasised responsibility, especially that of others. The aim of the common good of all family members should guide activities at home, and individual needs and wishes should be kept in control. Is such a family life possible nowadays in the modern Western world, and what does this mean in practice? Dencik (1997) has classified modern family types into four categories according to the family’s emphasis on individuality and collectivity. In a “modern strong family”, members have plenty of opportunity and freedom to develop their individuality while seeking to maintain solidarity and fellowship with other members of the family. The family functions as a team, and negotiations and voluntary agreements are based on this. The ideal model of family activities, according to Haverinen is quite similar, but individuality is less emphasised.

The “classical strong family”, or patriarchal family, lives under the leadership of one parent. Decisions are made for the sake of the family, and individual needs have less value. Traditions are accorded great respect, and the historical spirit of cohabitation is the basis action. Haverinen’s mastery model incorporates some elements of this family type (noted in strategic interaction), but on the whole, the ideal family action is more democratic, and all family members have an opportunity to express their opinions rather than be subject to the strong leadership of one individual.

There are also two modern “weak” family types. In what is known as a “revolving door family”, individuality has a high value, and members may choose their own social preferences. Other family members are taken into consideration minimally, and co-ordination and communion are encouraged intermittently. In the family as a “social aquarium”, members

may spend a lot of time together, but do nothing to actively promote a feeling of solidarity and fellowship. How would such family types be manifested in my research group families? Could one type be more vulnerable to difficulties or another more effectively protect its members from the problems of everyday life?

According to Vaines (2004), families have different communication patterns and themes, which can be divided into three organisational models: traditional, cooperative and laissez-faire. Each family type has its own concept of home, which is based on the family's philosophy and the way they manage the activities of everyday family life. Baumrind (1967) identified two aspects of parenting: parental responsiveness and parental demandingness. Using these dimensions, she identifies three different parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative and permissive. Vaines's categories closely resemble Baumrind's styles.

Vaines (2004) claims that the home could be considered as a factory, a web of interrelationships or a moral centre. If we compare Haverinen's model and Vaines's view, one could say that in Haverinen's view, the cooperative model of the family reflects the highest level of the mastery of everyday life. Family members become committed to working together, and actions are guided by a moral vision of the common good for all and by co-operative ecological sensibilities in which ecology entails all kinds of everyday life activities (Vaines 2004:134).

### Conclusion: Suggested modifications of the mastery of everyday life model

The mastery of everyday life model (Haverinen 1996) was developed to illustrate ideal family life and activities at home. It also sought to provide a background to thinking about upbringing, rather than serve as definitive criteria by which to evaluate practical action. When examining the qualitative dimensions of the model (at least the aims of actions and interaction in action), the highest mastery levels necessitate cooperation between individuals. According to Statistics 2008, 41% of Finnish citizens (1 014 974 people in total) live alone (Statistics Finland). How then should the model be modified to describe the mastery of everyday life of people living alone? For single people, interactions occur outside the home, so it may prove useful to extend the forum of evaluative action to other activity systems such as the work place, educational institutions and shops (Engeström 1990). Nowadays, socio-technical systems and communication systems such as Internet, virtual societies, SMS messaging, and phone calls are also vital ways to communicate and to converse with other people.

In the model developed by Haverinen, levels and dimensions are presented as having distinct dividing lines, but distinguishing clear "cases" in real life is seldom possible. Establishing strict categories for human action is artificial because the evaluation is always made subjectively. The actions in dimensions may also vary, with some being stronger than others. For example, the mother of the family may be very capable to interact with her children, and the interaction may well be communicative (the highest level in the model of the mastery of everyday life). She may negotiate effectively with the children, and the atmosphere in the home may be open and encouraging. Her knowledge and skills in household care, however, might be classified as poor. She may have some factual knowledge about cooking and cleaning (the lowest level according to the model of mastery), but may in fact never prepare proper meals herself, and the home may resemble a chaotic warehouse with removal boxes and masses of clothes. How would one evaluate her mastery of everyday life in this case? The model would probably require more permutations. The figure might sometimes even resemble an amoeba rather than a "classical shape" with circles and lines and perhaps it would be better to leave the original model altogether and to use only its feasible concepts and ideas.

In pondering people's lives and the multidimensionality of them, we might also consider whether setting levels for the mastery of everyday life is even sensible. Who needs such levels

and what purposes would they serve? Haverinen's philosophical and theoretical model offers valuable notions with which to consider many crucial concepts connected with activities at home, but the evaluation of the quality of mastery involves many ethical questions. To understand all the nuances of family life thoroughly will require ever more research. We must question matters of family life that are often considered self-evident and mundane. As Rönkä and Korvela propose, multidimensional and multidisciplinary research which uses situation-specific concepts would yield the most fruitful knowledge of everyday family life (2009:98).

Haverinen strongly emphasises responsibility and the common good, but nowadays individuality and personal ambitions are quite often expressed in newspaper articles or interviews with what appear to be happy and successful people. One may doubt whether modern-day individuals in Western welfare states are willing or able to target the common good the way individuality is admired and emphasised everywhere. Whose good is the real aim of family life? Is it possible to have a family in which both the sense of communality and the sense of individuality are strong (Dencik 1997) and in which all members have equal rights and responsibilities? Haverinen avoided incorporating a gender perspective into her model, but many feminists (e.g. Felski 2000), for example, might consider it necessary to include one in the study of everyday family life and the mastery of it.

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## **Time-rich and Time-poor Living Conditions: Balancing Time and Income in Everyday Life**

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This article focuses on the division of work and private life in a Swedish community. An interview study sheds some light on the diversity of time frames experienced by people living inside and outside the labour market. It examines in which way this duality is paving the way for new patterns of inequality. The purpose is to explore the living conditions of two groups in society: the *time-poor* who are established in the labour force that experience great demands on their efficiency and educational level and the *time-rich* who do not have a natural place in the labour market. People experience an unbalanced division of time and resources not only in work situations but also in everyday life in the home and in leisure time. The time-rich can experience having small margins partly due to a lack of social networks and social recognition, while the time-poor experience it due to multiple and unwieldy social roles in and outside labour market. Society has tried to cope with these two different problems in completely different ways, although both problems are related to income, one through salaried work and the other through income support. The results do not only exhibit the polarizing tendencies in terms of time and income. There are also similar differences concerning social participation. Time-rich people have a hard time finding alternative social networks outside the labour market. At the same time, many life course changes that require both a lot of time and a lot of money occur in time-poor living conditions. A restriction analyses, inspired by the time geographical approach, shows a diversity of time patterns and timespace restrictions between different life forms in everyday life. When the individuals' whole life situation is taken into consideration, the diversity of time patterns creates restrictions that oppose strategies for work/life balance in everyday life.

## Introduction

From a historical perspective, negotiations between parties in the labour market have improved the redistribution of working time and increased individual well-being. However, today, while welfare arrangements are able to solve many problems in regard to material shortcomings, workers seem to be unable to cope with a constant lack of time. With the inclusion of women and particularly mothers in the labour market, household working hours have increased (Timmermans et al. 2002). In this way, a “work society” is created as the working week is tied to paid work and policies essential to life which determines one’s social position (Sanne 1995). In loyalty to the employer, conflicts can appear when it comes to other responsibilities and commitments outside the labour market. So how do people manage to bring different roles together in everyday life as a worker, parent, husband/wife, child to ageing parents, house owner, sport practiser, politically engaged – at home, work, sports ground, school, hospital and club premises? In the long run, narrow limits can be established that make it hard to live up to the expectations in everyday life. The impact of flexible labour market demands, in relation to work times, work places and private life, is one of many factors behind an imbalance between time and income that poses questions about the organisation of everyday life.

- This article is about the difficult life problem faced by hard-working individuals at the peak of their careers, who are trying to balance work and their personal life. It’s about the “time-poor” that have been at the centre of the recent decades changing working life with increasing demands on qualifications, performance and dependency upon paid labour in time and identification. Although a pleasurable working life with long working hours can be a positive personal experience, many people fit work and life in an undesired way. In those cases, working life has become a straitjacket that tends to control and restrict other domains in everyday life. At the same time, a different problem emerges in “time-rich” ways of life with limited resources outside the labour market. It’s about citizens of working age with no access to important domains in society who experience another type of unbalance. In spite of periods of low unemployment rates, there are persistently high numbers of people outside the labour market. Among the people of working age which are not asked for in a changing working life, we find in particular low-educated young people, older workers and immigrants. These time-rich individuals are at risk to finding themselves dependent on allowances of social benefit systems.

Both the “time-poor” and the “time-rich” are facing conflicts and stressful living conditions when individual expectations are not in phase with the demands of society. Attempts to handle the tight time frames of the insiders and the scantiness of the outsiders have not limited the problems. The political inability to handle these late-modern unbalances of time and income can in reality reinforce the unbalanced division of those who have and those who have not enough self-experienced time, economic resources and social influence. Time is often taken for granted and looked upon as unproblematic, ignoring the diversity of temporal aspects (Held 2001; Reisch 2001; Fitzpatrick 2004). This upholds a framework where citizens’ ability to determine a flexible working life only has occurred to a limited extent (Furåker et al. 2007). In the article individual experiences of time and to what extent individual influence over one’s own time is possible will be investigated, both in the short and in the long run.

## Aims and research questions

This article sheds some light on the aforementioned duality between time-rich and time-poor (Lindskog 2002) living conditions and examines in which way this duality/polarisation is paving the way for new patterns of inequality. The purpose is to explore the living conditions of two groups in society: those who are well-established in the labour market and who experience great demands on their efficiency and educational level, and those who do not have a natural place in the labour market. This poses questions about working life and support, living conditions, domestic work and leisure time and what we do to maintain balance in paid work and private life. The aim is to understand what citizens do to have influence on their disposal of everyday life. The question is what kind of strategies time-rich and time-poor individuals use in order to establish/maintain a life in balance? Is it possible to find empirical evidence for a polarisation of resources? The study maps the division of time and income and discusses why specific ways of life and strategies are preferred to others. The selection procedure is related to an individual perspective where working life is investigated alongside with other dimensions of everyday life.

## Method

To document experiences of time restrictions in private households, an approach of semi-structured interviews is used. Twenty four interviews were carried out with inhabitants of a small Swedish community in order to increase knowledge about the individual's time-use in relation to economic resources. During the first six weeks of the field work, meetings with people representing the community, social services, trade unions, working places and newspaper offices were scheduled. Hanging around, talking to people around the small city centre about my project was a way of getting in contact with conceivable interviewees, as well as putting up notes at the local supermarket, work agency and regional social insurance office. All in all, it was quite easy to find people who wanted to talk about their balance or imbalance between work and private life. I just had to make sure that the selection of respondents corresponded to the aim of my study. To get a broad representation of various experiences, both time-rich and time-poor living conditions had to be represented in the interviews, as well as men and women with varying social and cultural backgrounds and different resources and living conditions. When balance in life is to be studied and discussed, the economic resources and differences in income are important. Individual differences and experienced (im)balances in the division of time and income are the lines along which new patterns of stratification are to be investigated.

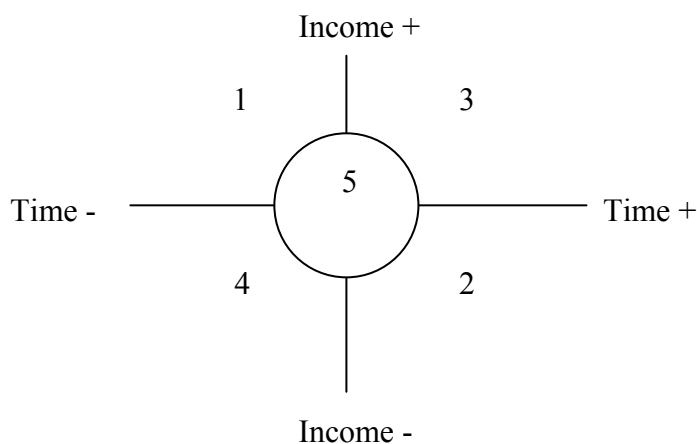
In order to analyse and categorise the interviews, the life form concept is used as an analytical method. This concept is used to categorize regular patterns of behaviour in a given situation in everyday life. The life form concept specifically pays attention to qualitative cultural differences between ways of life in society. These differences are by no means random, but a consequence of social structures, fundamental for society as such. The life forms constitute basic social motives and the life form analysis can explain the appearance of social phenomena, individual attitudes and structural processes (Jacobsen & Karlsson 1993: 13-25). The life form concept can disclose contrasts between different social groups' way of living (Tyrkkö 1999) and is a method in search of different life forms' needs and demands towards society (Jacobsen & Karlsson 1993). It has also been used as a complement to the time geographical approach (Friberg 1990).

Its original purpose is to describe what is characteristic to a specific life form in everyday life, in terms of eating, sleeping, working, relaxing and so forth (Höjrup 1983). Life form analysis examines contradictions and conflicts between different social groups. The purpose is to find environmental factors of strategical importance and what influence the life forms have on positions in the stratified structure of society. In this article, the concept will describe

differences in the social structures of a local community. A problem is that the original life form analysis focuses on different forms of paid work. Inspired by life form analysis, this article will also include people who do not have an active relation to the labour market. Taking the aim of the article into consideration, these peoples' needs and demands on time and income – which they have more or less access to in interplay with the local community – are as important as the living conditions with stable connections to the labour market. The strategies of the interviewed are expressed in their stories of everyday life. In the analysis, five ways are discovered that reveals relational positions in the division of time and income. The categories are used to discuss individual problems and strategies. The life form categories are based on the interviews and the individual representations is a part of the analyse process. The categories do not constitute a theoretical model to be tested. The discovered life forms are temporary; an individual's position can for instance be explained by age and is related to the life course. It is only people of working age who are represented in the study.

### Five life forms in the division of time and income

Time and economic recourses are two principals of differentiation of individual positions in society. In that respect, people in one life form may have enough money to overcome economical restrictions, but at the same time experience time strains in everyday life. People in another life form have time to participate in several domains in society during a day or week, but does not have the economic or social conditions to utilize this possibility. At first sight, these time-rich/income-poor and the time-poor/income-rich living conditions are two main ways of life that can be seen, but this is only one part of the whole picture. The analysis reveals five ways to cope with the division of time and income among the participants. These are: (1) the careerists (time-poor/income-rich), (2) the unwanted (time-rich/income-poor), (3) the independent (time-rich/income-rich), (4) the caretakers (time-poor/income-poor) and (5) the balanced (Enokson 2009).



*Figure 1:* Five ways in coping with the division of time and income.

To categorize the interviews in such a way is not problem-free. One problem with life form categorization is that compartmentalizing people can hide important information and make us blind for new knowledge (Tilly 2000). To be restricted to patterns of explanations rather than more stable generalizations of the empiric material can be understood as a problem. The elasticity of the life forms in late-modern societies is a methodological weakness, but at the same time a condition as the individuals are not representing homogenous groups of people. The purpose in using categorization in life forms, depending on the division of time and economic recourses, is to explore and investigate a rather new field of research. With such a

starting position, the method can be used to get a general view and find out more about a research field that can be further explored.

### The careerists

The careerists, who are time-poor but have relatively good access to economic resources, are forced to give up certain activities because of the time-consuming activities at work and in their private lives. Stretched time frames must be coped with by using temporary and occasional structures and processes in everyday life. More time is spent at work than the official duties require, overtime is often unpaid, and it is difficult to know what and how much is expected during a working day. Some time effective transfers and moments are possible to make, both at work and in private life. But leisure time is easily affected in the process, especially if there are small children in the household. The blurred boundaries between work and private life are described as being stressful and the psychological strains make them live on the limit of what is possible. Involving family members, for instance, in the working day is an unorthodox strategy for keeping work and private relationships together.

Erik: “At this job, I don’t have any working hours. It’s about doing it. Trying to be good at it [...] it’s no end to it; it’s always about finding new things to do. Especially at weekends”.

On the other hand, most careerists are pleased with their wages and what they can consume. Enjoying work has also opened doors towards self fulfilment in the career in terms of climbing the social ladder, achieving high social status and high positions in companies and organizations. They are all well paid and time strain can sometimes be compensated by consumption of individual solutions, e.g. household services. The possibilities for rationalisation in household work are, however, limited. The situation comes to a deadlock when duties at work, in the household and the needs of a functioning leisure time create an unbalanced time hardship that traps the individual into a lifestyle without time margins.

### The unwanted

The unwanted are time-rich, but have at the same time a difficult economic situation. The unwanted are stigmatized by unemployment or labour market absence due to ill health and subsequent early retirement. They do not have a regular or firm base in the labour market as their resources are not demanded. All the interviewed in this category are dependent on unemployment benefits, sickness benefits, other social benefits or early retirement pensions in order to provide for basic needs. They are constantly reminded of their economic shortcomings and limited means in their everyday lives. There is a great frustration about the inefficiency of unemployment policy strategies to make people “ready for work” and able to return to a dignified social life. These are people who once were a part of the core labour force, but have not been able to adjust to a changed labour market with its demands for flexibility, education and high work rate. At the same time, there are young people and immigrants who have never had the possibility to establish themselves in the labour market. The life pattern of the unwanted is explained in terms of meaninglessness and a humdrum existence without possibility for change. Loneliness in unbalanced living conditions corrodes their self-confidence, and limited margins leads to frustration. This forms a vicious circle that restricts individual actions in everyday life. Single householders dominate this category.

Eva: “It was just empty, it was nothing there. For a month, I read books and I didn’t remember what they were about and I forgot to eat, forgot time. I was just empty. There was nothing. No energy”.

The unwanted have the worst self-experienced living conditions of all the five categories. A strong need for recognition and social inclusion, together with difficulties in having influence on their own situation, provides a feeling of powerlessness when social recognition (Honneth 2003) is strongly dependent on and bound to the labour market. In spite of the fact that the unwanted' is a time-rich form of life, a lack of social networks makes everyday life fragile for a group of individuals who are already confronted with economic difficulties.

Exceptions can be found in social networks outside the labour market, mainly as "ambassadors" in a political struggle for people in the same exposed situation or through informal channels in the local environment. However overall, unemployment and long term sick leave comes as a chock and the small world the individual has at home in everyday life compensates for social structures that recently were accessible on the labour market.

The redistribution of temporary economic support from social security systems without any far-reaching change creates narrow margins for the unwanted. Furthermore, insecurity about economic support does not contribute to the development of social networks in everyday life.

### The independents

The independents are in a position outside the labour market in spite of the fact that they are at a working age with relatively good access to both time and money. The position is a voluntary statement due to the fact that they all have worked hard with long working hours to reach their independent goals, supported with means from private insurances, sometimes combined with pensions. But the long-term goal of economic independence has a backside. The lack of a social network outside the labour market makes them think in terms of re-entering the labour market, at least part time. Not working is unnatural and creates an empty identity without sufficient social contacts.

Morgan: "Not working is unnatural. Work gives you an identity. I mean that work is very important [...] Not that I would like to work 100 % or get cracking in full speed, but in some way I would like to feel more needed".

In other words, the independent might seem to live with a feeling of being well off, without problems of managing time and of having economic strains in everyday life. On the other hand, it seems difficult to make use of these advantages when experiencing a lack of social recognition. A lack of work and the accompanying social integration is overwhelming, despite having a secure economic situation. In order to be a part of society, voluntary work in the local environment could be a solution but this has not been carried out due to a lack of formal ways to do so.

### The caretakers

The caretakers' living conditions include the work-related problems of the careerists and the lack of economic resources of the unwanted, with economic and time constraints that characterize everyday life. It is not in such a way that they are necessarily dependent on social support, but rather it is individuals in the local community who are dependent on the caretakers – as they have a caretaking profession, are single parents with children or caretakers of other family members. Examples of this are paid or unpaid occupations in the borderland of voluntary work. This borderland includes a type of "self-chosen" lack of time in projects financed by non-profit organizations. A contribution to society is thus being made with only receiving a little in return in terms of time or income. A way of life that includes values of helping others with worse opportunities in life motivates their work efforts and explains work attitudes.



Jesper: “Working time steals family time. I have non-profit work outside paid labour and it’s real hard to relax. If I could work less and get more time for hobbies, leisure time and family, to get all that [...] that’s what we are working on”.

The caretakers are in a position in the individual life course with a relatively low mean age. The picture of how life is supposed to be fails to correspond with reality, especially in the case of single-parent caretakers. This is an example of a fatalistic approach to the conditions under which they live and how they often explain to themselves their experiences of shortages. The time strain limits social initiatives, just as limited economic resources does. This category is extremely heterogeneous and the span of possible strategies of coping with everyday life is wide.

### The balanced

A reasonable functional balance between time and income in everyday life is conceptualized by the balanced. If the careerists have a “careeristic” attitude to work and the caretakers a mission attitude, the balanced attitude towards work is to a greater extent an instrumental one. Experiences, or a sound knowledge, of a high work rate and its link to sickness in terms of a work overload have led to new priorities in the sense of a balanced life. The connection to the workplace suggests that individuals with “traditional” jobs in the manual and manufacturing industries have easier to find a work-life balance. The working hours of the balanced also correspond with the terms of employment. None of the interviewed in this category have voluntary or involuntary overtime duties. It is interesting to note that none of them have small children, something that otherwise demands contribution both in terms of time and economic resources. A capacity to adapt to situations, and modest claims and fulfilment during leisure time characterizes the balanced.

Gerd: “I stressed all the time. I was here and there and everywhere, I didn’t listen to anyone. Now, I have a slower pace and feel better. And I think the other ones agree”.

The balanced have all participated in a meeting or political gathering in the last year and all have income from work. Yet, a widespread belief is that the socio-economic system in society favours time- and income-poor groups and that stability does not pay and that a considerable proportion of public expenditure does not benefit the balanced.

### Time, income and social networks

An unbalanced division of time and resources does not only exist in work situations but also in everyday life at home and in leisure time. The time-rich can experience small margins partly due to a lack of social networks and social recognition, while the time-poor experience it due to multiple and unwieldy social roles inside and outside the labour market. The independents’ considerations of re-entering the labour market, even though they do not have the economic need to do so, reveals the importance of having a job in relation to identification and social recognition. At the same time, many careerists experience long working hours and several time and income consuming activities at the same time in their way of life. This then can create a risk for ill-health and marginalization, not only as a workplace problem, but in combination with a time demanding way of life as a whole. In other words: solving ill-health with labour market measures, rehabilitation treatment and occupational training might be counterproductive if not taking the individual’s whole life situation into consideration.

Nevertheless, the careerists’ position in the social structure can be rewarding. Social recognition and status can compensate the failings of time-poor living conditions. The unwanted, on the other hand, are victims of the same processes of individualisation. When success and failures are dependent on the individual, prosperity brings personal freedom

while misfortune is excluding. That limits patterns of behaviour, and restricts the margins, not only for outsiders, but also for careerists established in a hectic working life.

Principally, the strategies of the time-poor are adaption to a demanding pace of life. The strategies of the time-rich are often resignation, but also resistance. This variety of strategies or the lack of strategies in managing patterns of imbalances in everyday life shows that a one-sided debate about stressed time-poor in their careers does not present the whole picture. Unequal and unbalanced distribution of time and income is a problem, not only between different life forms' time use, but also because of the fact that many time consuming demands and activities occur at the same time in the life course. These findings open up for an analysis on restrictions, inspired by a time geographical perspective.

## Restriction analysis

In the following, an analysis of constraints draws attention to environment structures in relation to individual needs of sleep, rest and meals. Practices and routines are established to get the "life-puzzle" together and balance work life with private life and domestic work. Sequences of needs and obligations make us dependent on certain ways of doing things in order to fit our lives into the structural organisation of everyday life, for example, opening hours at work, day-care and public authorities. Not to forget the couplings to other people that repeat movements in timespace<sup>1</sup>, i.e. where you work out or where you and your friends drink your coffee. Hägerstrand (1991) points out that each individual follows a path in time-space and many individuals' paths taken together create web patterns in timespace. An individual's path through life is bounded by constraints (restrictions). Even if we plan everyday life and create routines in order to get past them, restrictions occur forcing individuals to do things in a different way, or if there are not enough resources to interact in important fields of life. These restrictions can have a location or extension in space and duration in time. There are three different types of restrictions (Hägerstrand 1991; Åquist 1992):

Capability constraints are those which limit the activities of the individual because of his/her biological construction and/or the tools he/she can command. The necessity to sleep a minimum number of hours a day and regular intervals of eating are of overwhelming importance. A restriction in mobility and communication appears as we are unable to travel from one place to another in no-time. We have to compromise between different solutions in timespace. If we, for instance, have access to a car or have the opportunity to go by train, we have an advantage in mobility compared to those who are limited to riding a bike or walking. Differences in capability between individuals or groups in the same local environment can be very large.

Coupling constraints visualize that we are dependent on a place during a certain time, frequently in interaction with others, in order to carry through different projects. Our paths are linked together with others in order to reach jointed goals, e.g. it can be connections for production at a workplace or consumption at the local supermarket. Individuals have to be at a certain place at a certain time, many times guided by schedules, opening hours or time clocks with limited individual freedom of action. As the project continues, individuals are restricted taking part in other activities. Telephone and the Internet allow people to have contact without requiring transportation in timespace. Coupling constraints can, besides entailing a lack of time and social networks, also consist of a lack of technical equipment.

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1 Timespace is a limited resource where the scope to carry through certain projects is exposed to mutual competition. The struggle for existence then creates restrictions of what is possible to archive and constitutes the framework of everyday life (Hägerstrand 1991).

Authority constraints are relations of power in timespace control. Individuals, organizations and institutions are limiting the access to domains, such as a territory, labour markets or a club. Restrictions in getting residence permit in Sweden are, for instance, a controlling domain on a national level. Domains in everyday life can be work places, a favourite place in front of the television or a bench at the promenade.

The purpose of using an analysis of constraints is to investigate the restrictions behind the different strategies of the life forms. The method of analysis is used to find constraints in the time budget among the life forms, compare these constraints with social and economical power and in what way they are related to each other.

### Competitive time patterns

The restrictions of the life forms focus on the critical importance of time and space when it comes to fitting people and things together in socio-economic systems. A person's biological construction is often taken for granted, but it has to be fit together with times at work, home and in the leisure time. The access to "stations" (Hägerstrand 2002), or places in timespace as the care-centre, the gym, day-care facilities and the supermarket are limited depending on access to resources. If you are, for instance, living in a family with small children, unable to get day-care during working hours, it would probably affect the whole family's allocation of resources. Or if two interesting events, for example a football tournament or a series of lectures, that you do not want to miss makes you want to restructure your time. But a reorganisation of the "life-puzzle" is only possible to a certain extent depending on what time-margins are available. Individual projects are restricted and time becomes a critical resource in timespace. At the same time; certain "projects" (Hägerstrand 1991) are sanctioned by society. Paid labour, as a dominant project, has priority in relation to other activities during the working week. Economically, the duration of parents' allowance and amount of compensation stimulate patterns of behaviour and makes it possible to calculate if time at the series of lectures is time well spent or if it is possible to withdraw from activities connected to paid work.

Based on the above we understand that the restrictions that appear are interplay between matter, time and space in a web of connections between the individual and the world around. The will to get back to work or to follow that football tournament may not be consistent with other activities. In the following, I will identify the restrictions in time-rich and time-poor ways of life and discuss the life of the balanced.

### Restrictions among the time-poor

The time geographical approach can be helpful to explain an individual's restrictions and possibilities in the construction of everyday life. The restrictions in timespace are of great importance when identifying underlying necessities that appear in the everyday strategies of the life forms. The careerists' navigating in timespace is limited by their inability to move unimpeded for long distances. The dominating restriction that occurs is the capability constraints. The frame of everyday life can not be bent to include an unmanageable number of projects or stations and compromises have to be made at work and in the leisure time depending on our needs for rest and that travel between stations are more than blinks of the eye.

Capability constraints are also an obstacle for the caretakers as a limitation in mobility and communication. The human body's restricted geographical motion in timespace can be speeded up by access to fast transport methods, especially for those individuals with economic resources among the time-poor. There is of course a limit of geographical motion in timespace, which is not at least shown in the way adaption strategies are handled by the time-

poor. These adaption strategies of adjustment have few alternatives for changing the experienced shortage of time.

One strategy is, however, the careerists' ability to control resources in timespace due to their position at the labour market. Another way is to fall back on a gendered division of work; a male world of paid labour and a female world of unpaid housework. A third way is to reduce the time spent in dominant projects of paid labour. Household services, or a consumption of other people's time, constitute an economic opportunity to the time-poor/income-rich careerists. Time saving household machines, electronic communication or buying a second car are other examples. But again; in spite of having a privileged position in important domains of society, there is a capacity limitation in how that influence can be used.

The capability constraints make it difficult to co-ordinate demands and necessities in private and working life. For this reason, coupling constraints become a problem when the time-poor are interacting in different projects in timespace. That concerns both time-poor life forms. The ambition to be a part of, and have influence in, a variety of projects is limited by restrictions to co-ordinate time for full-time work, parenthood, house projects, a social life and leisure time activities.

Time shortage and limited influence on domains of power contribute to the caretakers' authority constraints. A lack of control over their own lives in, for society, an important nursing or caretaking position represents a type of work, often carried out on a voluntary basis, outside the careerist's traditional labour market regulations. It is an activity that is not rewarding; with no time to ease up the capacity constraints, nor for influencing important fields of authority. A reduction in working time is not a way out as long as the caretakers have so little income. Instead, coping with time strain is trying to do more on a shorter period of time. When the strategies of adjusting to narrow time limits do not correspond to the caretakers' needs for a balanced life, resignation is a response in the presence of social demands and time consuming duties, thus constituting restrictions in stress-related ways of life.

### Restrictions among the time-rich

The work/life balance has partly other restrictions in the time-rich ways of life. If the careerists have problems with coupling constraints due to a lack of time, time-rich life forms have the same problems due to a lack of social influence and recognition. The social networks outside the labour market are fragile, for the unwanted as well as for the independents. Common projects in timespace are difficult to carry out. The lack of joint life courses and social participation outside labour market keeps time-rich life forms outside the common timetables that reproduce society. One example is the strategies of liberation, accomplished by the independents. These strategies, when the independent leaves paid work, have contributed to new restrictions and a desire to return to the labour market. This can lead to feelings of resignation towards work as the dominant project in life.

Incomplete or fragmented timetables outside labour market are also a concern for the unwanted's authority constraints and they experience a lack of access to important domains in timespace as their resources are not in demand. Living in a position of dependence with no access to important projects, for example in the labour market, leads to the unwanted being passive and isolated from domains where the couplings of man and tools meet (Hägerstrand 1991). Social activities also demand transportation between different stations in timespace. Transportations require money and thus constitute a capability constraint that may increase the experience of being an outsider.

The time-rich demonstrate a lack of strategies to cope with the different constraints. The feelings of resignation are a reminder of individual failings and shortcomings. A strong desire to get a job and to do one's share among the unwanted and the independents point to the

significance of time spent in paid work and work as a dominant domain in the development of society.

### The Balanced and the attitude towards work

The constraints have no considerable impact in the life of the balanced. Paradoxically, the lack of constraints is not always self-chosen. A long working life as a careerist ends up in an untenable situation. Stress and work under pressure with both capability constraints and coupling constraints can lead to long term sick-leaves and a long way back to working life. The fear of once again being stricken by illness and thinking about what is meaningful in life, makes them revalue life and the career ambitions. A way of understanding the change in experienced division of time is a matter of the attitude to paid labour and a perspective that concerns the value of work. In order to overcome the capability constraints and the coupling constraints, the price they have to pay is increased authority constraints and a step back from the social scene where the positions of power are distributed. That means that the balanced lose resources and influence in order to gain more time and a balanced life. Once again, results show how the labour market, as a dominating domain, has a great impact on individuals' experiences of timespace restrictions.

### Conclusions

A community study reveals the currently existing difficulties in finding balance in everyday life with time-poor and time-rich living conditions and varying opportunities and strategies to cope with tight margins. Careerists in a hectic working life experience life as an iron-cage, with enough space for consumption but no time to recover in fear of being left behind. The unwanted, supported by marginalizing welfare benefits or activation programmes, wish to contribute in some way to get social recognition and are waiting to show what they could do if they had the chance. The independents want to re-enter the labour market in order to have a richer social life, but are surprisingly dependent on structured social networks in order to do so. The caretakers have a community responsibility for which no one is willing to pay, nor in time or income. What will happen if their informal work suddenly disappeared? The balanced have been able to remain attached or to re-enter the labour market, generally with priorities of a balanced social life and an instrumental attitude to work. Yet, they have a feeling of being in a non-favourable position compared with time-rich and time-poor living conditions in terms of social innovations.

The underlying hypothesis of time geography is that the restrictions interact with each other and intensify each other in concrete situations in timespace. The conclusion of the time geographical patterns of the life forms shows that the restrictions in everyday life have "spill-over" effects. The restriction analysis reveals links between restrictions and different strategies at an individual level. Furthermore, conflicting forces in timespace can come up against the same constraints, but because of very different reasons. Apparently, that is the case with the coupling constraints. The time-poor's lack of time and the time-rich's lack of economic resources and social networks obstruct interaction in order to accomplish joint projects in timespace. This is something that not only poses questions about the life forms' relation to each other, but also moves the perspective from imbalances in individual life courses to an imbalance between individual needs and the demands of society.

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## Meaning and Dynamics of Daily Rhythm in Families with Young Children

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The sequential structure of each day is a kind of supporting tool for everyday living (Korvela, 2003). Similarity brings a sense of security and predictability to each day. Routines are often regarded as being restrictive, but to a certain extent familiar rhythms create predictability and thus a sense of security. Rhythms as automatised processes do not require much thinking capacity, thus liberating the mind for other functions. But when a supporting structure is missing, people's resources are tied up in reacting to varying situations and to constant negotiations. The daily rhythms are easily disturbed or even lost in the crises and turbulent phases of life. The meaning of sequential structure is important, especially in the transitional phases of the family life course.

The aim of this paper is to analyse how families and households construct their daily practices, rhythms, and sequence structures. Family and home will be analysed in relation to nearby communities and to society and how these relationships are seen in the individual's and the families' daily practices as well as how these relationships facilitate daily life or make it more difficult. The second aim is to study the functionality and usability of a new family work method: 'The Sequence Map', with which rhythms that are irregular in families with small and school-age children will be changed into more stable and predictable patterns.

The socio-cultural approach (Vygotsky, 1978) offers concepts and methods with which to analyse rhythms as dynamic, everyday processes. For this purpose, I will employ ethnographic data based on videotapes of authentic activities in everyday settings, combined with interviews. The video data makes it possible to analyse the topics thus revealed and produced in action and face-to-face interactions.





## **The Making of Morning Activity Patterns**

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The course of the day is an interesting unit of investigation in research on everyday life because in it most rhythms, conflicts and wonderful things are experienced. There is at least one part of the day where an inevitable conflict between the basic human needs of sleep and food and practical personal arrangements on one hand and on the other hand the demand from the modern way of earning ones' living collide - the morning. Morning hours are experienced by many people to be the most hectic hours of the day. There is time for necessary activities between waking up and starting to work, but the "window of opportunities (prism)" open for alternative handling and for something going wrong is limited. What character has the morning activity pattern of people's daily life? In my presentation I will problematise the result, i.e. what activities appear in the mornings of men and women in different ages? I illustrate the morning activity patterns in a population by using a method, VISUAL-TimePACTS, and look for sequences of activities constituting a collective activity pattern of the population.