

Making Wilderness

An Inquiry into Stig Wesslén's Documentation and Representation of the Northern Swedish Landscape

ABSTRACT The present article explores images of the Northern Swedish landscape, produced and mediated by Stig Wesslén (1902–1987) in the 1930s and 1940s. Trained as a forester, Wesslén gradually turned into a documentarist, focusing on the wilderness, notably big birds, predators and the mountain range in Lapland. Along with making a number of ambitious movies and embarking on intensive lecture tours, he was an active debater and writer and published six, richly illustrated books. These careers were interwoven, partly for practical reasons; income from lecturing and journalism financed his filmmaking and gave him time to write his books. It is argued in the article that Wesslén was driven by a strong feeling for wilderness and that he was against the way modern civilization exploited nature. The goal of his documentary work was ultimately to raise public awareness regarding the state of nature and he may thus be seen as a link between the preservationists of the early twentieth century and the environmentalists of the 1960s. In order to reveal the true essence of nature, Wesslén developed a “scientific” documentary technique, which he called “camera hunting.” The idea was to use the best camera equipment possible that would allow him to observe nature at a distance, not disturb the natural order of things, and present authentic images. Yet, as the article shows, Wesslén sometimes anthropomorphized the animals and also dramatized nature in many of his works.

TORJER A. OLSEN

“Masculinities” in Sami studies

ABSTRACT Sami masculinities must be understood as plural. This is the starting point for this article. There is little research done on gender and/in Sami society, especially concerning men and masculinity. The article deals with Sami masculinities as a field of research, and has two main goals. Firstly, the main trends in relevant research on gender in Sápmi in general and on Sami men in particular are presented and discussed. Secondly, a number of challenges related to doing research on Sami masculinities are explored. The theoretical perspectives are mainly drawn from the fields of gender studies and indigenous studies. The article will hopefully serve as a platform and a starting point for further research on Sami masculinities.

KEYWORDS Sami, gender, masculinity, intersectionality, Sami men, indigenous

Experiences of Being a Young Female Sami Reindeer Herder

A Qualitative Study from the Perspective of Mental Health and Intersectionality

ABSTRACT Objectives: To explore experiences of what it means to be a young, female Sami reindeer herder in Sweden, a group occupying a unique position in Swedish Sami life, with special focus on intersectionality and exposure to risk factors regarding mental (ill) health.

Methods: A qualitative content analysis of semi-structured interviews with 13 strategically selected female reindeer herders (18–35 years old).

Results: The participants described a reindeer-herding lifestyle that they find joyful and vital, but is also conflictual and harsh. Gender-specific issues were raised, for example that they unfortunately and unnecessarily have a place other than the heart of reindeer herding reserved for them.

Conclusions: The results of this study suggest that the position of women reindeer herders is paradoxical. This position implies not only a pride in Sami culture but also a risk of developing mental health problems which should be addressed in relation to gender, the reindeer-herding lifestyle and ethnicity.

KEYWORDS Sami, mental health, reindeer herder; female, gender, experiences, qualitative content analysis, social construction, social categories, intersectionality

ANNA WESTMAN KUHMUNEN

A Female Perspective on Sami Bear Ceremonies

ABSTRACT Researchers have often seen Sami bear ceremonies as exclusive male activities since the hunting was performed by men. This asymmetrical outlook on men's and women's participation in rituals is partly due to the old source material, which generally has a male point of departure. This view has also been reinforced by later researchers. By introducing Anna Tomasdotter and her account of the Sami bear ritual, a source not frequently used, the author of the article brings to the fore a female perspective on the ceremony. The complementary gender roles in Sami religion are thus put in focus.

KEYWORDS Bear ceremonies, Sami religion, female perspectives, Pehr Fjellström, Jonas A. Nensén, Anna Tomasdotter