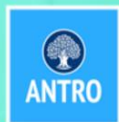


Aivita Putniņa

# Raising children in Latvia

## Nevardarbība

Stiprinot ģimenes, kopienas un attiecības: antropoloģiska pieeja vardarbības izpētē  
*Strengthening families, communities and relationships: anthropological perspectives on violence*



antropologija.lu.lv



Projekta nr. lzp-2018/1-0068

# Data

- 124 interviews / observation / discussion texts from 3 different regions of the project
- A representative survey 2019/20
- Different generations, genders, family models

Relevant as it sets grounds for pedagogical action

# Labour education

*How we were raised? Well, with work. Always work, work. But I had to work a lot at home as a child. (Valentine)*

- Child labor as a part of the (pre-) Soviet economy

*Work and work it was, in those years of collective farming. Oh, you tell me how I now regret my conscience at that time because I was made to work in a hay barn in open and I was working, and thought why that woman, for example, slips away and doesn't really work. Is a pot-boiler. But now I have those back problems, I must say, for many, many years. Then, well, I guess that's where it started. Fields were weeded [..]. And after that I began to lift up a bale in my own barn. It's all up. This was not a work for women, but it was all work. (Valentīna)*

- Child labour shrinks with the re-profiling of farms, the emergence of other opportunities
- Remains as a nostalgic ideal

*We see this best when we see how well parents in the countryside can raise their children with nature, hard work. They study well and know the word 'I have to do it'. They do not shout these words which are now widespread in Latvia, as today our English teacher said: "I don't want to! I won't! I don't like it!" (Katrīna)*

# Changes in labour education

- Changing the relationship of parents with children: from authority to participation

*Boy mine .. Well, maybe four or five years old was already sitting on Dad's lap, driving a tractor. Later he drove by himself. The girl too. Well, and somewhere from .. Well, from five years of age they .. Well .. Ran and helped. Well, in all the works! While they were, as they say, very young, well, you have to look after them. A then they went there themselves, helped the kitchen, washed the dishes. Anything, well. (Einars)*

- Money as a mediator in capitalism

# Behind the nostalgia

- It hides societal inequalities

*But we enter such situation now when we will end up wondering why they are stepping on our heads. Because you can't tell them anything. You must not make a child to do anything, use the child somehow. I went to one family, where the guardian had complained that she was not dealing with it. Boy 14 years old. I visit them, we're talking. Well, you put him to work at home, you know how it is to live in the countryside, to bring fire-wood. She says yes, he will bring in the fire-wood. I ask: what do you do in the summer? She says when we go to the forest to collect berries, the livelihood is as it is, then I once took him with me. But he is not allowed to pick berries. I ask: why? A previous [guardian] had said it would already be child exploitation. See how far we go? That you can't teach a child anything normal anymore. I say, but what could be cooler than getting the child to work, he would get paid for it, so he would already learn something. But behind all this, we look at everything with the suspicion. I do not know. Well, there are, of course, places where they [guardians] are cruel, let's not talk about it at all. (Daina)*

- Excuses the absence of parents due to work: «children with keys on their necks» and conceals their exploitation

# Work, being poor and children

*In my time we lived, I remember from my childhood. It was not violence, it was a situation that was. Mom went to work, I didn't go to school yet, I stayed home to wait for her to return. Was it violence? I didn't think so. I didn't feel well, but it wasn't violence. (Guntis)*

- Work as a value in conflict with raising children

*It wasn't bad, Mom just didn't know. Because she was also raising children alone, I was one year, my sister six. I was in the bed next to my sister, my mother went to the farm to earn food. When I asked my mother how much I weighed when I was born, she said, "I don't know, you're just born." That was the time. There was no shortage of love, but to say what she did, she doesn't remember. She worked all the time. (Nadine)*

- Modesty as an ambiguous value

*There, those single moms worked here, I don't think it's the casino, rather a gaming hall. She says, I don't have time for my daughter, I work at night, they both oversleep in the morning, then daughter is late at school, with crumpled clothes. Well, of course, at school right away, the kids are kids. Others notice it, maybe they start laughing, so the conflict drags on, and, as long as the ball explodes. (Evija)*

# Rising with an example

- A trivial conclusion => to justify the lack of a philosophy of nurture
- Relevant in an equal relationship and only when it is conscious and consistent:

*Do children have responsibilities at home?*

*No. Such elementary things - clean the table behind you. The oldest child thinks that he should clean the rooms, takes a vacuum cleaner and washes the dishes himself. The children come home from school and eat, the oldest says that he cannot look at this and washes the dishes himself. It is not that we say - we drive home now, have all the dishes washed - it is not. He probably sees that we don't like dirty dishes and dirty floors ourselves. It's that children learn from deeds and not words. (Ilze)*

# Borders

- Border maintenance as a method of upbringing
  - ⇒ Rules of the game
  - ⇒ Maintenance of distance
- Great diversity of border setting - from neglect to overcare
- There is no common understanding of boundaries - from "do not disturb another frame" to subordination

In the survey, 40% of women and 42% of men admit that physical violence in the family is permissible for purpose of defence. 5% of women and 12% of men would justify physical violence if the victim was aggressive or provocative.



# Result: respecting parents

*I respect my parents, but I don't love them. I always try to prove that I am valuable (Ināra)*

- Two expressions of respect: authoritarian and based on equality

*Then it seemed to me that I had to be a strict mom, that I shouldn't be too permissible to my boys. They must not do whatever they want. Well, my daughter doesn't do everything she wants, but then I thought that ... Then there was no information either. For myself, although I was a teacher, I have not been taught so much about such young children, I didn't realize that boys needed to move more. That boys can't sit still and I can't force a four-year-old to sit still. And I believed that in some specific situations he had to sit. And then, of course, I shouted, he sat there and, well, yes.. It was different. (Evija)*

*Follow and be inside that child's life, try to talk. Now the teenage stage is coming. Doesn't he feel too much control? It becomes different, I feel it, because we have a very good relationship, there are disputes, of course, and there's something, but I never think I'm in a higher position and he's lower. (Zita)*

# Punishment

*They just need to be loved and not too much. And don't give everything you ask for. (Nadine)*

*If the parent has not gained respect, then the child is blurred as a jelly (Inese)*

- Restrictions and control as a virtue
- From economic control to management, where money is replaced by sticky notes

*I have sanctions. It's the internet, which isn't [available]. At the moment, my big daughter doesn't have a phone for the third week. Grandparents are in shock. How is my child going to school in a small town and cannot be reached by phone? The teacher called, asked, "Have you really taken phone away?" Everyone is in shock, but my child is living with it. She is not allowed to use the internet, she is not allowed to use the telephone. If she doesn't make all the progress [in studies] by Christmas. Bad behavior? I don't know what bad behavior is. I mostly have learning problems. Somehow those views of children [have become] different than we had. (Nadine)*

# Corporal punishment

2% of respondents fully support, a further 14% tend to support corporal punishment

- Almost all interlocutors remembered an episode, mostly mothers

*I can't even understand why I had to be beaten. No. In any case, it was not necessary. Someone says: "It's good that I got beaten." As far as I can remember, nothing had changed. I have been just as smart. I didn't do anything crazy. Something happened - I either teased my sister or scared her, lied to my grandmother. For that, I've got really beaten. (Aina)*

- Usually justified by the need to obtain virtue

*Did beat me. Not often, but it didn't, but it didn't diminish my love. (Antons)*

- Reproduction of violence

*Well, that bed was at the wall and he was driving me to the corner, I couldn't run away. And then he gave me a strap on my leg. I remember that very well, it was the only time. I couldn't escape anywhere. I run there, I run into my bed in the corner. That's why it's stuck in memory. With [my] children, the youngest was obedient, but the eldest one, yes, when he was five or so. Not more. Well, yes, then he had earned. Birch grew [near the house]. I [said] to my son, "Well, what, take your pants off." He really, he stripped. "Pull out the birch twig!" Because well .. Well, it was needed. (Juta)*

- A daily experience in a youth discussion, but do not know what to do with it

- Are there other tools?

*With your eldest son, you hit him, but he doesn't do anything anyway. Then they don't understand what to do at all. (Zinta)*

# Other methods

- Raising voice

*But they are not afraid, they are not afraid of my shouting (Juta)*

- Intimidation

*My daughter once for a very long time, I do not know .., deceived us that she took a shower (laughs). She opens the tap. Okay, well, yes. Wet hair. [...] And once she had to go first to the shower. I walked in after her and noticed that the sponge was dry. But she has been sitting there for half an hour. I said, "Have you washed? Did you wash your hair?" Well, no, I just got them wet. Long hair, difficult to wash. She is so tall. And then I turned on Google and leprosy. I did it right away. I said, "Do you know what leprosy is?" No. I said: "Well, look! It's from not washing." And then she set for an hour. Yes. She was also into ballerinas once and wanted to become a ballerina. Then I turned on anorexics [on Google] for her. I showed what the girls [look like]. Well, and she didn't want to be a ballerina anymore (laughs). Yes. But, well, to beat her up because she fails to bathe? Oh my God! (Ilona)*

- Public apology

# Love and emotional attachment

- The most often talked about lack of it: «love with contact»

*I personally missed my mother's contact love. More often than not, such hugs. In those days, parents had work, kitchen, did you do everything? Okay, go to bed! Now I myself .. My children come, cuddle and hug me from time to time. I missed it myself and I try to do this as much as possible .. I know how it is .. I try to offer love as much as possible. Especially when you are sick. I remember a moment when I was sick myself and I had a fever - I was terribly ill, I had nightmares. And my mom just brought me tea and [said], "You have to drink," and left. I wanted to be loved and pitied, but I slept and shivered. It's such a moment for me that I know that children need to be loved. (Ilze)*

- Instrumental relationships:

Well, of course, coexistence is normal, I am the generation where parents perceived us as elements of interior. So, have eaten, prepared homework, everything - the furniture is standing. No, that's the way it is, I admit that it's not different for many of us, but I want to think it has changed. Of course, I support and have thought of sledges [for my parents]. I will not buy them and take parents to forest, I will suffer just like a Latvian. (Vija)

- Fear that emotions could destroy parental authority

*I know the only thing that comes to my mind is that my mom dad dad never, ever said they love us. Like nowadays: "Oh, I love you" and the child answers. I have also spoken to my friends and many people say that their parents had never said to them, "I love you as much as you do, yes, you are good, you are dear," those specific words. Yes, I know that I will definitely say that to my children and I want my children to tell me that too, because I think it's important to tell the child, that he understands that he is also loved, that there is such an attachment. It's hard to say about such parenting methods, I don't really understand how it is there, but I know that my parents conditioned gracefulness: when we went to the store to buy something, and I think I always had to, no matter what I bought, I always had to give mom a kiss and thank her for being here for me. (Elza)*

- Emotional literacy for teachers, educators and children

# Conversation

- Hard to practice like emotions
- Breaking point - adolescence

*It is very difficult. While the child is small, he still says something. But when they become teenagers. You feel bad, but they don't say anything at all. There is nothing that can be done about it. That is a terrible truth. I was very happy to have a couple of girlfriends with whom she went. And I know clearly that she knows everything. That she has someone to talk to. (Inese)*



# Gender and sex

- Gender roles are still important, but not closely linked to the individual child
- This also applies to partnerships: gender roles replace conversation and agreement
- Sex education is still an awkward and ambiguous topic: neither at home nor at school

*My mother hadn't told me anything about it. I was away from home and alone. I went to the toilet and saw that I was bleeding. I thought I was dying and I fell there, I lost consciousness. After that, for another 3 years, I fainted that day, until everything was right in me (pointing at herself). It affected my femininity. My daughter and I went to a cafe on the first day of her period to celebrate her femininity so that it was associated with positive things for her (Ināra)*

# To conclude

- There is no common philosophy and conversation in the family about raising children
  - Upbringing and growth as a natural superpower
- ⇒ Cannot critically evaluate it
- ⇒ Do not allow learning
- Social inequalities have a significant impact on the opportunities of parents and children and are reflected in parenting habits and values
  - Hierarchical relationships and direct control require less time and effort. Time and patience are a scarce commodity

# Similarities between an anthropologist and a pensioner: A non-violent anthropological practice as a question of precarity

Kristians Zalāns

12.11.2021.

Rīga

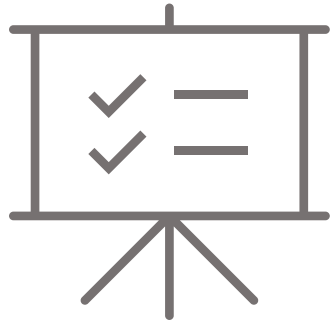


# Is non-violent anthropology a question of precarity?

Can practicing anthropology increase precarity?

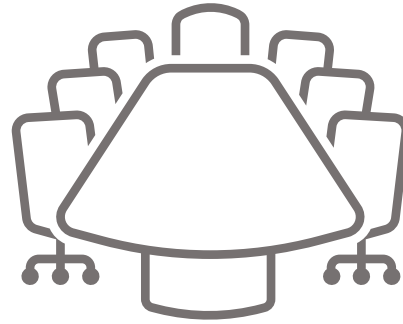
Is such precarity related to violence?

If so, what are the reasons for this precarity?



2,5 days

Below national  
poverty line



2,5 days

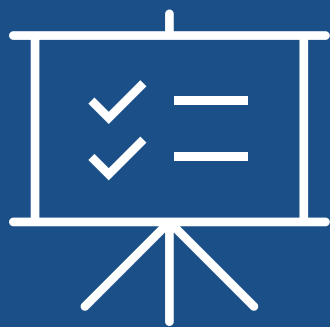
Higher than  
average salary



1 day and 1 night

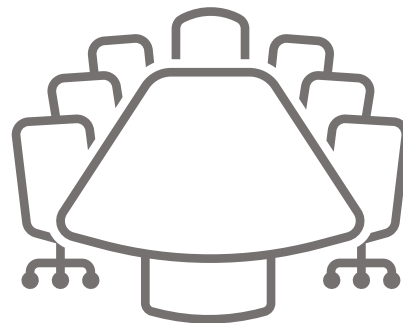
Average salary

October, 2018. A week



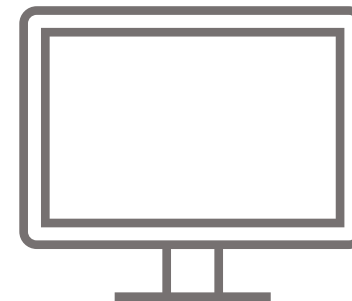
2,5 days

Below national  
poverty line



2,5 days

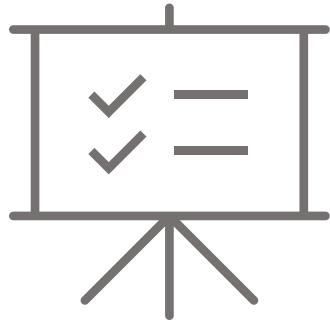
Higher than  
average salary



1 day and 1 night

Average salary

October, 2018. A week



2,5 days

Below national  
poverty line



2,5 days

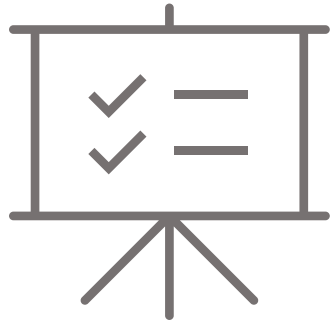
Higher than  
average salary



1 day and 1 night

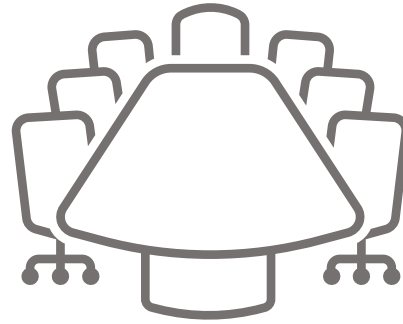
Average salary

October, 2018. A week



2,5 days

Below national  
poverty line



2,5 days

Higher than  
average salary



1 day and 1 night

Average salary

October, 2018. A week



Precarity can fuel circumstances in which there are limited resources available to address inequalities and tensions in teaching, doing research and working with colleagues

(Casalini, 2019)

# University and academics

Historically [...] exclusion, elitism and power [...] lately consumer-driven (Harris, 2005:424)

Lately [...] economic and managerial priorities (Billot, 2010)

Increasingly bureaucratised (Debowski, 2007).

Facing poverty, academics turn to sex work and sleeping in cars – The Guardian, 2017

Facing poverty academics turn to sex work and sleeping in cars. Gee, A. (2017, September 28). The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/sep/28/adjunct-professors-homeless-sex-work-academia-poverty>

‘My students never knew’: the lecturer who lived in a tent – The Guardian, 2021

‘My students never knew’: the lecturer who lived in a tent. Fazackerley, A. (2021, October 30). The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2021/oct/30/my-students-never-knew-the-lecturer-who-lived-in-a-tent>

23  
interviews

6  
weeks

care and  
responsibility



the elderly in  
particular

# Methodology

23  
interviews

6  
weeks

care and  
responsibility



the elderly in  
particular

Methodology

23

interviews

6

weeks

care and  
responsibility



the elderly in  
particular

Methodology

23  
interviews

6  
weeks

## Methodology

care and  
responsibility



the elderly in  
particular

[1] how aging in Latvia is framed, imagined, and performed in particular ways

[2] and what effects this has had on how the elderly experienced the first wave of Covid-19 pandemic in Latvia

[1] how aging in Latvia is framed, imagined, and performed in particular ways

[2] and what effects this has had on how the elderly experienced the first wave of Covid-19 pandemic in Latvia



Many politicians globally positioned the Covid-19 governance dilemma as choosing between either 'sacrificing the elderly' or 'sacrificing the economy'.

Sadruddin and Inhorn (2020)

Many of the elderly refused to fully commit to saving the  
elderly

When it all started, my grandson appealed to bring me groceries and we made a deal, but then I changed my mind. I will make it on my own. He lives there far away [...] It means that when his work ends at six, seven, he also needs to drive here. I didn't want to burden him like that and told him not to come. I found a solution that I can go to this small grocery store where there is not that much danger and there the two metre [distancing] can also be followed. And this is how I manage.

(Ivars, 80-90)



Post-socialist pensioner

[how imagined?]

Old age

Welfare dependent

If working, for a small wage

Cares for grandchildren

Valued more if working or wealthy



Post-socialist pensioner

[what effects?]

socio-economic marginalisation  
leads to 'saving the elderly'  
not being the only/main priority



## Neoliberal active aging

[how imagined?]

a highly individualistic approach to aging, with the aim that “[..]healthy, fit, active older persons can take care of themselves by pursuing the ideals of health and life [..]”

(Lamb, 2014, p. 43)





## Neoliberal active aging

[what effects?]

taking care of yourself no longer  
fully encouraged

positions different experiences of aging  
primarily as individual choice



Relational care

[how imagined?]

discourse of caring and  
relationships (being useful,  
needed, helpful, able to give  
gifts, talk, take care of etc.)  
was preferred and furthered  
most by the elderly themselves





Relational care

[what effects?]

the biopolitical approach  
incompatible

ways for care and  
relationships were found

# Conclusion

#	LV elderly	LV Anthropologists

# Conclusion

#	LV elderly	LV Anthropologists
1	Regular low income	Irregular and/or low income

# Conclusion

#	LV elderly	LV Anthropologists
1	Regular low income	Irregular and/or low income
2	Post-soviet and neoliberal imaginary	Possible post-soviet and neoliberal imaginary

# Conclusion

#	LV elderly	LV Anthropologists
1	Regular low income	Irregular and/or low income
2	Post-soviet and neoliberal imaginary	Possible post-soviet and neoliberal imaginary
3	Imaginary leads to increased risk, lack of services, issues in relationships	Imaginary leads to precarity, delays non-violent anthropology

# Conclusion

#	LV elderly	LV Anthropologists
1	Regular low income	Irregular and/or low income
2	Post-soviet and neoliberal imaginary	Possible post-soviet and neoliberal imaginary
3	Imaginary leads to increased risk, lack of services, issues in relationships	Imaginary leads to precarity, delays non-violent anthropology
4	A need for relational perspective in crisis management	Research to formulate how to lessen precarity needed

# References

Wilińska and Cedersund (2010)

Sadrudin and Inhorn (2020)

(Casalini, 2019)

(Lamb, 2014, p. 43)

(Harris, 2005:424)

(Billot, 2010)

(Debowski, 2007).

The Guardian, 2017

The Guardian, 2021

Thank you!



# **Beyond ethnographic sentimentalism: Situating care in anthropologies against violence**

**Kārlis Lakševics**



Project nr.: lzp-2018/1-0068

**Towards a non-violent anthropology**  
**12-11-21**

## **Towards a non-violent anthropology**

**with Putniņa, Hamilton,  
Linde-Ozola**

## **Youth perspectives on cyberbullying in Latvia**

**with Dudure, Grinblate,  
Kupka-Harrison, Pokšāns,  
Thaller, Vītiņa, Zalāns**



## **Covid-19 crisis, care and responsibility in Latvia**

**with Aniņa, Celmiņa, Dudure,  
Grinblate, Kupka-Harrison, Juceviča,  
Kanderāne, Kupfere, McCombe,  
Pokšāns, Švandere, Thaller**

## **Responsibility, well-being and study relationships in Higher Education**

**with Lukša, Dukure, Pokšāns,  
Kubila, Staris, Auziņa, Kampare,  
Lazdāne, Rupā, Lediņš, Zariņa,  
Stepiņa, Smorodins, Rāta**

## **The following chapters**

- 1      On violence within anthropology**
- 2      On the university during a care crisis**
- 3      On barriers to practice of nonviolence**
- 4      On being an accomplice**

# **Problematizations in anthropology**

**Jobson, 2020**

**The case for letting anthropology burn:  
Sociocultural anthropology in 2019**

**Berry, Arguelles,  
Cordis, Ihmoud &  
Estrada, 2017**

**Toward a fugitive anthropology:  
Gender, race, and violence in the field**

**Todd, 2020**

**should I stay or should I go?  
+ (an answer)**

# **The care crisis**

Dowling, 2021

**Individualization of responsibility**

**Care as a patchy response to 'vulnerability'**

**Intensification of emotional labour responsibilities**

**Neoliberalization of higher education**

# Barriers to nonviolent practice in the neoliberal university



**Lack of 'vision'**



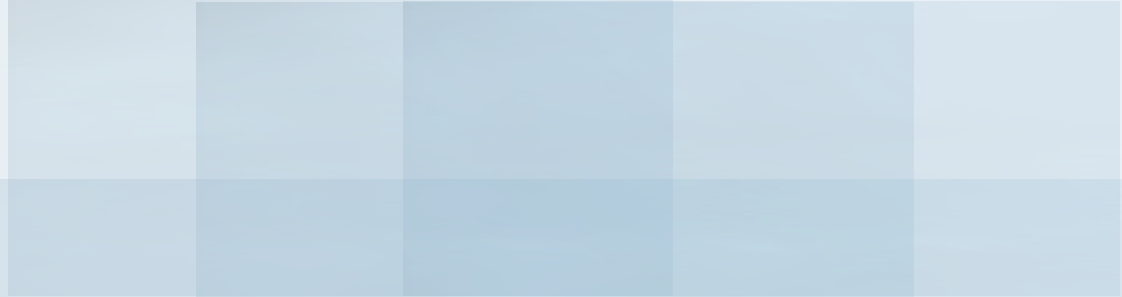
**Lack of 'time'**



**Lack of 'empathy'**



**Lack of 'clear responsibilities'**



# **The ongoingness of complicity**

**Gomberg-Muñoz, 2018**

**Anthropology as a radical praxis space (Escobar, 2018)**

**GET IN TOUCH**

**KARLIS.LAKSEVICS@LU.LV**



**UNIVERSITY  
OF LATVIA**



# AUTOETHNOGRAPHICAL HEALING: ANTHROPOLOGICAL METHODS FOR LIVING THE AFTERMATH OF VIOLENCE

Towards a non-violent anthropology

Strengthening families,  
communities and relationships:  
anthropological approach to  
researching violence



# Contents

**The problem**

**Context**

**The research**

**The implications**

**The conclusion**

# The problem

*“when did you first become an anthropologist?”*

Judith Okely “Confronting Positionality” (2012)

Entering anthropology as someone with  
experiences of violence

Higher education as (in)accessible

Okely, Judith. 2012. ‘Confronting  
Positionality’. *Teaching Anthropology* 2  
(1).

# Context

**Suffering slot (Robbins 2013)**

**Dark anthropology (Ortner 2016)**

**Objectivity as abnegation of self**

Ortner, Sherry B. 2016. 'Dark Anthropology and Its Others: Theory since the Eighties'. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 6 (1): 47–73.

Robbins, Joel. 2013. 'Beyond the Suffering Subject: Toward an Anthropology of the Good'. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 19 (3): 447–62.

# The research

**PhD thesis research in residential schools**

**High levels of violence**

**Impact on my own position as a  
university lecturer and  
anthropologist**

**Autoethnography**

# The research

High levels of violence

Retraumatisation

Smells and sounds

Potentialities of violence

# The research

Impact on my own position as a  
university lecturer and  
anthropologist

Lived experience of violence after  
the act (Henze-Pedersen 2021)

Sometimes the field diary is not  
enough

Stigma (Goffman 1986)

Henze-Pedersen, Sofie. 2022. 'The  
Ghost of Violence: The Lived  
Experience of Violence After the Act'.  
*Violence Against Women* 28 (1): 194–  
210.

Goffman, Erving. 1986. *Stigma: Notes on the  
Management of Spoiled Identity*. Reissue edition.  
New York: Touchstone.

# The research

## Autoethnography

“autoethnography confronts dominant forms of representation and power in an attempt to reclaim, through self-reflective response, representational spaces that have marginalized those of us at the borders” (Tierney, 1998, p. 66)

Tierney, William G. 1998. 'Life History's History: Subjects Foretold'. *Qualitative Inquiry* 4 (1): 49–70.



# Implications

**The role of personal stories of anthropologists**

**“[autoethnography] involves a rewriting of the self and the social.” (Reed-Danahay 1997)**

**The importance of support**

**lecturers, supervisors, coursemates**

Reed-Danahay, D.E. (ed.) (1997),  
Auto/Ethnography: Rewriting the  
Self and the Social. Ox-  
ford: Berg.

# Implications

**The role of my personal story**

**Change in the approach towards teaching**

**Critical approach towards excellency**

**The paradox of success**

**Cynical knowledge (Goldner, Ritti, and Ference 1977; Alleman 2018)**

Goldner, Fred H., R. Richard Ritti, and Thomas P. Ference. 1977. "The Production of Cynical Knowledge in Organizations." *American Sociological Review* 42 (4): 539–51

Allemann, Lukas. 2018. "'I Do Not Know If Mum Knew What Was Going on': Social Reproduction in Boarding Schools in Soviet Lapland". *Acta Borealia* 35 (2): 115–42..

# Implications

## Limitations

Does not solve structural issues

Precarity

May be counterproductive if applied haphazardly

The background is a vibrant, abstract composition. It features several large, organic shapes in various colors: a large pink shape on the left, a teal shape at the top left, a grey shape at the top center, a dark teal shape on the right, and a yellow shape at the bottom center. These shapes are decorated with different patterns: the pink shape has a dense pattern of small black dashes; the yellow shape has a pattern of small white plus signs; the grey shape has a pattern of small black dots; and the dark teal shape has a pattern of small white dots. There are also several small, wavy lines scattered throughout the background. The text "THANK YOU!" is centered in the middle of the image, written in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

THANK YOU!

# NON-VIOLENCE, SOCIALIZATION AND IDENTITY: QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA REVIEW

Māra Neikena  
12.11.2021.



**FLPP**  
FUNDAMENTĀLO UN  
LIETIŠKO PĒTĪJUMU  
PROJEKTI



# Violence and everyday life

- Experiences of violence as something that affects everyone, not just certain groups of people.
- Mechanisms and tools to help control violence?
- The first time [to socialize with a person who is in prison] was terrible, I couldn't talk [..] it was a stereotype, a prisoner, he probably wishes to harm me. But no, then I realized that they were just people who made a mistake, who had used drugs, or who had done something while they were drunk, and this is how they got there. (girl, 25 years old)

# ‘Strengthening families, communities and relationships: anthropological perspectives on Violence’ research methods and research participants

***Specialists:*** people working in educational institutions, social services, orphans' courts, police, municipal employees. Criterion: Contact with dealing with a violent relationship.

***Families with children,*** including pensioners - recipients of municipal services

- Qualitative, structured interviews (124) in four Latvian towns
- Looking for positive examples in violence prevention

# Everyday communication culture

- Emotional and verbal abuse as an experience that has too little attention
- My mother used to shake me very often, which seemed absolutely unacceptable to me as a teenager, even disgusting, humiliating and offensive. And I used to swear to myself that I would never do that to my children [...] And when the elder child was born and then he was in primary school, I did. And here's the vicious circle – it is very easy to lose the control over yourself.



# Other research

- Positive trends - decrease in interest in smoking and alcohol among young people, decrease in interest in fights among boys, greater interest of adults in relationship advice by calling the crisis centre.
- New problems - other types of addictions, time spent on the Internet, teenagers share less of their problems with their parents, types of violence on the Internet

## RESOURCES

- Valsts bērnu tiesību aizsardzības inspekcijas Konsultatīvā nodaļa sadarbībā ar SIA "Norstat Latvija", 2020. **Iedzīvotāju aptauja par sabiedrības attieksmes maiņu attiecībā uz vardarbību ģimenē. Gala ziņojums par aptaujas rezultātiem.**
- Pudule, I., Velika, B., Grīnberga, D., Gobiņa I. u.c. 2020. **Latvijas skolēnu veselības paradumu pētījums. 2017./2018. mācību gada aptaujas rezultāti un tendences. Slimību profilakses un kontroles centrs**
- **Centrālā statistikas pārvalde. 2021. Bērni Latvijā.**
- Valsts bērnu tiesību aizsardzības inspekcijas gada pārskats – statistika par Bērnu un pusaudžu uzticības tālrunī sniegtajām konsultācijām. 2020.

# Relationship quality problems

- Insufficient understanding of the child's development
- Lack of healthy relationship models
- Inappropriate disciplinary techniques (threats, lack of praise).

# Relationship quality problems

- Violence as 'harming the other' or 'pouring out ones own problems onto others'
- Socialization
  - *Lack of knowledge, overload, etc. causes tension (inability to explain processes)*
  - *Inequality of relations - control vs. clearly defined boundaries (children-adults, among institutions)*
  - *Building of self-confidence.*

# Relationship quality problems

- Well with my daughter it's easier [laughs] she's only 7. Because she's 7. *Why is it easier?* Because she's listening to me, my son is listening too, but he already has his own mind and he can tell that he does not want to listen. (Mother of 2 children)
- I had a very, very low self-esteem. Scary low self-esteem, so I absolutely didn't care what happened to me. I got in the cars of strangers, I drove around. I went to places, I shouldn't have gone, and the use of various substances in our class started very early. (a woman who experienced violence)

# How to reduce violence?

- Shifting the focus to stress, reduction of inequality, and also the importance of a sense of belonging.

# Conclusions

- Knowledge of how to guide children and young people so that their personal and behavioral patterns are developed in a positive way is very widely available but difficult to put into practice. For example, most teachers are trained in recognizing and dealing with violence (it could even be said that there is an oversupply of available courses), but teachers feel that they lack practical skills to implement the theory effectively.

# Conclusions

- The severity of less visible forms of violence (such as ignorance, verbal abuse, neglect) has to be recognized at a better level.
- The presence of good professionals in schools has a positive effect on the rest of the team, they have the capacity to rise awareness of the reasons that make children and young people emotionally anxious and aggressive.
- A communicative (rather than controlling) strategy also works better among adults. E.g. when social workers try to reach out to families, better results are expected if there is a dialogue (not blaming).

Thank you for your attention!



Stiprinot ģimenes, kopienas un attiecības:  
antropoloģiska pieeja vardarbības izpētē

## Ceļā uz nevardarbīgu antropoloģiju

Projekta noslēguma konference

Tiešsaistē "Zoom" platformā

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85004436868>

Latviešu un angļu valodās

2021. gada 12. novembrī

10:00 - 15:30 (EET)




**FLPP**  
FUNDAMENTĀLO UN  
LIETIŠKO PĒTĪJUMU  
PROJEKTS



## Seeking non-violence: practices of care and commitment to the welfare of other in Latvia

Zane Linde-Ozola, PhD, University of Latvia

# The concept of care or commitment to take care of others

- Most caring practices are outside the sight & reach of the state and its institutions - in families and communities
  - Lots of normative notions of what care is and how care should be provided
    - Minimum parental care for children defined in legislation
    - Adult children must care for their elderly parents
  - Caring is often imagined as universal, natural, unchanging
  - Anthropologists: careful focus on how care is actually practiced in everyday life
    - Overturns simplistic notions of care
    - Caring is not a biological human quality, but a social relationship with another
    - Extreme diversity of practices of care and their impact
    - Caring practices are not simple
- 

# Data

Research project «Strengthening families, communities and relationships: an anthropological approach to violence prevention»

- 182 participants in four regions in Latvia
- Participant observations (63h)

=> Data coding Atlas.ti => Care & Solidarity (512 data items)

# Understanding of care

- Obligation

*We need to change this attitude that you must not be indifferent D5*

- Relationship work

*We want to create an environment where they... If they get picked on at school and if they have bad situation at home, then here, when they come, they can feel safe that they're not going to be picked on, they're going to be accepted [...] Actually the aim is not so much to learn [music] instruments, but just a space to establish relationships. D145*

- Skill

*[...] about empathy or relationships, It's a big part of the educator's work with children on a daily basis. Every day. [...] Because I'm a class teacher myself. They're already in my eighth grade. I remember what they were like in fifth grade. And I also understand very well how much time, energy, class bonding activities in different ways. And then now you can see the result. D148*

*I understand the injuries that they carry, I understand them. D74*

- Continuing caring

*Because then the hand that gives, there is always another hand that can give back. D129*

## Caring practices in the family

*She has dedicated her life to her family. She spent her time caring for both her father and her mother. A mission. When her husband was put in [the nursing home], he was still living in the countryside. She moved to the city to live with her son. Every day she came visit her husband from morning till evening. Then last April she thought she would come live here [to the nursing home]. They both lived in a separate room, of course, but [her husband] was very ill. Now she moved back living with her son [...]* D134

*For me the aim was to put my farm in order. To leave it for them [the children]. I think I have done much... It's not all done yet, but it's almost done. For example, the buildings are all pretty much renovated, in my time working in the factory and at home, actually everything is done. In fact, the machinery too. The tractor is new.* D133

- Undervalued care

*Family is important, it has to be kept as it is. Family as a value, yes. A big enough value. But if you are not valued, if things are bad, if you live in a house and you come from work and work is psychologically hard for me. You come home and you have to cook something to eat and maybe it's still not good. Maybe the jealousy scenes start. Totally unjustified. I haven't even done anything like that. It's just sad. D10*

- Too much need for care

*I didn't have time on my own, my parents were very ill even then, I had to take care of them. In fact, my child grew up from the age of 13 on his own and [...] for 7 years I looked after my parents. I remember that my child had empty pots at home because I had to run to the countryside [to look after my parents] straight after work. D130*

- Invisible care

*I knew that, like, the money wasn't that much, so I'd get, like, less than I'd like for a week, yeah? But I wouldn't have imagined it when, for example, the 7 or 10 lats they gave me with me was the last. And the sisters, sitting at home, the four of them then got by as best they could. Because there was, I guess, this idea that, well, I'm away, I'm on my own, and they're going to manage somehow, and I have to live on my own. And then that last lats was given to me. D132*

- Caring above all

*[...] she was told - here X is an orphanage - put us in there, take us out at the weekends. And mum didn't do it. She got 13 lats, at that time she was working in X's grain factory. But she worked for us to grow up. Really. That she did. That she didn't give us up. D50*

*[...] his mother lives near X town [54 km away], 90 years old, on bed, he goes every day after work to take care of her and to give her a bath and to cook for her and he doesn't say it's hard. D13*

*So hats off to her, she's, I often think about it, she brought us up on a teacher's salary alone, well that's ... Before that dad was the biggest money earner. Well, hats off to the woman, she is impressive. D73*

- Reverse care

*[...] I was the person who rang because my mum couldn't talk, my brother was in the car, I had to ring my mum and his two brothers. Grandpa, when he was alive, that was, I became a man - the head of the family I was 16 [years old]. I mean, as much as I wanted to make my mum and brother feel better, I forgot about myself D73*

*This is one mum who was drunk and he [child] dragged the drunk [parents] home, grade 8 [child] and he took care of her. I how many times, they are more supportive and pity their parents. D20*

Volunteering at the shelter

Give things "on receipt" in the shop

GP helps needy families out of their own pocket

Serving the role of mum in a youth centre

Organise a summer camp for children

Mentoring young people

Local residents care for abandoned cats

The boss spends time each morning talking to each of her employees about their well-being

To provide a job and a livelihood for a young person

A sports school buys skis for neighbouring school children

A church raises funds for a victim of violence

Local politician visits to residents' homes to provide municipal support

Creating a safe and non-violent environment for young people in the community

Celebrate birthdays at the youth centre

School staff find a new home for a victim of violence

The head of the parish takes villagers to the doctor and wherever else they need to go

During Advent, dress up as an elf and give out sweets to everyone he meets

Community residents help each other write a project

Municipal police officers help with immediate childcare when parents are unable

Community mums unite to support families in need

A parishioner rescues a victim of violence and gives her a place to stay

Local entrepreneurs donate their products to the community

Vegetables and fruit community table for others

School organises fairs and concerts to raise funds for children with special needs

Youth volunteering to help organise community events

A parishioner walks older parishioners to the doctor, the hairdresser, the bank, the market

Organise a concert to raise funds for a child with special needs

A teacher pays close attention to children's "pain" and is a supportive shoulder

The headmistress of the school provides work so that the family can have an income and be closer to the children

Free sand therapy sessions for children

## Caring practices in the community



Not looking after now, though. In those days, though, it was, I think, quite natural that if someone in the neighbourhood had an hour of incapacity, if someone was ill, say, the farmer couldn't milk the cows, it was natural that the neighbours would come and help. D130

Tas, ko es redzu savās mājās, savā daudzdzīvokļu mājā, ir jaunieši, viņi palīdz nepazīstamam cilvēkam. Teiksim, aiznes tantiņai iepirkumus. D75

I helped my neighbour - for example, I had to sort sheep. I came, I don't remember what the issue was, and I didn't have any help - kids at school or at work, wherever. The neighbour, yes, came and helped, so we need to help each other. [...] there are neighbours [...] who have a tractor, one neighbour, the other one, he doesn't work for pay, he has a farm. They ask him to go and mow, no I won't go, I won't mow, I don't... just a man doesn't want to go to help. You'll get paid, no. He'd rather watch TV. D133

I also remember that the neighbours' barn burnt down, and I know when people came together, they were gathering wood, they were gathering hay. D11

## Being neighbourly

Our house is quite like.. they don't even know each other. They don't know who lives at the other end, because they don't care. When one of our neighbours died, one of the neighbours went round and collected money for some flowers D72

There is the story that if an old lady gets sick, all the women I know - near and far - know about it. Then they help to fetch something from the shop. D79

My kettle broke, then my neighbour gave just new one D154

We call. I, for example, call almost every day with one of my neighbours. D21

We have very good neighbours, a neighbour cleans the road from snow at home, his yard, comes over the field less than a kilometre to me and cleans my yard and road as well. D25

# The "crust" of community care

Caring practices not only create a sense of belonging, relationship, intimacy, security, stability, but also isolation, emptiness, oppression, violence

## (Not) earning care

*Well, we're not condemning them. Let them live, let's see in 20 years where everyone is. Because there are often those who say, you never imagined he would end up here. Because I liked it when one woman said, 'We are already born, everybody has already had a childhood. Everybody has had children, born, sweet, soft. Everybody has been. And in the end, we don't know what life is going to bring and what we are going to stay. Because in life we have always been cool. Nobody is born homeless or a criminal. D7*

*[...] my organisation, she works with external help. Those who need help from outside, we don't want to help. All the time they ask me, 'Why should we help somebody in Africa? D36*

## Abusive care

*Of course I repent him - how you look with soiled pants like that, how you look. He looks at me with big eyes. I said, you're a cool dude, young, cute. Get a grip! I hope he got it. D37*

- Caring is hard

*A lot of them might be, okay, I'll ask you now, okay. Until I find out now, I'll have to look for his parents. Where, who. I have to run after my children. Where am I going with this child now. Why do I need all this now. D37*

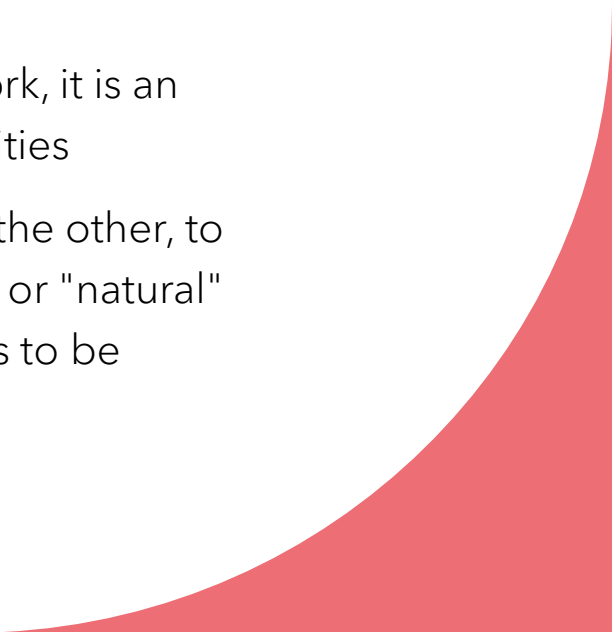
*The son, he was totally against it, he was ashamed of what Mum was doing [looking after abandoned cats]. D54*

*It's not my usual environment either, when you see those little kids sitting next to you and what they are like. I have also caught myself [whispers] not knowing how to react. D65*

*It's people's fear of getting involved. We're such a cold people... we're probably afraid of a lot of things, like the Latvians. D70*

*The conversation goes on to say that sometimes asking for help in person is not easy; "again you come to ask for something", it's also uncomfortable to ask. Seems like it might be easier in a strange place where you don't know the people. Uncomfortable, difficult to ask for money or other support for people who are your own. (D138, observation notes)*

# Concluding

- In everyday life, caring practices are diverse and complex and cannot be contained in narrow normative "boxes"
  - Community often serves family care practices for young people
  - While family care work seems more natural than community relational work, it is an "exhaustible" resource, for example when care needs exceed care capacities
  - In both family and community settings, care work, or the ability to notice the other, to recognise the other's needs and to try to provide for them, is not an easy or "natural" practice -> the possibility of care work in families and communities needs to be strengthened, promoted, facilitated
- 

**Thank you for your  
attention!**

