

## **Animation as a Tool for Promoting Life Lessons Among Rural Women**

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### **Abstract**

In this conceptual paper, we introduce a novel phenomenon/concept, namely 'animation' in the entrepreneurship setting, which contributes significantly to recognizing how new ventures create rural development, in particular with regard to recognizing how this shape of entrepreneurialism is enabled by actors that aren't necessarily entrepreneurs but are nonetheless important. Since both animatorship as a profession and animators as people are important to our concerns, it seemed intuitive to divide animation from business in order to define the function that animation may play in entrepreneurial processes. In this work, we focus on the individual while still recognizing the importance of practice and its incorporation into the empirical findings.

**Keywords:** entrepreneurship, animation, rural development, animators, processes, concerns

### **Introduction:**

Although entrepreneurs play a crucial role in rural areas, they are far from the sole agents of change. To better encompass enterprise as a "collective" effort by individual people in communities to grow enterprise in its broadest sense, we expand the definition of "community enterprise" beyond the individualistic description of Somerville as well as McElwee (2011), which refers to a single organization or group of community enterprises. It is also popular to use the term "community entrepreneurship" without ever specifying who exactly is doing the entrepreneurial work in question.

The primary objective of this article is to show how animatorship and animation practices might provoke (Berglund, Gaddefors, and Lindgren, 2016) and support, channel, or promote the entrepreneurial endeavors of others in rural and community settings. McKeever, Anderson, & Jack (2014) argue that entrepreneurship is a highly context-dependent discipline (Korsgaard, Ferguson, & Gaddefors, 2015b). And there is moral justification for business ownership (Kibler & Kautonen 2016). To motivate people to take entrepreneurial action, we define animatorship as a separate process.

### **The Concept of Animatorship**

The discussion on community business and mentoring, and how together they improve our comprehension of community development, is enriched by the idea of animatorship. The study's background is grounded in empirical data collected during an investigation into the reliability of the Village SOS Project, a nationwide initiative in the United Kingdom that aids the continuation and success of community projects in rural areas by offering services similar to those offered by

business advisors. The instances of animatorship that have evolved from this research allow us to explain and deepen the notion of animatorship while also contributing to an orchestration of a policy plan.

To animate anything is to give it life, interest, energy, motion, and activity, and animatorship is the skill of doing so. In this article, I'll explain what animation is and how it differs from other similar ideas. To be animated is to have the quality of life, activity, energy, or vitality (Smith 2013). In his research on rural animators in Scotland (Budge, Irvine, and Smith, 2008), Smith found that these professionals helped people realize their potential, develop a sense of community, and feel like an integral part of something larger than themselves through the provision of stimulation, inspiration, and physical as well as emotional support. The activity of informal educators, community organizers, and others is linked to animation (Smith, 2009), especially in underdeveloped nations (Mascarenhas, 1991). Facilitating, regulating, or encouraging, bringing about change by inspiring a speeding of action, are all aspects of animation that assist individuals and groups become more active members of and leaders in their communities (Smith, 2013). (Boud and Miller, 1997). Animating a setting or a character entails arranging elements such as time, place, and people such that a desired outcome may be achieved via the efforts of others.

Patient, open, listening, and group dialogue are how animators cultivate and strengthen people's social and emotional lives and connections. Animators and communities work collaboratively to eliminate barriers to change by establishing limits (to minimize confusion, turmoil, and waste of community resources) (Palmer, 1998). Inspiring action has characteristics that extend to both individual and systemic transformation. Specifically, it entails imparting knowledge, sparking interest, and motivating others to take part in (additional) community activities. Building, coordinating, and controlling networks, connections, circumstances, and surroundings all work together to achieve this goal in a roundabout way. So, animation may be seen of as allowing for and even encouraging the value creation efforts of others, whether they be individuals, teams, or whole communities. Animatorship, as the study and execution of animation, thus serves as a driving force in the production of wealth.

At present, there is little differentiation between the processes of community and economic development (such as the activities of various external and internal entrepreneurs, gov'ts, philanthropists, and voluntary organizations) and the practices that underpin and drive some these processes as well as the practices of the animators. This matters since animatorship is not yet socially positioned in the public perception, maybe because it has been taken for granted, always there but never acknowledged or stated; or because it is an emergent activity, which is still not a topic of conversation.

### **How Animatorship is Different from Entrepreneurship**

Brokerage (serving as a reliable go-between) between different power structures in order to reorganize existing resources is a classic definition of entrepreneurship (Barth, 1963). Entrepreneurship, it has been suggested, is similar to bricolage, defined as "the recombination of resources to generate value," by Korsgaard, Müller, & Tanvig (2015a) (see Alvarez and Busenitz, 2001).

Animatorship, on the other hand, is less concerned with value creation itself and more with helping others generate value via facilitation, excitement, orchestration, etc. Entrepreneurship involves the

direct creation of value, whereas animatorship involves the production of value only implicitly, through the channel of others who act as entrepreneurs.

Community entrepreneurship, according to Lindgren and Packendorff (2006), is "an eternal careful balance between divergence and belonging," in which the entrepreneur is both a member of and a stranger to the group they are trying to influence. Entrepreneurship in the community might also entail acting as an animator. Research results on entrepreneurship, especially community entrepreneurship, benefit greatly from the analytical clarity provided by the recognition of animatorship as a separate category. In this way, animatorial identity may influence the actions of business owners (Alsos, Clausen & Hytti, 2016).

### **Conceptual Framework and Premise for Comparison**

By drawing a line between (community) action that may give birth to entrepreneurship and what can be considered entrepreneurship proper, which yields actual advantages, the idea of animatorship provides analytical clarity (in this case, for a community).

The thesis highlights the idea that everyone has the power to inspire others to take risks, even if they do not consider themselves to be entrepreneurs. The same might be said about animators. An in-depth case study of a communal gardening initiative in an impoverished region of Sweden is provided by Berglund, Gaddefors, & Lindgren (2016). They illustrate the significance of the procedures (in situating animatorship), such as:

1. Incorporating innovation while maintaining (and improving) tradition
2. Being an outcast who affirms certain established concepts while introducing new ones.
3. Possessing both foresight and organizational efficiency; inspiring some people in the neighborhood while infuriating others; live in the now while planning for the future: People's perspectives shifted when they were startled, captivated, inspired, or otherwise "touched," allowing them to take in the "there" that had previously been overlooked.
4. People's customs and history.

As a result, when people rediscover and value a certain area, they often start businesses there in ways that are unconventional but ultimately beneficial to the community. In this example, animatorship—defined here as a renewed appreciation of place—comes first, and entrepreneurship—defined here as a procedure or collection of activities for re-establishing oneself in that location—comes second. Changes in a location are the result of a mix of ongoing activity and concerted effort. Animatorship's importance in community development may be seen in these and similar cases, where it provides analytical clarity.

Animatorship functions by motivating people to take action, whereas community organizing does it via direct action. Engler and Engler (2016) differentiate between this kind of conventional organizing, which they term "structure-based," and what they call "momentum-driven" campaigning, which entails energizing big groups of people. Again, in a broad variety of settings, a difference is drawn between the act of organizing and the motivation that drives more people to join the movement.

The key difference between animators and entrepreneurs seems to be that animators facilitate the creation of value for others but do not necessarily create value themselves. Given the multifaceted nature of value creation, drawing a clear line between the two may be challenging in practice. While the former produce value and profit for themselves, the latter create systemic reform from

which others may gain. This is analogous to the contrast between individual and institutional entrepreneurs.

### **Animation Pathways**

While the constant pursuit of profit creates "leading" and "lagging" areas, which shift with the demands of labor and commodity markets, depletion is primarily the product of capitalism's uneven growth (Harvey 1985; Smith, 1990; Terluin, 2003). Some of the results of exhaustion are:

- i. Reduced population (mostly as a result of youth emigration)
- ii. Damage to vital infrastructure (schools, shops, etc.),
- iii. a deteriorating setting
- iv. A diminished capacity to feel safe. Experience with such depleting effects may reduce place bonds but they will not go entirely.

Johnstone & Lionais (2004) provide insightful case studies of three deprived communities in which animators developed novel organizational structures to mobilize local resources. Here, animatorship begins with a desired future for a revitalized or depleted community (especially on a regional or national scale), with a focus on economic growth, job creation, decent housing, and other social and cultural amenities. The animator then begins the negotiating process to bring together those who share this vision (even those from outside the community) and can contribute significantly to making it a reality. This forms a group responsible for finding the means to put the vision into action (Johnstone and Lionais, 2004).

By "identifying and gaining access to new sources of capital; tapping into the significant value-added contributions of volunteers; and modifying the business structure to ensure pursuit of community benefit over personal gain," these animators act as entrepreneurs (Johnstone and Lionais call them "community business entrepreneurs") (Johnstone and Lionais, 2004). They care deeply about the character and identity of the community as a whole, seeing "business" as a social and political tool rather than an aim in itself. Although these studies have value, they miss the nuanced distinction between animation and genuine entrepreneurial activity (novel combinations of resources). Our study provides a solution to this problem.

Animators' drive seems to stem from a variety of distinct factors, including their own (psycho-social) make-up, their immediate surroundings, and their professional history. This is likely due to the diverse nature of the responders (including parish councillor, management consultant as well as a research worker). The majority of respondents identified as consultants, mentors, or community activists; they were not aware with the word "animator" prior to our introduction of it; nonetheless, we argue that this is precisely what they are, since they inspire others to bring about community regeneration. Bricolage (orchestrating various existing resources, particularly relational resources, to address new challenges) and brokerage are shared by those who are interested with producing social value. Individuals who were recognized as animators often held prominent positions in the community, had extensive networks, and were well regarded because of their ability to galvanize support for positive economic and social change. Retired businesspeople and entrepreneurs who were involved in the community and held seats on the community council were among the animators.

## **Results of Animators Practices in Rural Area**

The time it takes to see a concept through to completion might be rather lengthy. Because of time constraints, typical approaches to business consulting and advising are less likely to be as effective as animatorship in this setting. One responder said, "Their skill sets are much like those of an entrepreneur," in reference to the animators they worked with. I believe they have a plan, are dedicated, and can rally support. "While they do not use the phrase, they comprehend and instinctively implement bricolage, building something from frequently very little," said another observer. "The main thing is to discover shared causes that can be owned by the group of people that are interested and not pushed onto them," asserted another reply.

Community education was facilitated not just legally, via management committees and paid brokers, but also informally, through word of mouth and personal connections. The importance of village council networks was emphasized. Certainly, there is room for improvement in the quality of these community-based networks of mutual aid. It was also noted that churches were an underutilized resource for rural community development and education.

Brokers like animators can only recommend what has been successful in their own areas. It's obvious that there isn't a single solution that works for everyone. In certain places, political factors will prevent positive change from occurring. A skilled animator knows how to muster certain assets to dampen unfavorable elements. Working with established animators, providing guidance to aspiring animators and businesses, and facilitating easier access to necessary resources all fall under the umbrella of animatorship. The management task is a complex combination of bricolage and brokerage, and it includes traditional management practices like managing volunteers. However, this is not the usual kind of management because these relationships also include their own connections with local residents (both personally and collectively) and the relations between both the community in its entirety and the world outside the community. Nonetheless, the dynamics of specific communities and the depth of links within those groups are crucial factors to consider when evaluating success. The right community infrastructure may help even if it seems like a community is doing everything wrong (theoretically) compared to conventional wisdom.

Of the many similar ideas, community entrepreneurship stands out as most distinct from animation. We have shown convincingly that the present conceptualizations of community entrepreneurship fall short of accurately explaining the phenomena of animation. Both the animator and the entrepreneur are held up as examples of virtue in entrepreneurial animation. We contend that while our respondents were animating, they were also participating in a kind of phronesis, or practical knowledge about the mundane but essential aspects of community service (Flyvbjerg, 2002; MacIntyre, 1985). Consequently, entrepreneurial animation is similar to the processes of becoming aware in that it needs experience and skill (Berglund & Johansson, 2007). To return to the literature and the discussion of animatorship possibly having contradictory impact, replenishing the community in some ways while depleting it in others (Johnstone and Lionais, 2004). Animators rely on and energize preexisting systems, resources, and knowledge. Although they do "manage," their acts subtly criticize conventional management and entrepreneurship by arguing that organizations should exist to serve their communities rather than use their power to impose their vision on others or siphon off their resources. Animators help rural communities by increasing their knowledge, skills, and abilities; encouraging them to fill service gaps; connecting

them to resources; establishing community or social enterprises to bolster service delivery; boosting incomes; and facilitating a better understanding of rural communities' needs among support agencies and funders.

Animators seem to have an innate ability to map local business offering, which is necessary since many publicly financed initiatives overlap with the other providers in the community. Since animatorship involves space, time, and context, animators need to be very careful about where and when they introduce new ideas. The literature on business has covered these topics, but not from a particularly animated standpoint. We hypothesize that fostering an entrepreneurial spirit is necessary for local growth in rural regions, but know from experience that this is not sufficient on its own. It's easy to get lost in the weeds while discussing community entrepreneurship since, improperly applied, it may lead one to confuse the process of creating value for oneself with that of creating value for others (i.e., animatorship). Hence, by adding the idea of animatorship, our knowledge of problems related to entrepreneurship for rural development is enhanced and clarified.

Further research is needed to fully understand the connections between animatorship, entrepreneurship, and related ideas. Many caveats with the research are acknowledged. The limited size of our sample population, which threatens the generalizability of our results but does not diminish their practical significance.

The theory of animation is still in its infancy, and more research is needed into the processes by which animation makes entrepreneurial-driven rural development possible.

Further research is needed on regional and cultural differences. This will be investigated more in the future. We recognize that the problem of external validity may have been influenced by the narrow geographical breadth.

The goal of animatorship is to build and empower communities by animating individuals of those communities who voluntarily participate in the procedures of animatorship to attain mutually agreed-upon goals. It always requires joint effort to break down barriers that have stood in the way of progress. The benefits of successful animation include 'catalytic' change, a rise in personal, societal, and community-level social and political capital, novel combinations of social value, and value from an economic standpoint. Active processes like building capacity, engagement, empowering, empowerment, facilitation, inspiration, moderation, mobilization, negotiating, orchestrating, involvement, and stimulating are deployed in the service of community interests, complementing more traditional forms of stock broker, bricolage, mentoring, and management. This deeper processual knowledge justifies the investigation of the phenomena.

### **Conclusion**

Empirical findings validate the value of animatorship as a concept and a methodology. We've argued that the concept of animatorship and the ways in which it promotes business and development in communities isn't given enough attention in the literature or by policymakers. In the end, we think that our study's major value is an illustration of how animators encourage and prod others to be entrepreneurial. More insight into entrepreneurship as a societal phenomena is provided as well. This work's strength is in its identification of a kind of behavior crucial to entrepreneurship, one that we have seen firsthand in the context of rural areas but which has not been well represented by previous research. This research presents a novel theory that provides an

explanation for a hitherto unexamined phenomenon. In addition, this research fills a need for understanding the relationship between entrepreneurship and its environment (Gaddefors and Anderson, 2017).

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