

Abstract

Between Activism and Escapism:

The Significance of the Arts and Humanities in a World of Crises

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Slow Movements: Learning Sustainability from Activist Culture and Artist Action

Activist research is often understood as research that aims for societal change (e.g. Ramstedt & Välimäki 2025). As such, it is rooted to the histories and various forms of social and environmental justice, intellectual activism, societal participation, as well as ethical pursuing. An important part of activist research is a collective knowledge production, which presumes knowledge as being constructed in reciprocal relationship with the world, where researcher is participating, observing, and learning from “the field”.

In this presentation, I will discuss what I have learned from contemporary social movements, and namely Extinction Rebellion Finland (XRF, *Elokapina*) while researching their music culture as a tool of activism. In the presentation, I will reflect the ethical dimensions of slow activism as well as social, and emotional sustainability in relation to the culture of the movement and contemporary academic life. I will pay attention particularly to the culture of care of XRF, which is reflected, for instance, in the principles of regenerative culture and affective organization (Jokela, Kettunen & Luhtakallio 2024). While the previous research has identified the culture of care particularly challenging culture of “high standards”, it serves as a lens through which academic culture and its affective “apocatopias” (a hybrid of utopia and dystopia) can be discussed (Ylijoki and others 2024).

The presentation is part of an on-going research project *Sounds for Change: Music as a Means of Contention in the Environmental Movement in Finland in the 21st Century* (p.i. Sini Mononen, Academy of Finland 9/2024 – 8/2028).

Literature:

Jokela, Maija, Jenni Kettunen, and Eeva Luhtakallio. “Reluctant Rebels: The New Climate Movement and the Individual Activists.” In *Youth Participation and Democracy: Cultures of Doing Society*, edited by Eeva Luhtakallio & Veikko Eranti, 138–158. Bristol University Press, 2024.

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Ylijoki, Oili-Helena, Johanna Hokka, Elisa Kurtti, Pia Olsson & Tiina Suopajarvi (eds.) *Tiede ja tunteet: tutkimustyön arki ja arvot kilpailuyliopistossa*. Gaudeamus, 2024.