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Trespassing entrepreneurship
– bridging business and
community development

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Abstract: The prime objective of this article is to explore the phenomenon of ‘trespassing entrepreneurship’, i.e. combined business and community entrepreneurship. The purpose is to explore two questions: *How do ‘trespassing entrepreneurs’ combine business and community enterprise? Why do entrepreneurs engage themselves in both business and community development?* A sample of four trespassing entrepreneurs has been interviewed and observed in a series of research projects. We found that it was a heterogeneous category in many aspects, but they all combined business and as community entrepreneurship by ‘dragging’ local authorities into entrepreneurial activities in order to develop the community.

Acting on both arenas might be a more common phenomenon in the future, since management and entrepreneurship on different arenas have a tendency to become more alike. However, trespassing entrepreneurship is probably mostly a rural or small town phenomenon, since the links between business and community development are more obvious in such settings. Thus, demographic conditions, rather than individual traits, seem to determine the frequency of trespassing entrepreneurship. The notion of trespassing entrepreneurs demonstrates that distinctly different communities of practice, societal sectors or other terms for opposite elements can be united, at least partly, in single individuals.

Keywords: trespassing entrepreneurship, business, community, rural

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INTRODUCTION

Classic entrepreneurship literature defines enterprise and entrepreneurs as solely business or even profit oriented, e.g. Paul Burns who wrote: 'Entrepreneurs use innovation to exploit or create change and opportunity for the purpose of making profit' (Burns 2001: 7). However, there is also a competing, broader approach that regards business-type entrepreneurialism as just one context in which people act in 'enterprising' ways. Thus, enterprise and entrepreneurship is about entrepreneurial attitudes and skills, i.e. innovating to create change and opportunity, in whatever sphere of life (Bridge et al 2003: 32). From this perspective, entrepreneurship is both an extensive and a comprehensive phenomenon. One way to deal with this complexity is to describe it in different dimensions, thus creating "maps" containing many sorts of separate or even contradicting entrepreneurship (see e.g. Smith 1967, Miner et al 1991, Johannisson et al 2003). As a result, entrepreneurship tends to be presented in different boxes covering distinct types of entrepreneurship. Another result of the naming and framing might be that we become puzzled when we 'discover' entrepreneurship that do not fit into the schemes, thus treating it as either non-existent or examples of new categories of entrepreneurship, i.e. arguments for a re-mapping process.

In this article I argue for a 'new' type of entrepreneurship, i.e. entrepreneurs constantly crossing the border between the economic sphere of business development and the social sphere of community development, thus activating themselves in private, public and civic organisations. Descriptions of such 'trespassing entrepreneurship' seem rare in the entrepreneurship literature.

One possible candidate presenting the idea of trespassing entrepreneurship is the notion of 'institutional entrepreneurship' (Eisenstadt 1980, 1995). Colomy (1998) regards it as a solution to the problem of explaining institutional change in neofunctional and neoinstitutional theories, i.e. the kind of action that triggers large scale change. Institutional entrepreneurs should not be intermixed with the notion of 'moral entrepreneurs' (Becker et al 1963), since they are obsessed with a will to change the world in one way or another, using all kinds of methods to reach their goals, including the use of coercive, manipulative or persuasive techniques (Eisenstadt 1995: 190). However, such large scale change does not seem to cover combinations of entrepreneurship in different spheres of life, though it probably affects both business and community conditions. Rather, it is a term for groups and individuals organising around a project who adopt leadership roles in episodes of institution building (Colomy & Rhoades 1994).

Quite a few types of entrepreneurship oriented towards changes in the community or social sphere have been presented in the literature. One of these is 'social entrepreneurship' (e.g. Leadbeater 1997) describing entrepreneurship applied in the social field and obviously not a combining type of entrepreneurship. Another category is 'community entrepreneurship' (e.g. Lotz 1989, Johannisson & Nilsson 1989, Boyett 1995, Johannisson 1990, de Bruin 1998, Haugh & Pardy 1999, Johannisson et al 2002, Dutton 2004) describing local venturing processes by entrepreneurs in order to develop communities. Thus, the community entrepreneurship literature separates entrepreneurship in a community context from entrepreneurship in a firm or business context. As Dutton (2004), in his working definition of community entrepreneurship, stated: 'Community entrepreneurship involves the creation, co-

ordination and exploitation of local resources to improve the social and economic well being of the locality by positively affecting the volume of local mainstream entrepreneurial activity’.

A third community oriented entrepreneurship is “civic entrepreneurship”, which seems to be used as a broader term for all kinds of people, professions and sectors within a society that contribute to the welfare of the community (Henton et al 1997). However, these civic entrepreneurs act as *either* business people in a firm context *or* as local government representatives in a traditional business support function, thus not combining two types of entrepreneurship. Rather, it strengthens the calculative ‘civic matters’ arguments (e.g. Putnam 1993; Kilkeny et al 1999; Putnam 2000) stating that mutual support and trust between business and community create more successful business and wealthier communities. A better candidate for trespassing entrepreneurship is ‘cultural entrepreneurship’, acting in the field of culture. According to Spilling (1991), ‘cultural entrepreneurs’ need to link the economic and social spheres of life, since cultural expressions in the experience economy calls for broad alliances in the community. If so, are cultural entrepreneurs the only category of entrepreneurship striving for combining business and community development?

Since entrepreneurship is seen as a prerequisite for business and regional renewal, there are strong links between entrepreneurship and the on-going discourse of regional development, cluster and innovation system development. The Triple Helix model (Etzkowitz & Leydersdorff 2000), i.e. close co-operation between industry, university and government, have been used as a model for regional development, especially in organising regional innovation systems. Similar to the entrepreneurship literature, individuals and organisations are presupposed to belong to – and act from – one sector only. Since actors from industry, government and university act in different but complementary ‘communities of practice’ (Brown & Duguid 2000), they ought to co-operate according to the model, a tough challenge as it seems (Trägårdh, 2004).

To conclude, the idea that community and business are fundamentally different – and even contradictory – activities has deep and strong roots in classic sociology. One might think of Ferdinand Tönnies’ contradictory terms ‘*gemeinschaft*’ and ‘*gesellschaft*’ (Tönnies 1887/1957) or Emile Durkheim’s ‘mechanical solidarity’ in the feudal peasant society versus ‘organic solidarity’ in the industrialised, modern society (Durkheim 1964). This is true for entrepreneurship literature as well. Even when broad definitions have been used, entrepreneurs seem to be oriented towards either the business sector in order to create new business opportunities, the public sector or the civic society sector in order to create new welfare infrastructures. Quite often collaboration between entrepreneurs are wanted (e.g. Etzkowitz & Leydersdorff 2000) or even described (e.g. Henton et al 1997), but we lack examples of entrepreneurs that *simultaneously* develop enterprises in both private, civic society and public sector.

The purpose of the article is to explore two questions: *How do ‘trespassing entrepreneurs’ combine business and community enterprise?* But we also tentatively want to answer the question *why some entrepreneurs engage themselves in both business and community development.* The phenomenon is illustrated with descriptions of four trespassing entrepreneurs acting from four types of enterprise – Mr Music, Mr Design, Mrs Handicraft and Mr Retail. These individuals were familiar to us from earlier research projects. The original research projects were not designed to explore the idea of trespassing entrepreneurship, each of them had their own purpose and logic¹. However, when comparing different research

¹ For example, some studies investigated how an industrialised rural district coped with industrial down-sizing, another research project focused on organising events and a third project dealt with community branding.

projects we found a pattern – some entrepreneurs crossed the border between business and community development. As a result of this “discovery’, we made complementary interviews and observations focusing on how they acted as entrepreneurial managers and community developers. Since we studied the entrepreneurs in earlier studies as well, the total amount of data is quite comprehensive. The interviews were taped and transcribed; older interviews and research reports connected to the entrepreneurs were re-read from the point of view of the research questions above.

TRESPASSING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT WORK

Entrepreneurship has traditionally been regarded as an individual and private business phenomenon among SME:s. However, as discussed above, such a narrow definition has been questioned since there is a demand for entrepreneurship in all kinds of organisations. Mr Design and Mr Retail were both classic examples of the SME entrepreneur; young founders of fast growing companies. *Mr Design* was the head of a strategic marketing bureau and had been listed as one of the most influential marketing individuals in Sweden. *Mr Retail* was the owner of a company that bought and sold quality clothes to low prices. *Mr Music* was also a young SME entrepreneur, but he acted more as a member of an entrepreneurial team in the music business. The team had established a national music centre including events, festivals, educations, marketing companies etc. *Mrs Handicraft* was a middle-aged director of a university college specialised in handicraft educations and organised in the public sector. She was the leading member of a team that had established the school at the national and international handicraft education scene. Thus, we notice that this sample of trespassing entrepreneurs represented both private and public sector, young and middle-aged people, single and team entrepreneurship and different service and knowledge industries.

The trespassing entrepreneurs were known as successful entrepreneurs within their industries. But they also acted as entrepreneurs in the communities they were part of. The platform for acting as community entrepreneurs was their engagement as business entrepreneurs, but they did not act simply in order to create better business opportunities. Rather, business and community development were regarded as both separate and connected fields of action. In the next section, we present a) the background of the trespassing entrepreneurs, b) how they acted as innovators within their business fields, c) how they acted as community entrepreneurs and finally d) how they combined business and community entrepreneurship by acting in private business, public and civic organisations.

The background of trespassing entrepreneurs

The trespassing entrepreneurs represented different backgrounds. *Mr Design* was a son of school teachers without entrepreneurial traditions who immigrated to Sweden in the 1970’ies. Later he became the chairman of the students’ association at the local university and took the initiative to build a house for student activities. As an entrepreneurial chairman he developed a lot of relations vis-à-vis the university, the local government and local business. He discovered that he was a good communicator and after a degree in business administration he started an advertising agency. Then he got a job at a large, full scale advertising agency, a bureau that he later on bought and developed to a strategic marketing consultant bureau.

Mr Retail was brought up in a sports oriented working class family in a small town and never went on to higher education. As a young boy he started to buy and sell things on a small scale. As an active athlete in different sports he also engaged himself in sport clubs. After upper secondary school he opened a small shop, buying surplus clothes from mail-order-firms in the region and then selling them cheap to local customers. After a learning period as a production development manager in a successful Swedish clothing trade – he left the firm since he was denied becoming a partner – he started a shop in a rural community, well known for its traditions in producing and selling clothes. The business has expanded since the start and has become the dominating trade firm in the local community.

Mr Music also grew up in a working class family in a rural community. In secondary school he started school papers, school dances and other activities for young people. In upper secondary school he started an association in order to get resources for a youth club where young people could play rock'n roll music. Then he started a special section for girls in the local football club and trained the girl football team. In the middle 1980'ies he and his friends started a national rock festival, a repetitive summer project that grew for each year. The festival concept became a starting point in establishing 'Rock City', a business concept containing a lot of business activities and functioning as a new vision for the local community.

Mrs Handicraft was brought up in a larger city, a daughter to a head master and liberal parliament member as a mother and a sea captain and ombudsman as a father. At home she became familiar with politics and learned to cope with power expressions and diverse opinions. As she was engaged in social matters – she belonged to the 1968 left wing student generation – she wanted to become a student of social studies and later a trained social worker, but since she had dyslexia she became a nurse instead. After a few years as a nurse she joined the Peace Corps in Ethiopia for two years and learned more about injustice, racism and different cultural traditions, but also that it is possible to influence local conditions by bottom-up initiatives. Back home she started to teach at nurse schools and later became a school leader. When a handicraft school situated in a rural area wanted a leader with entrepreneurial ambitions she applied for the job and got it, in spite of her lacking knowledge and experience in advanced handicraft. During her period as director, the school developed to a national and international centre for handicraft educations on a university level.

As shown, both working class and middle class, as well as rural and city, background were represented among the entrepreneurs. None of them came from entrepreneurial families. As usual, social heritage is a strong predictor for higher studies – the entrepreneurs with working class background never attended university. All of them took independent initiatives when they were young, working class entrepreneurs even when they were school kids. A striking feature is that they already as youngsters played leading roles in community matters, e.g. they were elected representatives or volunteered for social reasons. But at the same time they started – or prepared for starting – business of their own.

Building business as platforms for trespassing entrepreneurship

The entrepreneurs had built up enterprises resulting in strong brand names, expanding organisations and economic growth. Though they all were skilful professionals, they had different attitudes towards the business they lead. *Mr Design* and *Mr Retail* regarded themselves as strongly attached to the industry they were involved in; they identified themselves as advanced professionals of the designing/retailing business communities. As such, they wanted to play an active role in the industry development. For example, *Mr Design*

developed his bureau from a firm with loyal and obeying employees selling commercials to an organisation with independent and capable co-workers communicating strategic marketing knowledge. It operated on a global market with customers all over the world, although it was situated in a middle-sized Swedish city. Since the customers regarded design as limited to the form of the products, Mr Design decided that the firm should educate its customers in design knowledge with free seminars and lectures. Since he bought the bureau it had doubled its size. *Mr Retail* developed his enterprise from a simple business idea – quality clothes for less than half of the normal prize – to a business with a strong brand name, well known across the region. The process took years taking many small steps, e.g. quality improvement, better selections, personnel policy, defining of core values, focus on satisfied customers etc. The business attracts customers from a large region, though it is situated far out on the countryside. The firm is steadily expanding economically, hiring more employees and finding new customer segments.

Mr Music regarded rock music business mainly as a way to develop the community. But such a detached view did not hinder entrepreneurial initiatives vis-à-vis business. The short story version of the development of the rock festival and the establishment of Rock City has already been told. In the 1990'ies, the festival had established itself as the dominating rock festival in Sweden, going on 3-6 days every June and visited by about 25.000 people. The festival became a platform in establishing the community as a Scandinavian rock music centre. 'Rock City' was created as a brand name. Rock City inhabits, e.g. a government supported "industrial development centre" in rock music, university educations in music engineering and music management, small companies linked to music, e.g. studios for rock rehearsals and recording, rock stages, restaurant, rock music marketing etc. Mr Music and his fellow managers also acted as consultants in festival management and in renewing industrial municipals. The total business is now considered to be the prime development vehicle in the community.

Mrs Handicraft had an even greater distance towards the type of business she was managing, though she was interested in handicraft in general. She was neither an academic nor a handicraft scholar, which initially made her feel very uncomfortable in contacts with professionals. But she found out that finally her leadership and entrepreneurial talents was regarded as more valuable than professional skills in her role as headmistress. She led the upgrading of the education to a university level balancing between handicraft skills and understanding of arts. She got recourse to create the most advanced forge education in Sweden. She also developed collaboration with university colleges in the region and integrated a private animation company in the school area which might lead to animation educations in the future. The handicraft centre is now considered as the most promising enterprise in the community.

To conclude, they acted as true entrepreneurs in renewing their enterprises. The successful enterprise functioned as a platform for acting in other types of organisations. But in order to label them as trespassing entrepreneurs we have to demonstrate how they acted as community entrepreneurs as well.

Acting as community entrepreneurs

How did the trespassing entrepreneurs act as community entrepreneurs? The methods varied. *Mr Retail* spent one day a week in meetings and small talk with business and community people in order to strengthen the community in different aspects, e.g. creating a trade

association that functioned as a support group and lobby organisation vis-à-vis local, regional and central government. The trade association was partly used as a business network for mutual help, e.g. marketing and organising the community as a trade centre, but it had a much broader agenda, e.g. lobbying for better roads and telecommunications in the community, better sports facilities and better life conditions in general. *Mr Music* overall objective was to make the community an attractive place to live in – the important thing was to develop the “best community in the world” so he and other community members could stay there and make a good living. As described earlier, already in school he organised social activities for young people. He developed these ideas further later on, e.g. helping the community in organising a music school and university courses in music management. For a period he joined the municipal council but found himself trapped in party politics and preferred to act as a ‘free agent’ from his business platform. In order to make the community well known, he and his colleagues named the rock festival after the name of the community. Also, Rock City improved the image of the community. Mr Music was constantly occupied with ideas how to make the community a living and prosperous place, e.g. by ‘educating’ municipal officials in thinking entrepreneurial, by starting new public or private enterprises in the community or by exporting ideas made in the community to other places.

Mrs Handicraft and her colleagues organised a ‘knowledge park’, an ‘incubator’ for developing handicraft business ideas and an education in entrepreneurship, giving the students better possibilities to stay in the neighbourhood and start a handicraft business. She invited animation companies to establish themselves in the school area and started education in animation and thus created job opportunities. By constantly importing and exporting people and ideas to the community, the static region got dynamic impulses. She also welcomed the local population to use the facilities of the school, e.g. kept the library open to public service, invited local associations as Lions or retired peoples’ association to the school, arranged art exhibitions for the pupils in the local schools, discussed building a theatre and a cinema with a local non-government organisation and a learning centre with local authorities. Parliament members from the region were influenced in order to get central government support for all kinds of recourses to the region. As a result, local government regarded the school as one of few hopes in a community dominated by closing-downs of industrial plants and unemployment. *Mr Design* had – according to a ranking marketing magazine – ‘put the community on the map’ as a meeting place for design. During three years, the company had arranged – and paid for – an internationally recognised event which was rapidly evolving to a festival with seminars, shows and possibilities for design people from all over the world to get to know each other. Besides, Mr Design engaged himself in steering committees in the local university, developed marketing for the regional theatre and in developing the strategy of the local government.

To summarise, the entrepreneurs acted actively as community developers in different ways, e.g. creating trade associations as arenas for community development, platforms for new industries or events that made the community well known as knowledge centres in a certain area. They also were speaking partners to local politicians and civil servants how to develop the communities and worked actively to make the community an attractive brand name. The next question is to reflect on how these “trespassing’ entrepreneurs combined and bridged enterprises in sectors that are usually regarded as fundamentally different.

Combining business and community entrepreneurship

Our data shows four attitudes in balancing between business and community commitment. In one extreme we have Mr Retail who basically regarded *the community as a source for business success*. Establishing the business in the community was basically built on rational business arguments, i.e. strong historic traditions, deep knowledge and large network in the industry. In the other extreme we have Mr Music who basically regarded *the business as a source for community success*. Here we have the local entrepreneur who had been faithful to the community all his life and planned to be so for the rest of his life. He saw business and community development as totally intertwined. In between those extremes we have the entrepreneur that regards *community development as a duty*, a part of her task. For Mrs Handicraft it was a regional task to take part in developing the region. Another entrepreneur in between the extremes regarded the local *community as a partner for mutual help*. The basic attitude of Mr Design was a will to be faithful and helpful to the local community, but expected the community to “pay back’ in some sense. In short, balancing between business and community entrepreneurship meant different things. Thus, in one extreme, community development was regarded as the ultimate objective and business development was the main tool to reach that goal, in the other extreme it was the other way around. In both cases, they needed to act as both business and community entrepreneurs.

Our examples of trespassing entrepreneurship also combined business and community in another way, i.e. by connecting the brand name of the enterprise they were in charge of and the brand name of the community they lived in, thus increasing the attractiveness of the community. If possible, they acted entrepreneurial by *renewing old local traditions*, much in the same way as Anderson (2000) reported from the Scottish Highlands where entrepreneurs moved in and by restoring old castles or vessels started modern business. In the same way, Mr Retail moved into a community with long traditions in producing and selling clothes. He created a modern retail business and took initiatives to renew the community by creating a community image – the fashion centre with historic traditions in quality production of clothes. Mrs Handicraft did the same but in another context, i.e. created a centre in educating and producing handicraft in a community with handicraft traditions. However, if the community lacked suitable local traditions the entrepreneurs *invented new local traditions*. Mr Music lived in a community where the dominating industry had its prime time in the past. He and his colleagues discovered that their hobby could be transformed to business. Since rock music is a relatively new phenomenon and the festival started in the early 1980’ies, the community was seen as a traditional rock music centre already in the 1990’ies, at least among young people. Mr Design lived in a larger community with a more diverse industry. He personified a new idea what design was all about and established an event that challenged and partly renewed the image of the community. In the fast changing and fashion oriented world of design, repetitive social events are regarded as traditions even quicker than in the rock music industry.

In spite of the fundamental differences between the trespassing entrepreneurs, they had one thing in common – they used their strong enterprise platforms in order to *influence local government people in developing their communities*. Politicians and civil servants did not listen to Mr Music until he and his colleagues had demonstrated business success. Then they started to regard the good business results as a sign – a new world had arrived to the local community and the carriers of that promising world should be listened to. The transformed attitude of the community authorities towards Mr Music and his colleagues – from naughty rock music boys to the future hope of the community – took some years. Nowadays, local

government come to visit Rock City, not for criticising but to get inspiration and proposals how to renew the community. Mrs Handicraft had developed a strong platform as a university dean. The local government listened to her proposals and invested in integrating handicraft and community development. Mr Retail, from his business platform, acted as the strong man in the trade association and linked it to community development issues. Mr Design created the community design event from his platform as a design entrepreneur. Although he had developed relations to the local university and government since he was a student, he was yet not as successful as the others. In spite of the success of the big design event they ignored his proposals.

Thus, one can argue they all combined business and as community entrepreneurship by 'dragging' local authorities into what is normally regarded as local government tasks, namely entrepreneurial activities in order to develop the community.

EXPLAINING TRESPASSING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In this article it has been argued that combining business and community development is a kind of trespassing between two opposite logics – the 'homo oeconomicus' logic of the business world and the 'homo sociologicus' of the community world. However, such a simple dualism is not a very trustworthy one. Both private business and public organisations have to deal with all kinds of organisational subjects and dilemmas (see e.g. Morgan 1986). Furthermore, private and public organisations are becoming more alike each other, especially since public organisations, the main actor in community development, have imported management ideals from the private sector, usually summarised as 'new public management' (Hood, 1995). The isomorphic phenomenon (Powell & DiMaggio 1991) is probably not just a phenomenon within a specific organisational field, but also between different organisational fields. Therefore, acting as entrepreneur simultaneously in both business and community development should be less difficult and maybe more common in the future.

However, obvious illustrations of 'trespassing entrepreneurship' do not seem to be very common. Our investigation implies that trespassing entrepreneurs have a few things in common. One of those things seems to be an ability to communicate accurate and promising images of the future of the community. Regardless if the entrepreneurs renew old or invent new business traditions in the community, they seem to contribute to a positive change of the community image.

Our examples also indicate that trespassing entrepreneurship – just as community entrepreneurship – is a rural or a small town rather than a big city phenomenon. The empirical data in community entrepreneurship studies are usually gathered in rural or peripheral areas – some of them have already been mentioned in this paper (e.g. Haugh et al 1999, Kilkenny et al 1999, Anderson 2000, Johannisson et al 2002). It seems easier for people in rural areas to be aware of the connections between business and community and to simultaneously act on different arenas. The know-who of business people and local government is usually smaller in peripheral than in big city areas – the communities are simply small enough to make it possible for influential people to get to know each other, also on a more personal level. In a classic small town study, Robert Merton (1968) identified two types of influential people at the country-side. 'Locals' had their roots in the area, they were local patriots identifying themselves with "the little world" of the community and building their influence in who they knew in the community. 'Cosmopolitans' had immigrated from - and

were oriented towards – “the big world”, translating global events to local conditions and building their influence in what they knew about big world issues.

Still, the Merton study seems to have some relevance. Mr Retail and Mr Music were classical examples of the “local” influential rooted in the community, local patriots who knew every other influential person in the area. On the other hand we have the cosmopolitan Mrs Handicraft from a major city and with experience from other parts of the world, constantly importing and exporting people – teachers, handicraft experts, business people and pupils from all over Sweden and elsewhere. However, the distinction between ‘local’ and ‘cosmopolitan’ entrepreneur seem to constantly become more blurry. The local entrepreneurs in this study were definitely less local than in the Merton study, instead they were clearly oriented towards events on the global arena, translating international trends into local conditions and even trying to influence the trendsetting. At the same time, cosmopolitan entrepreneurs were deeply involved in local matters and building results on strong relations to other local leaders. Thus, the study support the idea of ‘cosmo-local’ or ‘trans-local’ (Martindale & Hanson, 1969, Steinbock, 2003) entrepreneurs – locally involved and patriotic as well as globally informed and acting as translators between the local community and other communities.

We have already mentioned that trespassing entrepreneurship preferably seem to be a rural or small town phenomenon, acting in communities often in desperate need of renewal. In a small community, energetic business’ entrepreneurs can dominate by either creating a new business or renewing the traditional industry and thus becoming identified with the hopes and strives of the community. Very few entrepreneurs in cities dominate the communities or engage themselves in the development of the communities, simply because the impact is relatively smaller and life is more specialised. Even Mr Design in his middle-sized town of less than 100.000 inhabitants tried and failed to influence local government.

Rural communities in trouble trigger trespassing entrepreneurship

To conclude, how can we explain that some entrepreneurs actively develop business and community simultaneously? Are they unique individuals with an extra potential or are they extremely interested in both business and community development? Our data do not support such a conclusion. Rather, the entrepreneurs seemed to be ordinary people, however bright, energetic and interested in both business and community entrepreneurship. Howard Aldrich argued that entrepreneurship can better be explained by contextual factors since we have no empirical evidence that entrepreneurs have special personal traits (Aldrich, 1999). In our case, all trespassing entrepreneurs had some strong reason to engage themselves in both business and community development as a result of the context they were part of. Two of them can be described as ‘cultural entrepreneurs’ acting in the field of culture – Mr Music and Mrs Handicraft – thus having a direct link between the economic and social spheres of life. According to Spilling (1991) such cultural entrepreneurs usually want to take part in stimulating local economic development. However, the other two trespassing entrepreneurs did not fit into the culture entrepreneurship picture. But as shown above they had other reasons to act in both spheres simultaneously.

Our trespassing entrepreneurs had established themselves in situations and contexts where business and community development were heavily intertwined. Not acting on both arenas simultaneously would mean giving up their entrepreneurial ambitions. They all used strategies to cope with a situation they – for one reason or another – found themselves to be part of.

Simultaneously dealing with business and community matters was a prerequisite – and maybe a prerogative – in that situation.

CONCLUSIONS

In this article we have discussed a combination of business and community entrepreneurship and described it as “trespassing entrepreneurship”. Trespassing entrepreneurs seem especially important in regional development since they both consciously develop the image of the community and create business activities that become well known also outside the region. They develop future-oriented ideas and implement those ideas into a potential development for the region. Thus, trespassing entrepreneurs can play an important role in strengthening collaboration in an industrial clusters or acting as a strong links in triple helix co-operation contexts.

In general, trespassing entrepreneurship seem to be a rural or small-town phenomenon. However, it has a broader range of interest since it demonstrates that distinctly different communities of practice, societal sectors or other terms for opposite elements can be united, at least partly, in single individuals. The Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (1999) wrote that currently dominating political and democratic theories try to separate the private and the public spheres of life. Bauman proposed that those theories instead should focus on the connections and mutual interdependences between the sectors and regard it as a promising and fluid interface. The old Greeks constructed a term for an arena where the public *polis* and the private household, *oikos*, could meet – the *agora*. According to Bauman, the agora played a decisive role in institutionalising a public sphere resting on autonomous citizens and creating a good balance between the two spheres. As an allegory, maybe we should regard trespassing entrepreneurs as good citizens breaking up stiff borders and stimulating constructions of *agoras*, making business enterprises a public matter and public affairs relevant for all citizens.

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