

# Graffiti – For Joy and Confirmation

Motivational aspects, triggering and inhibiting factors,  
and emotional satisfactions in graffiti:

The creative-interactive dimension of vandalism

Anki Nordmarker

Department of Psychology,

2016

---

Avhandling för avläggande av doktorsexamen i psykologi som med vederbörligt tillstånd av samhällsvetenskapliga fakulteten vid Göteborgs universitet kommer att offentligen försvaras fredagen den 2 december 2016, kl. 13:00 i sal F1.

Psykologiska institutionen, Haraldsgatan 1, Göteborg

Opponent: Docent Susanne Strand

Örebro universitet

-----

This thesis is based on the following papers, referred to by roman numerals:

- I. Norlander, T., Nordmarker, A., & Archer, T. (1998). Effects of alcohol and frustration on experimental graffiti. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 39, 201-207. doi:10.1111/1467-9450.00080
- II. Nordmarker, A., Norlander T., & Archer, T. (2000). The effects of alcohol intake and induced frustration upon art vandalism. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 28 (1), 15-28. doi:10.2224/sbp.2000.28.1.15
- III. Nordmarker, A., Hjärthag, F., Perrin-Wallqvist, R., & Archer, T. (2016). The roles of gender and personality factors in vandalism and scrawl-graffiti among Swedish adolescents. *PsyCh Journal* 5, 180-190. doi:10.1002/pchj.133
- IV. Nordmarker, A., Perrin-Wallqvist, R., & Archer, T. (manuscript). Graffiti in adolescence – joy and confirmation. An interview study with young graffitists. *Submitted*



GÖTEBORGS UNIVERSITET

## Abstract

Nordmarker, A. (2016). *Graffiti – For Joy and Confirmation. Motivational aspects, triggering and inhibiting factors, and emotional satisfactions in graffiti: The creative-interactive dimension of vandalism.*

The purpose of the present dissertation is to achieve a deeper understanding about what motivates young people to commit vandalism in general and scrawl-graffiti in particular, and what this propensity provides in the form of satisfaction and/or further motivation. The present thesis consists of two experimental studies, one questionnaire study, and one interview study, of a total of 515 participants (287 male, 219 female, 9 missing gender). The experimental studies show that alcohol and frustration in combination increases the risk for vandalism to occur, and also the degree of vandalism, destructivity and aggression. The questionnaire study demonstrated that impulsiveness presents a significant personality trait related to vandalism in general, as well as to scrawl-graffiti, but whereas vandalism is predicted by non-planning impulsiveness, scrawl-graffiti is predicted by motor impulsiveness. Further, the interview study indicated that there are distinctions between vandalism, graffiti and scrawl, where vandalism is assessed as destructive behavior, often conducted in an affective and destructive mood, while graffiti is interactive and creative, conducted in a creative mood. Scrawl might be destructive or creative, depending on the context, how it expresses itself, and whether or not it is created in a *vandalism mood* or in a *graffiti mood*.

Additionally, The Equity Control Model of Vandalism (Baron & Fisher, 1984) was used as an explanatory model to understand the complexity of vandalism. The model was complemented with two new primary moderators; *Personality traits* and *Emotional state*, and a new dimension of vandalism; *the Creative-Interactive dimension of Vandalism*, and finally resulted in an extended Equity Control Model of Vandalism (e-ECM 2016).

Keywords: vandalism, scrawl, graffiti, personality traits, frustration, motivation, joy, flow, satisfaction, the extended Equity Control Model of Vandalism (e-ECM 2016)

---

Anki Nordmarker, Department of Psychology, Karlstad University,  
SE 651 88 Karlstad, Sweden. Phone: +46(0)54-700 10 00  
E-mail: [Anki.Nordmarker@kau.se](mailto:Anki.Nordmarker@kau.se)

ISSN: 1101-718x Avhandling/Göteborgs universitet, Psykologiska inst.  
ISRN GU/PSYK/AVH --349 –SE  
ISBN: 978-91-628-9997-4 (PDF)  
ISBN: 978-91-628-9998-1 (Print)