

# Bortom scenen

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En sociologisk studie av frilansande skådespelares villkor

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# Abstract

Title: Beyond the stage: a sociological study about the conditions of freelance actors

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The study investigates the experience of freelancing and unemployment among freelance actors and the strategies they pursue in order to find employment in their profession. Theoretical approaches addressing issues of precarity form the inspiration for the multidimensional theoretical framework of the study.

The empirical material is constituted by qualitative semi-structured interviews that have been conducted with eleven freelance actors. One main argument that emerges from the material concerns the relevance of a multidimensional understanding of the freelance experience. The three dimensions of interest can be referred to as economic, symbolic and emotional. These dimensions are analytically separated, but they overlap empirically.

The analysis reveals that unemployment is related to the reduction of economic and social capital and experiences of stigmatization at different levels. Unemployment as experience also needs to be problematized with regard to freelance actors since they are not necessarily unemployed in a traditional sense. The continuous entertainment of artistic skills facilitates employment opportunities, but can also be understood in relation to creative desire. Further on, the main strategy to cope with an insecure position on the labour market and to obtain employment is to become visible to employers. However, the lack of material resources and the lack of recognition for the exercise of their profession are the two main causes for the frequent expressions of anger in the material. Feelings of anger generate acts of resistance and are a potential motor for social change of these conditions. Finally power relations with regard to gender are significant in the sense that female actors experience greater insecurity on the labour market and less recognition generally, than their male colleagues. The overall conclusion that can be drawn from the analysis is that the freelance experience among actors involves conditions like competition, subordination and insecurity, but also the presence of creative desire, resistance and solidarity.

**Keywords: Freelance actors, gender, unemployment, stigma, visibility, anger**