



STRÖMSTAD AKADEMI

Nordiskt institut för avancerade studier

NEWSLETTER JANUARI 2021

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Anders Gustavsson: Editor's corner

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Anders Gustavsson: Editor's Corner

Surgeon and Chairman of the Board Peter Fritzell reports on important events in Strömstad Academy.

Vice-Chancellor and Information System Scientist Per Flensburg provides various tips on the IT front. DuckDuckGo can be used besides Google.

January's cronicle in Strömstads Tidning on 23 January was written by **Researcher within Tehnics and Social change Lars Ingelstam**. He analyzed the modern "system society". In a debate article in Dagens Arena on 11 January, he discussed the issue of growth as a societal goal.

<https://www.dagensarena.se/essa/tillvaxt-ett-egendomligt-samhallsmal/>

Proposals for new chronicles in Strömstads Tidning should be sent to **Mariana Back** mariana.back@tekniskamuseet.se.

Editor: Anders Gustavsson
Layout: Per Flensburg

Economist John Fletcher continues his article series with the theme "What Happens to Our Welfare?" This time the theme is "Talking about the future".

Business Economist Rune Wigblad comments on, and rejects in Dagens Arena on 28 January, the consulting company Ramböll's final report "Fast land transports". <https://www.dagensarena.se/essa/oserios-rapport-om-snabba-transporter/>

Physicist Lars Broman presents a book about pioneers in solar energy research.

[ISES SWC50_The_Century_of_Solar_Final_Interactive.pdf](#)

Medical researchers and spouses Christina and Jan Hultman reflect in poetry form on the Swedish corona strategy.

Educator Åsa Morberg discusses current reforms of teacher education.

Tourism researcher Anders Steene pointed out in a debate article in Göteborgs-Posten on 12 January the difficult crisis of the tourism industry as a result of the corona pandemic. This must lead to further government support measures at least until the summer of 2022.

https://www.gp.se/debatt/turistbranschens-sv%C3%A5ra-kris-kr%C3%A4ver-f%C3%B6rl%C3%A4ngda-st%C3%B6d%C3%A5tg%C3%A4rder-1.39604264?utm_campaign=gp_nl_20210112&utm_medium=email&utm_source=rule

Ethnologist Anders Gustavsson has published the article Nineteenth Century Cholera Epidemics in Sweden from a Popular Perspective in ARV. Nordic Yearbook of Folklore 2020 s. 119-150. <http://gustavadolfsakademien.se/tidskrifter/tidskrift/aryv>. He has also published the book Women and Men in Fishing Communities on the Swedish North-West coast ISBN 978-91-86607-04-4 at the Publishing House of Strömstad Academy.

Psychologist Kajsa Brundin has reviewed **Psychologist Gudrun Olsson's** book 'I metaforernas landskap – Om livet, döden och kärleken', 2020.

<http://www.kajsabrundin.se/i-metaforernas-landskap-Recension.pdf>

Pediatrician Gudmund Bergqvist is responsible for the pre-publication series, PPS.

I want to urge a previous call for all members to verify and complete their personal information on the Academy website. Also try to recruit new members to the Academy, not least young scholars. Please, send suggestions to: lars.broman@stromstadakademi.se

I wish new contributions to the February issue 2021 of the Newsletter sent to my e-mail address with deadline on 24 February 2021: anders.gustavsson@ikos.uio.no. Send short articles, opinion articles and/or reviews of new scientific literature. Swedish contributions should have an English translation.

Please, also send contributions to the Academy's publication series Acta Academiae Stromstadiensis, AAS, and the video series to the e-mail address: gudmundbergqvist@hotmail.com

Chairman's report

Colleagues in Strömstad Academy,

Globally, focus remains on Covid-19, but the pandemic has also taught us to communicate and work together in a different and creative way. And the vaccine that is underway gives us hope.

The Academy's work during January has, as every January, been on a low level, but has now started again during week 3. For example, we have conducted a Webinar with highly relevant topics. On 27 January, "Moral conflicts" (in Swedish 'deep value conflicts') were presented, initiated by the Academy Local Chapter in Gothenburg in collaboration with the Immigrant Institute. On 28 January, "Pandemics - Covid-19 and the Spanish flu 1919-20" were discussed, where two Academy members with relevant cutting-edge expertise in the Academy (Tomas Bergström, Professor of clinical microbiology and Bode Janzon, PhD in history) discussed viral diseases from both a current and historical perspective.

All in all, I urge all members to consider this arena, by inviting to online meetings/Webinars, and that we also record these webinars so we can offer them via the Academy website. The local chapter in the western parts of Sweden, led by Jens Allwood, has been a pioneer in this business.

This year, it will be exciting to follow the activities of the local chapters, as well as of the various working groups. The anthology "Epidemics" is also underway, which feels very relevant. Cooperation with the Strömstad Municipality must also be prioritized, which can hopefully restart once the spread of the pandemic has been brought under control.

The debaters in the Academy, for example Rune Wigblad, are thanked for their continued efforts in the public debate arena. Most recently on 28/1, Rune writes about Maglev Trains in Dagens Arena (<https://www.dagens->

rena.se/essa/oserios-rapport-om-snabba-transporter/)

Per Flensburg has now been active as the new Vice-Chancellor since January 1, and we look forward with great confidence to an equally committed work input as he has shown in the management of our website. Christina Hultman has also been reported to be on the road to recovery and we are all so grateful for that!

I would like to end by wishing everyone good health, and refer to my summary reflections on the Academy's work published in the Newsletter from last December. /All the best, Peter

Vice-Chancellor's report

The first month

Now my first month as Vice-Chancellor has soon passed. There was no major difference compared to how it was before. Thanks to the fact that I have been co-opted to the Executive Committee (AU) for six months, I have gotten well into the current business and am fully updated regarding current matters.

Speaking of current affairs, I discovered in the articles of association that "the Vice-Chancellor is responsible for ensuring that all members are reached by personal contact by letter at least once a year". I had just set up a database of the Academy's 153 members and realized that it meant producing 153 letters, with content, envelopes, address and return address. Lasse also called the letter the "January letter". So it was just to get started. In a few steps I was able to get the register into Word as a table where each member's information was in a long line. This would then be transformed into a four-line address. I managed to do this in an ingenious way. If anyone wants to know, please contact me. Now I'm just waiting for a stamp with a return address before I can start shipping.

Two weeks ago, I did something I hadn't done in several years: I visited LinkedIn. For those of you who don't know what it is, you can

simply say that it is a face-book equivalent with professional info for working life. It is the website that conveys the most job advertisements in the world and many events, both within and outside the research world are advertised there. I wrote that I had a new job and immediately received a lot of congratulations. Then I took the opportunity to ask some congratulators if they were interested in joining Strömstad Academy and immediately got some answers: Two Yes! and a lot "should think about it". I would like to urge all members who are with LinkedIn to draw attention to Strömstad Academy there.

Concerning attention, a marketing group has been formed with me as convener. We have met a few times and the ideas sprout like radishes from our ears! You are guaranteed to hear from us.

It has been complained that our reports are not in Diva. The library at University West has so much to do that they only register the AAS series, and do so when there is time. But by February, all AAS reports should be in place. I then wrote to the Chairman of the Diva consortium and asked if we could have our own access. I sent the question at six o'clock in the evening and half past nine the same evening, I received an answer: There were several smaller organizations that had the same wishes and the question was to be discussed, but it was not possible to say when. But so far there is hope...

Finally, I plan to occasionally write a brief text with the headline: Vice-Chancellor's IT Tips. It will be concrete tips on how to use our computers and the programs on them to facilitate our work and to be able to work safely. Maybe I'm just describing how something works. This time I will recommend a search engine instead of Google, namely DuckDuckGo.

Per Flensburg

Vice-Chancellor's IT-tips

Search engines

Per Flensburg

When the internet broke through in the mid 90's, there were no search engines. You had to know the address of the page you wanted in advance. It became customary for everyone who had a personal website to also have a list of 10-15 links that were especially recommended. It was called "link pantry" and the main purpose was to show how sophisticated taste the site owner had.

As the web grew, the need for a simple search function also increased and the search engines were born. One of the first was Altavista. It was funded with advertising and consequently the search page was littered with links, which you would be tempted to click on instead of searching for what you were interested in. The search box in the top left corner was quite small and if you were not used to Altavista it was easy to miss it. See picture below:



In 1997, another search engine was launched: Google. It was completely different; a blank page with a clear search box in the middle. Not a hint of advertising! In addition, you could get free e-mail with the huge space of 15 GB! It was launched with the slogan: "Never more erase an e-mail" or something like that. This was fantastic and I could not understand how they financed it all. After a year or so, I discovered that there was a discreet text in the email, which advertised various products that I had been looking for recently. And then I figured out how Google financed its business!

Google gathered information about which pages you visited and, using AI, built up a profile of your interests. This information was sold to companies that could use it for targeted advertising. Sometimes, however, it came too late, I have many times received advertising for products I have already bought. Google can also sell the collected information to companies that want to know more about you, e.g. if you are looking for a job. Let us take an example.

Suppose we have an ambitious high school student who writes a special work on young people's mental health. She finds a lot of material on the internet and her work is highly praised. When she has graduated, it is time to search for a job. The employer she is looking for buys information about her on Google. He finds a lot about young people's mental health. He then concludes that she suffers from mental problems and our talented high school student does not get the job.

Another more subtle danger is that Google uses its information about you to provide you with relevant information when you search. To continue with our high school student. Let's say Google has noticed that she seems to be fond of red clothes. But then she has suddenly decided to apply for a green dress. Google "knows" that she is interested in red dresses then suggests a red dress with green dots.

Yes, one can go on to imagine how information can be misinterpreted, put into the wrong context and cause inconvenience to the holder. We simply don't want anyone to collect a lot of information about us, which can be misused. And there is actually a search engine that does not do that, namely DuckDuckGo.

It does not save any information about you, it does not track you and it has no advertising. And it's free and just as good as Google. How do you get it? Simple, you enter "Settings" in your browser, click on "search engine" and there you can select DuckDuckGo. Apple has had it since 2014, Chrome since 2019 and Firefox since 2016.

But how does DuckDuckGo make money? In the usual way, through ads. But general ads without tracking you or fine-tuning ads so that they are more targeted and desirable for you to click on. In addition, the number of ads displayed by DuckDuckGo is less than what you see on Google. So my recommendation is: Do as I do, use DuckDuckGo!

If you want to know more, there is a simple review here: <https://sv.l3xa.com/simple-questions-what-is-duckduckgo>

Talking about the future

Talking about the future

John Fletcher

The future welfare system needs to encourage frugality in its use.

Let us follow a line of thought.

Yes, I know! This isn't an idea that could be applied as described. I want to move out of the mental box which declares: "I need – society pays" (i.e. all other tax payers).

What would happen if each taxpayer had the option to save up to one year's income tax free and could use that money to complement relatively low welfare benefits when needed (sick leave, care of children leave, parental

leave, ...)? The fund should be available only for such purposes. Or some other system which encourages the recipient to be prudent.

The benefits which work like an insurance system (health insurance, unemployment benefits, holiday pay, parental leave, . . .) is established on a level (the same for all concerned) which ensures that basic needs are met. The individual decides for her-/him-self how much to put into her/his economic buffer (over and above a certain minimum level?) which can then be used to complement the (low) welfare benefits in question. This gives that individual time to consider her/his options, given the reason for needing the benefits.

If that reason is going to be of a temporary nature, the individual can use the buffer to complement the benefit. This makes it highly attractive to get back to work as soon as possible.

If the reason is of a more permanent nature, the individual gains more time to consider more basic alternatives such as:

- *will I be able to keep my house?*
- *will I need to move to . . . where I can find a job*
- *Do I need to consider a change of profession in order to manage?*

Such decisions rest with the individual concerned. The public welfare system can offer support, for example during the adaptation process. The alternative is to depend upon the basic welfare benefits.

So, what do I mean when writing 'basic needs'?

In 2017, a retired person who had worked for 40 years with an after tax income of SEK 25.000 per month, received slightly more than SEK 12.000 per month in total pension benefits (also after tax, and excluding any housing benefits or old age support).

Does this cover that person's 'basic needs'? I don't know. There are many factors involved in building a buffer. Should the savings be de-

ductible from the taxable income, or from the tax as such? More beneficial deductions probably lead to a lower 'basic need' level. Of course, it is also a matter of how tough we chose to be on ourselves (through our politicians).

I am no wiser when a family is involved, but I am convinced that the individual needs to be the 'point of departure' when thinking about these matters, not 'society' (which is a euphemism for 'all the tax payers'). I don't know what to do about those who don't earn an income either. Should that person receive the 'basic needs' amount?

There is a lot that needs to be discussed!

There are also other things to consider.

Should I get a refund at the end of the year if I don't use all my benefits? Money can be very loudmouthed.

When we develop incentives that encourage a wise use of all the benefits, we need to establish where the key decisions are made. That is where incentives can make a difference. I have listed some such situations below:

•“Am I so unwell that I **need** to stay at home?” (the individual decides)
Should every adult have a personal medical budget – and get a refund when not using the budget?
Those needing more than budgeted should receive all the medical aid they need, of course.

•“Is **staying at home** the optimal treatment for this person?” (the physician)
Should the physician have a treatment budget of his own based on his patients – and a review at the end of the year?
Today somebody else (the 'disease fund') carries the costs for the physician's decisions

•“Is there some other way to care for my unwell child than staying home, getting the 'care for unwell child'?”

(the parent)

Should parents have an 'unwell child budget' – and a refund when not using the entire budget?

•“Can I improve my **pension** by working more years?” (the individual, the employer and the lawmaker)

Are there jobs I could handle, and the employer is willing to pay for? Can more such jobs be encouraged?

•“How can we ensure that this person finds a **job**?” (the employment service, the municipality)

Could they 'earn' a bonus for finding jobs for the unemployed?

I don't know how a future welfare system might be shaped, but I want to stress some basic truths:

People react to social and economic incentives.

Private enterprise doesn't work without a well-functioning welfare system.

Welfare cannot be financed without thriving enterprises.

Democracy won't work unless there is a mutual understanding between private enterprise and the political establishment.

But what about the technology, can't that take care of the failing funding of our welfare?

Solar Energy Research

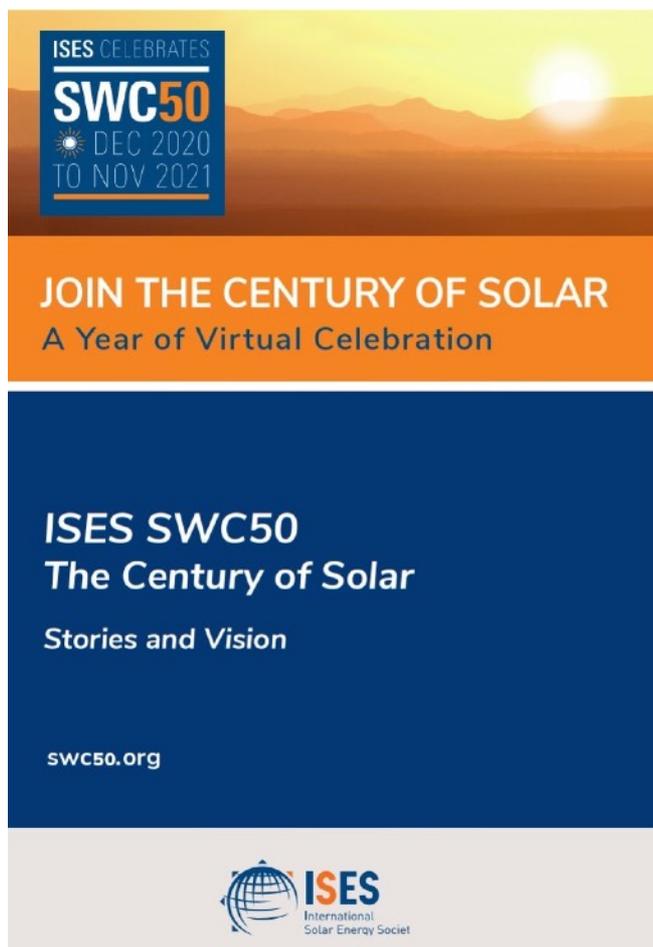
Solar Energy Research Pioneers

Lars Broman

The International Association of Solar Energy ISES has recently named 167 scientists as Solar Energy Research Pioneers, who begun their research careers between 1910 and 1995. Out of these, four are Fellows of Strömstad Academy: Hary P Garg who begun already in the 1960ties, Lawrence L Kazmerski who begun in the 1970ies, Lars Broman and Gouri Datta who begun in the 1980ties. All pioneers, with short résumés, plus much

more solar energy history are found in the book *Join the Century of Solar*, also available in pdf format:

<https://www.ises.org/sites/default/files/ISES%20SWC50>



Reform of teacher education - again!

Now it's time again for a comprehensive reform of teacher education

Åsa Morberg

Now it's time again for a reform of teacher education. The reform is connected to the January agreement between the government parties, the Centre Party, the Liberals and the Green Party. Sweden's pace of reform of teacher education is very high, if you compare with other countries. We can compare with

Finland, for example. Extensive reforms have been made in Sweden since 1968 (the Teacher Training College), in principle one reform every ten years. In Finland, only a few reforms have been made during the same time period. Change in work procedures can actually be done without extensive reform.

It is interesting to study the reforms over time. You will find that the focus of the reforms is comparable to "dancing tango". There is a lot of back and forth, and tours also go in different directions, on both sides. Nothing is really new and much could be remedied without radical changes in statutes and governing documents. Teacher education has a special position in higher education, through the detailed control to which it is exposed.

One of the main purposes of the reform is to take active action against the more serious teacher education. The focus so far has made it difficult to increase the dimensioning. This is now done, among other things by introducing a pilot project with a new shorter pedagogical education (KPU) and this applies to both basic teachers and subject teachers. The education is aimed at graduates with a completed degree and includes pedagogy, subject studies and work-based education.

The quality increase that is proposed, deals with e.g. an increase in teacher-led teaching in education. It is necessary, but it could of course have been done without extensive reform. The higher education institutions could have had an extended earmarked financial framework. Teacher-led teaching has been continuously reduced sharply since the time of the Teacher Training College Charter 1968-1977. Furthermore, a new management of teacher education is also proposed, which will be gathered in a separate ordinance.

Now again, teacher education is given a special position in academia. Politicians do not trust the country's universities and their independence. Teacher education wants politicians to rule hard with tight reins. All higher educational institutions will now, for example, have practice schools and they will be further developed so that students gain insight into

practical research. The former experimental and demonstration schools 1968-1977 had the same purpose.

Investment will be made in methodology, an experience-based professional subject. It is very interesting that the methodology topic is reintroduced. The subject was actually discontinued when the basis of teacher education became scientific and didactics replaced the methodology. Subject representatives for methodology were good teachers, without scientific training. Who will now teach methodology and represent the practical subject? The employment of teacher educators has mainly been done on a scientific basis. What subject content should the methodology subject be given now? The most interesting thing will be to see who will teach the methodology subject?

There should also be a better connection between theory and practice. That is good. In previous reforms, the distance between theory and practice has gradually increased. In addition, cognitive science is now included in all teacher education programs. The detail control returns. Teacher education has been controlled in detail since 1968, but was released in 1977, but now the reins are tightened and detailed control is reintroduced.

Changes must also be made so that a broader assessment is made of the applicants' subject knowledge and thereby make it easier for subject-skilled academics to become teachers. How could this have been difficult for so long? Swedish as a second language or mother tongue must be able to be included in order to get more qualified teachers in these subjects. It is an adaptation to practice.

There is a short consultation period on the proposals. The consultation responses must be received by 15 April 2021. The changes are proposed to apply from the turn of the year 2021/2022. There will be a short preparation time for the country's universities. Quality is also about time. Change in work procedures must take time. Students in teacher education must not come to an activity that is not fully planned. This is by no means a good idea.

Call

Gudmund Bergqvist

Carl Olivestam and I published an essay/debate article on measuring scales in the Free Series in September 2020. We attacked there, among other things, the GAL-TAN scale, which we pointed out had no dimension around development in technology and biomedicine, ie activities that drive development forward. We also had a monthly magazine reprint of an article in the daily press where we touched on the need of measuring.

We have ideas but want more proposals for a new scale.

Dear friends! Give us more clues! Join as a co-author in the next article.